



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	California City, CA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX04CA175
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	04/02/2004, 1725 PST	<b>Registration:</b>	N88BM
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 177	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	4 Minor

**Flight Conducted Under:** Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional

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## Analysis

The airplane collided with terrain during the takeoff initial climb. Prior to departure, the certified flight instructor (CFI) noted calm wind conditions. During the initial climb, about 50 to 75 feet above ground level, the airplane began to descend, while rolling and yawing to the right. The CFI could not maintain control of the airplane, and it continued in a 300-foot-per-minute descent. The airplane impacted the ground and a fire erupted. After egressing the airplane, the CFI noticed a strong shift in winds into tailwind conditions. A few minutes later, he noted that the winds became light again, followed by periodic gusts and wind shifts. The CFI reported that the airplane had no mechanical failures or malfunctions during the flight. The CFI reported that the airplane's gross weight was about 2,341 pounds, and the published maximum gross weight is 2,350 pounds.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the certified flight instructor's failure to maintain an adequate airspeed, which resulted in a stall/mush condition and a collision with terrain. Factors in the accident were strong tailwind conditions and a sudden wind shift.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SUDDEN WINDSHIFT
  2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - TAILWIND
  3. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
  4. STALL/MUSH - ENCOUNTERED - PILOT IN COMMAND(CFI)
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

5. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

## Factual Information

### Flight Instructor Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Flight Instructor; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	35, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>		<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	08/01/2003
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	982 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5 hours (Total, this make and model), 32 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	35, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>		<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	11/10/2003
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	44 hours (Total, all aircraft), 43 hours (Total, this make and model), 24 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N88BM
<b>Model/Series:</b>	177	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	177-00986
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-320-E2D
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Chris Phillips/ Tom Goodnough	<b>Rated Power:</b>	
<b>Operator:</b>	Edwards AFB Aero Club	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	California City, CA (L71)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Rosamond, CA (L00)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	PST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

## Airport Information

Airport:	California City Municipal Airp (L71)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	24	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	4 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	35.152222, -118.016667

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Nicole Charnon	Report Date:	06/30/2004
Additional Participating Persons:	Dale Roy; Federal Aviation Administration; Van Nuys, CA		
Publish Date:			
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
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 <a href="mailto:pubinquiry@ntsb.gov">pubinquiry@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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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](#).