



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	GALVESTON, TX	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW98LA038
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	11/01/1997, 1119 CST	<b>Registration:</b>	N40201
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-23-250	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Ferry		

## Analysis

After takeoff, at about 250 to 300 feet AGL, the right engine lost partial power, followed by the left engine. The pilot made a wide left turn toward a small field with trees in front, and retracted the landing gear. During the forced landing, the pilot 'intentionally' hit the trees in order to slow down and go under some power lines. After going under the wires, the airplane came to a stop in the field. The airplane had not been flown for about two years, and the pilot was to ferry the aircraft for the owner from Galveston, TX, to Colorado Springs, CO. A mechanic at the Scholes Field Airport in Galveston prepared the airplane for the flight and obtained a ferry permit from the FAA. The mechanic reported that the fuel tanks were drained and visually inspected. About one gallon of water was drained from the tanks, and both fuel filters were cleaned. The mechanic also reported that rained had fallen on the day before the accident flight. Examination of the fuel filters revealed that they were both clogged with debris.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: inadequate maintenance and/or preflight inspection of the airplane, and subsequent blockage of the fuel filters, which led to fuel starvation, partial loss of engine power in both engines, and a forced landing. A related factor was the lack of suitable terrain for the forced landing.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. 2 ENGINES
2. (C) MAINTENANCE,INSPECTION - INADEQUATE
3. (C) FUEL SYSTEM,FILTER - BLOCKED(PARTIAL)
4. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

### Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

- 6. OBJECT - TREE(S)
- 7. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport; Commercial; Flight Engineer	<b>Age:</b>	50
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine
<b>Flight Time:</b>	10000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 100 hours (Total, this make and model), 9000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N40201
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-23-250 PA-23-250	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	RICHARD C. HOLDEN	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	TIO-540-C1A
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Ferry		

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	GLS, 7 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None / 0 ft agl	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	10 knots / , 280°
<b>Temperature:</b>	27° C	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(GLS)	<b>Destination:</b>	COLORADO SPRGS, CO (COS)

### Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): DOUGLAS D WIGINGTON

Adopted Date: 10/30/1998

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](mailto: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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