



Starr Blum
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: July 6, 2023

Subject: WPR23FA256

Contact: Gary Hart - Witness

On July 6, 2023, Mr. Hart was at the airport mowing the grass. He saw the airplane take off and the flaps were still down. He observed smoke while the airplane turned left and descended to the ground.



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Contact: Jessica Westbrook - Witness

At 9:15 local time Mrs. Westbrook and her family were camping and eating breakfast on their grandfather's property. She noticed an airplane departing the airport that was not gaining altitude and "sputtering and blowing smoke". Her husband said, "why isn't he giving it throttle?" At the time the engine sound completely stopped, and the airplane stopped midair and began to nosedive into the field across the street. Her husband and his father rushed to the crash site, and she called 911. They directed law enforcement to the scene when they arrived.



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Contact: Patrick Westbrook - Witness

At 9:15 am local time, Mr. Westbrook reported that, as he was eating breakfast, he heard an airplane take off, and shortly after heard the engine “popping” and told his wife that “he shouldn’t be letting off the throttle”. A second later they saw smoke and the airplane started nosediving. He yelled for his father who is a 32-year state policeman, and they jumped in a truck and drove down to the field the airplane crashed in. His father checked the pilot for a pulse; there was none. There was no way to help get the pilot out of the airplane, so they waited till the police came and kept everyone nearby away from the accident site.