



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	ARNAUDVILLE, LA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW98LA039
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	11/02/1997, 1630 CST	<b>Registration:</b>	N9437B
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 175	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	4 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The flight had been airborne for 1 hour 15 minutes when a total loss of engine power occurred. During a forced landing in a field, the airplane hit a drainage ditch, the nose gear collapsed, and subsequently, the airplane nosed over and came to rest inverted. The airplane contained 43 gallons of fuel at the time of departure, and the fuel selector remained in the 'BOTH' position during the flight. At the site, fuel was found in the fuel tanks; however, a crack was noted in the fuel line between the fuel strainer (mounted on the firewall) and the engine fuel pump. There was evidence that air entered the fuel system through the cracked line, resulting in fuel starvation to the engine. The reason for the crack in the line was not determined.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a cracked fuel line, which allowed air to enter the line and lead to fuel starvation and loss of engine power. A related factor was: the lack of suitable terrain for a forced landing.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) FUEL SYSTEM,LINE - CRACKED
2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION

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

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Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

### Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - DITCH

## Factual Information

On November 2, 1997, at 1630 central standard time, a Cessna 175, N9437B, struck the terrain during a forced landing following a total loss of engine power near Arnaudville, Louisiana. The airplane was owned and operated by a private individual under Title 14 CFR Part 91. The private pilot and 3 passengers were not injured and the airplane sustained substantial damage. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal flight that departed from Homer, Louisiana, at 1515. A flight plan was not filed.

During a personal interview, conducted by the investigator-in-charge, and on the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2), the pilot reported that the flight departed an airstrip at Homer, Louisiana, and had been airborne for 1 hour 15 minutes en route to Breaux Bridge at 1,200 feet MSL when the "engine quit." The pilot performed the emergency checklist procedures; however, the engine did not restart. The pilot commenced the forced landing procedures for landing in a plowed field. During the landing roll, the airplane hit a drainage ditch, collapsing the nose gear. Subsequently, the airplane nosed over and came to rest inverted. Prior to the original departure from Beaux Bridge, the pilot fueled the airplane with 43 gallons of fuel and performed a preflight inspection. The fuel selector remained in the "BOTH" position during the flight.

The FAA inspector examining the airplane found structural damage on the left wing. Approximately 6 gallons of fuel was found in the fuel tanks. The inspector noted a crack in the "fuel line between the fuel strainer (mounted on the firewall) and the engine fuel pump. It is suspected that air was suctioned in to the fuel system through the cracked line, resulting in fuel starvation to the engine." The reason for the crack in the line was not determined.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	41, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	03/10/1997
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	362 hours (Total, all aircraft), 257 hours (Total, this make and model), 336 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N9437B
Model/Series:	175 175	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	55237
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/15/1997, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	7 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-A1A
Registered Owner:	RAY A. BERGERON	Rated Power:	180 hp
Operator:	RAY A. BERGERON	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	15 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	HOMER, LA (5F4)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	BREAUX BRIDGE, LA (LA05)	Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	1515 CST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** JOYCE ROACH **Report Date:** 07/31/1998

**Additional Participating Persons:** JAVIER RODRIQUEZ; BATON ROUGE, LA

**Publish Date:**

**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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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).