

Eleazar Nepomuceno
Aviation Accident Investigator
AS-WPR

Date: August 31, 2022

Subject: WPR22LA313, Witness Interview

Contact: Theodore Raymond, passenger

The following is a summary of the witness interview:

The witness stated that the purpose of the flight was to start up the accident airplane to take it to a local airport to drop it off and pick up his tri-pacer. During the preflight, the accident pilot drained from the two drain lines underneath and was collected about 1/2 a cup from each tank, some fuel, couple droplets of water at the bottle. They then pushed the airplane out to the grass and continued through the preflight checks. The pilot then attempted to start the left engine, but the left engine had trouble starting; it popped, sputtered, popped; sputtered for about 5 minutes. It then started after another 10-15 minutes. The pilot continued and completed his checklist and idled the left engine for about 20 to 25 minutes. Shortly after, the pilot started the right engine; the right engine fired up, with no popping and sputtering and then the witness boarded the airplane. The pilot showed the witness that the RPM changed and told him that they should be stacked and that there should be no space between the two needles. The pilot increased the RPMs and taxied to the engine of the runway. The witness added that the needles were identical throughout the ground movement. The airplane went down the runway and the witness stated that the engine sounded great during the initial climb. Shortly after, the noise of left engine changed, in which the tone got lower at about 50 ft above the ground. Immediately, the pilot applied full power to both engines, but the airplane continued to decent. The airplane was drifting toward the power lines and the pilot turned the yoke to the left and pulled aft and flew it to the ground.

The witness added that the pilot was working on the airplane on and off the past couple years. About 2 years ago, he witnessed the pilot start and run the #2 engine.