



# Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

<b>Location:</b>	Akron, OH	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA26FA208
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	May 14, 2026, 15:45 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N7188W
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-28-180	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

On May 14, 2026, at 1545 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-28-180, N7188W, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Akron, Ohio. The flight instructor and student pilot were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 instructional flight.

According to the Akron, Fulton International Airport (AKR), manager, the airplane arrived at AKR, Akron, Ohio on May 11, 2026, and one of the pilots informed the fixed-base operator (FBO) that they would be staying for a few days and conducting flight training during their stay. They fueled the airplane and flew for about 3 1/2 hours on May 12, 2026. On May 13, 2026, the airplane was serviced by a mechanic, who performed an engine run and conducted a flight in the airport traffic pattern before landing and parking the airplane overnight. On May 14, 2026, at about 1400, the flight instructor and student pilot departed on an instructional flight.

Preliminary ADS-B data showed that the airplane departed AKR and flew south to Cambridge, Ohio, flying at various altitudes and headings, common to flight training. After overflying Cambridge Municipal Airport (CDI), Cambridge, Ohio, the airplane turned north back to AKR, maintaining about 2,500 ft mean sea level (msl) for most of the flight. Upon arrival at AKR, the pilot communicated their intentions over the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) and entered the downwind leg of the airport traffic pattern while on a track of about 245°, followed by a left base, and final approach. During short final, and for reasons unknown, the pilot communicated over the CTAF that he was conducting a go-around and rejoined the traffic pattern. Reported wind about that time was from 330° at 19 kts, gusting to 32 kts.

Once reestablished on the downwind leg, the flight track of the airplane showed that it was about 3/4 mile and perpendicular to the runway consistent with a normal traffic pattern. As the airplane approached the end of the downwind leg, the distance from the runway had

decreased to about 1/4 mile. The flight track then showed a right turn of about 15°, widening the distance from the runway.

The pilot reported the left base for runway 7 over the CTAF and initiated the left turn; immediately thereafter, the airplane entered a steep, uncontrolled descent. Eyewitnesses observed the airplane flying straight and level, then observed the left wing drop followed by a spiraling descent. One witness stated that the airplane did two complete revolutions before appearing to recover from the spin, but the airplane continued to “dive” into the neighborhood.

Dashcam video from an automobile parked across the street about 300 ft south of the accident site, captured the airplane immediately before impact in a steep non spinning descent. After the airplane disappeared from view behind trees and houses, a large fireball was observed. Home security footage showed the airplane impact on a residential street, where it slid into the attached garage of a 2-story home, impacting an electric vehicle before coming to rest.

An adult male and two children were occupying the home at the time of the accident. All three were able to evacuate without injury.

The wreckage path was 70 ft long and oriented on a magnetic heading of 195° at an elevation of 1,555 ft. There was a significant post impact fire, initially caused by the breached fuel tanks, which spread to the vehicle and structure. The electric vehicles’ batteries were subsequently damaged, resulting in a thermal runaway of the lithium-ion batteries and an intense fire that took about 20 minutes to extinguish according to the Akron City Fire Department.

The airplane’s engine was discovered under the vehicle. The fixed blade propeller separated from the crankshaft at the initial impact site and was discovered about 65 ft from the main wreckage. The blades were s-curved and there were significant leading-edge gouges and scrapes along the blade surfaces. On the road at the initial impact site, there was a 3-foot-long and 3-inch deep 45° cut in the asphalt consistent with a propeller impact strike.

The instrument panel and all digital and analog instrumentation were destroyed by impact forces and postcrash fire that rendered all avionics and instrumentation unable to be read or downloaded.

Flight control continuity could not be verified due to impact and fire damage, however, the flight control cables, when traced to their relative positions in the empennage that controlled the rudder and stabilator remained attached to their respective locations and were functional. The stabilator and rudder, when manually actuated, caused corresponding movement to the control cables and were traced to their respective locations in the cockpit, but were no longer attached to the cockpit controls due to impact damage. The stabilator trim actuator exposed threaded rod measured .80 inches which corresponded to a slight nose up setting.

Both left and right wings and their respective flight control surfaces were destroyed by impact forces and postcrash fire. The aileron controls cables were traced to their respective positions

in the cockpit controls but were impact damaged at the control gearing. The flap selector was found in the flaps full down 40° position and was secure in the detent.

The engine was damaged by impact forces and postcrash fire. There was no evidence of catastrophic damage to the engine crankcase. The engine's crankshaft was rotated manually through 720°. There were adequate compression and suction; crankshaft and valvetrain continuity was confirmed. The spark plugs displayed normal coloration and wear when compared to the Champion Check-A-Plug chart. Both left and right magnetos were damaged by fire, impact forces and fire suppression efforts and could not be functionally tested.

The wreckage was recovered and retained for further examination.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N7188W
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-28-180	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Amateur Built:</b>			
<b>Operator:</b>	ECHOAVIATION HOLDINGS LLC	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>			

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	VMC	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	AKR,1044 ft msl	<b>Observation Time:</b>	16:00 Local
<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	2 Nautical Miles	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	15°C /0°C
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>		<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	19 knots / 32 knots, 330°
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>		<b>Visibility:</b>	10 miles
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.95 inches Hg	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	NONE
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Akron, OH	<b>Destination:</b>	Akron, OH

### Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	On-ground
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	41.018351,-81.507555

## Administrative Information

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**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Mccarter, Lawrence

**Additional Participating Persons:** Jose Borges; FAA / FSDO; Cleveland, OH

**Investigation Class:** [Class 3](#)

**Note:**