



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	COLBERT, GA	Accident Number:	ATL99LA037
Date & Time:	01/02/1999, 1601 EST	Registration:	N7295P
Aircraft:	Piper PA-24-250	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The preflight inspection of the fuel tanks by the pilot revealed the tanks were filled to the bottom of the filler neck, which the pilot believed was appropriately full. After starting the engine, fuel began leaking from the fuel sump drain hose. The pilot operated the spring loaded valve handle inside the airplane which apparently stopped the leak. Shortly after departing, the engine began running rough upon which the pilot began a deviation to another airport. During this time, the engine began running smoothly whereupon the pilot continued to his initial destination. During descent, the engine began running rough and the pilot decided the tanks had been exhausted. The pilot performed a forced landing causing substantial damage. The airplane cruising endurance based on 75% power and 90 gallons of fuel on board is 5.4 hours. However, the usable fuel capacity on this airplane when the fuel tanks are filled to the bottom of the filler necks is approximately 80 gallons. The actual flight time of this aircraft was 5.55 hours. A Federal Aviation Administration inspector who examined the airplane noted only residual fuel was found in the selector valve and no leaks were found in the fuel system.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Inadequate planning/decision by the pilot, which resulted in fuel exhaustion due to an inadequate supply of fuel.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
3. (C) FUEL SUPPLY - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

4. (F) OBJECT - UNDETERMINED

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	59
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1478 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1000 hours (Total, this make and model), 1376 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 41 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N7295P
Model/Series:	PA-24-250 PA-24-250	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	JOSEPH J. FRIEND	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-540
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	AHN, 802 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 600 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	12 knots / 22 knots, 100°
Temperature:	0°C	Visibility	2.5 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	ALLAIRE, NJ (BLM)	Destination:	LAWRENCEVILLE, GA (LZU)

Airport Information

Airport:	ATHENS/BEN EPPS AIRPORT (AHN)	Runway Surface Type:	
Runway Used:	0	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Length/Width:			

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:			

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): PRESTON E HICKS

Adopted Date: 04/25/2001

Investigation Docket: NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov, or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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