

9/26/23

NTSB Statement Re: Seawind 3000 crash on 9/15/23

My name is Kurt Holstein. I live at [REDACTED] This is my statement regarding my eyewitness account of the airplane accident on Friday, September 15th, 2023 on Lake Sammamish. I'm also an ATP-rated pilot with a Single Engine Sea rating. I own and fly a Cessna 180K on amphibian floats here on Lake Sammamish.

On the morning of the 22nd, I was working at my desk on the second floor of our lakefront home when I heard and saw the plane begin its takeoff. I stood up and looked out the window (see attached photo for the view from my office) as I was familiar with this plane and had seen it take off many times before.

The plane was taking off to the south, slightly towards the east shore from the middle of the lake and straight out from our house. The takeoff run looked normal, and the plane got up on the step and was close to take-off speed when it hit three large wakes or waves. The first 2 waves caused significant bounces off the water that resulted in the plane jumping up a few feet and then coming back down and contacting the water again. However, when the plane impacted the third wave, it pitched up sharply and climbed at about a 30-to-35-degree angle. It only went up to about 30 to 40 feet up before nosing over and coming back down at about a 30-to-35-degree angle, impacting the lake with a big splash and flipping over onto its back.

I immediately called 911 and stayed on while they forwarded me to the sheriff's department, where I explained what I had seen and where the plane was on the lake. Several residents on this side of the lake (the west side) were in their boats and got to the plane in less than 3 or 4 minutes.

It's my opinion that the third wake was enough to pitch the plane up at an unusual altitude and, I believe, the wing exceeded the critical angle of attack, stalled and brought the plane back down at a steep angle, impacting the water.

