



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Wayne, NE	Accident Number:	CEN24FA327
Date & Time:	August 26, 2024, 09:44 Local	Registration:	N9626K
Aircraft:	Piper PA-28-140	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On August 26, 2024, about 0931 central daylight time, a Piper PA28-140, N9626K, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Wayne, Nebraska. The private pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The flight originated from Norfolk Regional Airport (OFK), Norfolk, Nebraska, and departed to the northeast, presumably to return to Buffalo, Minnesota. The airplane had been hangered as a transient at OFK for the weekend. The FBO manager stated that the airplane was refueled by the pilot at the self-service fuel pump prior to departure but he did not observe the pilot check the weather at the FBO.

The pilot rated landowner, whose property the airplane impacted, stated the clouds were at about 100 ft above the ground when he initially heard the airplane fly by. Several minutes later he heard the airplane at a very high rpm followed by a loud “pop” and silence afterwards. A black plume of smoke appeared, and he eventually located the airplane in his cornfield.

Examination of the airframe, engine and propeller at the accident site did not reveal any pre-impact anomalies. An SD card was recovered from a Honeywell AV8OR personal navigator and was retained for data download.

The FBO manager stated weather at OFK at the time of departure of the accident airplane was mostly clear skies with 10+ miles of visibility. A surface observation taken about 7 nautical miles southeast of the accident site recorded ceilings at 600 ft agl near the time of the accident. A preliminary review of weather radar for the time and place of the accident showed a band of precipitation moving across the area. Flight track data showed the airplane traveling below 1,000 ft agl.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N9626K
Model/Series:	PA-28-140	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:		Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KLCG,1424 ft msl	Observation Time:	09:55 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	7 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	25°C /23°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	9 knots / , 310°
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 600 ft AGL	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Norfolk, NE (OFK)	Destination:	Buffalo, MN (CFE)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	42.334419,-97.067471

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Miller, Bradley
Additional Participating Persons:	Brandon Bennett; Federal Aviation Administration; Lincoln, NE
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	