



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Fargo, ND	Accident Number:	CEN20LA208
Date & Time:	06/03/2020, 1400 CDT	Registration:	N3869W
Aircraft:	Piper PA32	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

On June 3, 2020, about 1400 central daylight time, a Piper PA-32-260 airplane, N386W, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident in Fargo, North Dakota. The pilot, student pilot, and one passenger were not injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 91 instructional flight.

The flight was planned to originate at Hector International Airport (FAR), Fargo, North Dakota, at 1400, with an intended destination of Park Rapids Municipal Airport-Konshok Field (PKD), Park Rapids, Minnesota. No flight plan was filed for this visual flight rules flight.

According to the pilot, he entered the airplane with two student pilots. One of the student pilots read through the checklist during the pre-flight process. The master switch was turned on, the rotating beacon was turned on, fuel pump was turned on, and the primer handle was pumped 8 times. The instructor explained that is the amount of prime they had previously needed to start the airplane. The magneotes were then turned on and the starter pressed. The airplane engine began to turn slowly, as was "typical of this airplane," and after about two revolutions of the propeller the engine started.

The instructor stated the engine ran for about 3 seconds and began to sputter. He noticed the mixture had not been pushed in prior to start; that step was skipped over when reading the checklist. He pushed the mixture full forward, but the engine still quit. He noticed black smoke coming from the engine cowling. The instructor thought it was a carburetor fire; he pulled the mixture handle out and opened the throttle. He continued to crank the engine to "draw the fire into the engine." Within a second or two he noticed fire coming from the cowling. Realizing the very slow RPM from the starter and the fact that the fire was already proceeding out of the cowling, he determined "there was no hope in extinguishing the fire with this procedure" and told the two students to evacuate the airplane immediately.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the engine mount and firewall.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N3869W
Model/Series:	PA32 260	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:	No		
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KFAR, 899 ft msl	Observation Time:	
Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	/ ,
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility:	
Altimeter Setting:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Fargo, ND (FAR)	Destination:	Park Rapids, MN (PKD)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	46.920556, -96.815833 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Courtney Liedler
Additional Participating Persons:	Perry Oschner; Federal Aviation Administration; Fargo, ND
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.