



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Ridgefield, CT	Accident Number:	IAD05LA050
Date & Time:	04/02/2005, 1210 EST	Registration:	N134DE
Aircraft:	Piper PA-31P-350	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Prior to departing on the accident flight, a mechanic, who was to perform work on the airplane advised the owner/pilot that the weather was below landing minimums and he should not attempt the trip. During a localizer approach at the airport, the airplane impacted trees that were located west of the approach end of the runway. After executing a missed approach the pilot advised ATC that he had bird strikes on both wings and that it looked like the de-icing boots were damaged. A local resident who witnessed the event stated that "the scraping sound of branches against metal was audible, and I saw the upper branches of the pine trees waving after contact with the plane." The trees were located at a terrain elevation of 599 feet above sea level. The minimum descent altitude for the approach was published as 1,100 feet.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper IFR procedure by flying below the minimum descent altitude, which resulted in the airplane striking trees.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - FAF/OUTER MARKER TO THRESHOLD (IFR)

Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) IFR PROCEDURE - NOT COMPLIED WITH - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	46
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1633 hours (Total, all aircraft), 695 hours (Total, this make and model), 1595 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N134DE
Model/Series:	PA-31P-350	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Operator:	On file	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-V2AD
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:	DXR, 458 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 200 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	9 knots / , 80°
Temperature:	8°C	Visibility	2.5 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - Rain; Mist		
Departure Point:	East Hampton, NY (HTO)	Destination:	Danbury, CT (DXR)

Airport Information

Airport:	Danbury Municipal Airport (DXR)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Runway Used:	8	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Length/Width:	4422 ft / 150 ft		

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:	41.362222, -73.526111		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Todd G Gunther	Adopted Date:	10/27/2005
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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