



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	NEGUANEE, MI	Accident Number:	CHI99FA332
Date & Time:	09/01/1999, 2040 EDT	Registration:	N91901
Aircraft:	Piper PA-12	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The floatplane impacted a microwave tower at 2040 edt while maneuvering 1/4 mile from the lake where it typically landed. Official sunset was 2030 and the sun's azimuth was 283 degrees. The pilot had 'Defective distant vision, right eye, 20/60, uncorrectable.' A witness reported, 'It appeared as though he was doing a circle back towards his house-a routine I had seen him do many times before. This time ... he seemed to be flying much lower, closer to the trees, than usual. The witness reported, 'He appeared to have circled around again, and this time the engine was revved up considerably higher. Again, his flight was uncharacteristically low. I wondered whether it was [the pilot] flying the plane because I'd never seen him fly like this before.' He reported, 'I went into the house and within a few minutes I heard what sounded like a rifle blast.' The left pontoon was located about 46 feet from the base of the tower. It exhibited cable scratching and crushing and bending of its main strut. The main wreckage was located about 120 feet from the base of the tower. The inspection revealed no airframe or engine pre-impact anomalies. The propeller exhibited chordwise scratching, leading edge gouging, 'S' bending, and blade tip curl. The side lights on the tower were observed operating the night of the accident after the airplane had impacted the tower.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot failed to maintain clearance from the tower.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT(VISUAL DEFICIENCY) - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. OBJECT - TOWER(MARKED)
4. LIGHT CONDITION - OTHER

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	75
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1136 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N91901
Model/Series:	PA-12 PA-12	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	HOWARD C. KITZMAN	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-TCA274
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MQT, 1419 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	10 knots / , 230°
Temperature:	21 °C	Visibility	20 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MARQUETTE, MI	Destination:	DEAD RIVER LAKE, MI

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JIM SILLIMAN	Adopted Date:	11/30/2000
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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