Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Bogalusa, LA	**Accident Number:**	ERA26FA291
Date & Time:	August 6, 2026, 10:30 Local	**Registration:**	N5409D
Aircraft:	Beech H35	**Injuries:**	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On August 6, 2026, about 1030 central daylight time, a Beech H35, N5409D, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Bogalusa, Louisiana. The private pilot and passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

Preliminary ADS-B data showed the airplane departed Elm Creek Airpark (0TX6), Seguin, Texas, where the airplane was based, at 0617. The airplane arrived at George R Carr Memorial Air Field (BXA), Bogalusa, Louisiana, about 0915. According to the airport manager at BXA, the pilot wanted 40 gallons of fuel. He continued that the pilot "topped off" the left and right main fuel tanks and was adding fuel to the right auxiliary fuel tank when the fuel farm pump motor stopped working. The pilot had added 35 gallons at that point and told the airport manager that this would be enough fuel.

The airport manager also reported that the pilot had wanted to put more fuel into the right side of the airplane to help "get the plane trimmed better." The airport manager asked the pilot if he planned to use the crew vehicle to go into town to get something to eat, the pilot told him no, that they had left early and were on their way to Florida. Motion-activated surveillance cameras at the airport showed the pilot and passenger in the fixed base operator (FBO) building and the airport manager reported that he spoke with the pilot about the next leg of their flight to Florida. The pilot told him that they would stop on their way back to Texas the following Tuesday. The airport manager then left to begin working on the fuel farm pump and the cameras show the pilot and passenger leaving the FBO at 1013. The cameras that were pointed at the ramp did not capture any other footage of the pilot and passenger, or the accident airplane. The airport manager continued that while at the fuel farm working on the pump he saw the pilot doing a walkaround but did not watch the full preflight inspection and was not sure if the pilot sumped the airplane's fuel tanks. He then heard the pilot start the engine, which took two tries before it started. He watched as the airplane taxied out to the

runway and heard the pilot perform an engine run-up. He then watched the takeoff roll, rotation, and initial climb before he turned and began putting tools away. When he exited the fuel farm pit and began to place his tools in his truck, he saw a smoke plume and went to the accident site where he found the airplane consumed by a postimpact fire. He did not report hearing any abnormalities in the engine noise during the engine run-up or takeoff/initial climb.

The accident site was located about 0.5 statute miles from the departure end of runway 36, the runway the airplane departed from, in a forested area. A pine tree about 10 ft aft and outboard of the right wing tip had two branches broken about 40 ft up the tree with the higher branch broken closer to the trunk. A large log was embedded in the cowling and cabin compartment of the wreckage, and a broken stump was observed under the fuselage consistent with the diameter of the embedded log. Multiple pieces of wood were observed with clean 45° angle cuts and the ends were singed. The wreckage came to rest on a true heading of about 300°, at an elevation of 148 ft mean sea level (msl). All major components of the airplane were located with the main wreckage. The wreckage debris field was contained to about a 15 yard radius encompassing the main wreckage. Postaccident fire damage was observed for about a 50 yard radius around the accident site.

The fuselage was mostly consumed by postimpact fire. The main cabin door was observed in the main wreckage and was substantially damaged by fire. The baggage door and emergency escape hatch were consumed by fire and not observed. The empennage was thermally damaged and remained attached to the fuselage via the control cables. Both stabilizers remained attached to the empennage. Both ruddervators remained attached to the stabilizers and the trim tabs remained attached to the ruddervators. Both wing leading edges were impact crushed aft to the forward spar and the upper and lower wing skin, aft of the forward wing spar, was wrinkled. The right wing impacted a tree, about 5 inches in diameter, about 5 ft from the base and slid down the tree removing bark until the wing came to rest on the ground. Both flaps and ailerons remained attached to their respective wings. The left flap actuator was measured, based on this measurement the flaps were at or near the “UP” position. The right flap actuator was consumed by fire and was unable to be measured. The landing gear actuator housing, motor, and landing gear extension handle were consumed by fire. The sector gear and main landing gear pushrods remained, and the position of the pushrods corresponded to the landing gear being fully extended or nearly so, if in an intermediate position. The faceplate for the tachometer was recovered with the needle fixed at a high rpm; due to thermal damage the exact reading could not be determined. All fuel tanks were destroyed by postaccident fire. When low pressure air was blown through the fuel selector it was found to be in the AUX position. The fuel strainer screen was examined and was unobstructed. The strainer bowl was examined and did not contain any debris or signs of corrosion.

The impact crater created by the engine was about 18 inches in depth. The engine exhibited impact and fire damage. Multiple accessories were impact separated from the engine. The throttle, mixture, and propeller controls were impact-separated. The airplane was equipped

with one standard and one electronic magneto; both magnetos were impact-separated. The oil pan was destroyed by impact forces. The oil filter remained attached to the oil filter adapter and was not removed. The oil filler cap and dipstick remained installed in their respective locations.

The propeller remained attached to the engine crankshaft flange. Both propeller blades remained installed and attached to the propeller hub. The propeller governor remained attached to the engine and the governor actuator rod arm was impact separated. One propeller blade was curved slightly aft. The other blade exhibited significant S bending and twisting. The spinner was crushed around the propeller dome.

The airplane was recovered and retained for further examination.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	**Registration:**	N5409D
Model/Series:	H35	**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:	VMC	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	BXA,120 ft msl	**Observation Time:**	10:15 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	31°C /25°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:		**Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:**	
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 2300 ft AGL	**Visibility:**	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.14 inches Hg	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	
Departure Point:	Bogalusa, LA	**Destination:**	The Villages, FL

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Fire:**	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	**Latitude, Longitude:**	30.827541,-89.866443

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Young, Joshua
Additional Participating Persons:	David Gutowski; FAA/FSDO; Baton Rouge, LA Tony Hershberger; Textron Aviation; Wichita, KS J Ferrell; Continental Aerospace Technologies; Mobile, AL
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	