

**Brief of Accident**

**Adopted 04/28/2004**

SEA03LA052  
File No. 15397                      03/29/2003                      Mabton, WA                      Aircraft Reg No. N2629Z                      Time (Local): 17:30 PST

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Make/Model: Robinson / R-22B  
Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-320-B2C  
Aircraft Damage: Substantial  
Number of Engines: 1  
Operating Certificate(s): None  
Type of Flight Operation: Personal  
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew	0	0	1
Pass	0	0	1

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Last Depart. Point: Pasco, WA  
Destination: The Dalles, OR  
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Day  
Weather Info Src: Pilot  
Basic Weather: Visual Conditions  
Lowest Ceiling: None  
Visibility: 10.00 SM  
Wind Dir/Speed: 090 / 005 Kts  
Temperature (°C): 18  
Precip/Obscuration:

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Pilot-in-Command                      Age: 31

Flight Time (Hours)

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)  
Commercial; Helicopter

Total All Aircraft: 2300  
Last 90 Days: 180  
Total Make/Model: 160  
Total Instrument Time: UnK/Nr

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Instrument Ratings  
None

While en route, the pilot made the decision to make an off-airport landing in an open field. While he was making a shallow approach, the helicopter experienced a momentary loss of power and the pilot heard a burble noise coming from the engine. This was accompanied by a low rotor rpm warning and the settling of the aircraft toward the terrain. The pilot then tried to roll the power on further, but the rpm did not fully recover. He was able to hover-taxi about five feet above the terrain for about 50 yards, but when the helicopter began to yaw, he made the decision to attempt to land. During that attempt, with the helicopter moving slightly sideways, the left skid got stuck on a large clump of dirt, and the aircraft rolled over onto its side. During the investigation it was determined that there was approximately 25 gallons of fuel on board at the time of the accident. An inspection of the engine and airframe did not reveal any anomalies that would have contributed to a loss of power.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Occurrence #1:    LOSS OF ENGINE POWER  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2:    IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN
3. TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD

Occurrence #3:    ROLL OVER  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

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The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.  
A partial loss of power, for undetermined reasons, during a shallow approach, that ultimately lead to a situation where the pilot found it necessary to attempt a forced landing while the helicopter was moving slightly sideways. Factors include rough/uneven terrain.