



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Oelwein, Iowa	Accident Number:	CEN26LA154
Date & Time:	March 29, 2026, 14:35 Local	Registration:	N942MA
Aircraft:	Enstrom F-28F	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that while hover taxiing, the helicopter encountered a quartering tailwind and immediately started to spin. The pilot attempted to correct the spin by reducing engine power; however, the helicopter touched down hard. During the hard landing, the left skid collapsed and the main rotor blades impacted the ground, which resulted in substantial damage to the main rotor system. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation. At the time of the accident, the pilot was hover taxiing the helicopter to the north with wind from 170° at 18 knots.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain directional control during the hover taxi with a quartering tailwind.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	(general) - Effect on equipment
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Taxi-from runway	Other weather encounter
Taxi-from runway	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Taxi-from runway	Attempted remediation/recovery
Landing-flare/touchdown	Hard landing

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	49,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	BasicMed Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 4, 2025
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 2, 2025
Flight Time:	643 hours (Total, all aircraft), 78 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Enstrom	Registration:	N942MA
Model/Series:	F-28F	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1988	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	754
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 22, 2025 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5062 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	H10-360
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	225 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KOLZ	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	14:15 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	18 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.95 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Peru, IL (VYS)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Oelwein, IA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:47 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Oelwein Municipal Airport OLZ	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	1076 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1822 ft / 85 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	42.684562,-91.975327

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Finne, Andrew
Additional Participating Persons:	Smaldino, Matthew ; FAA-FSDO; Des Moines, IA
Original Publish Date:	July 15, 2026
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=202726

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).