

Portland Area RV Builder's Group Newsletter

Issue 91.12

August 1992

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August Meeting:

For the August meeting, we will hold a fly, drive in at the Vernonia airport.

Thursday August 20th, 7:00 PM

Vernonia Airport (05S)

Topics: Review of our group fly—in at Scappoose and hopefully some planning for next years event. Inspect Mike's RV—6 and project underway, and of course — talk about Van's upcoming fly in.

Flying In:

From Hillsboro (HIO) to Vernonia (05S)
308° Magnetic 22.3N.M.

From Troutdale (TTD) to Vernonia (05S)
279° Magnetic 39.7 N.M.

Driving In:

From the North Plains overpass on Hwy 26 go WEST on hwy 26 for 11.5 miles to Hwy 47. Turn Right (north) on Hwy 47 and travel on Hwy 47 for about 12.4 miles. Look for a small green sign saying GOLF COURSE pointing to the left. Turn Left at the sign and travel down this no-name road for 1 mile, then turn Right (north) and cross over a single lane bridge to a gravel road--Airport Way Road. Follow the road to Mike's Hangar. IF YOU GET LOST, CALL THE HANGAR 429-1562.

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Calendar & Miscellaneous

- August 8th & 9th. Vernonia jamboree fly in. Hangar dance Saturday night, Breakfast Sunday morning. Camping on the field. Parachuting on Sunday morning as well as other activities throughout both days.
- Don't forget, EAA Chapter 105 meetings are every month on the third Thursday, 7:00 PM at the PGE building, corner of Murray and Scholls Ferry Rd.
- EAA Chapter 105 Supplementary Fly-In meeting at Twin Oaks Aug 29, 1:30PM. Session on weight and balance and a chance for some folks to check up on their full fuel weight and balance.
- August 28,29,30th. Vans Homecoming Fly In.

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Flying Safety Update — Reprinted from Summer 92 Approach Magazine (Avemco)

Wire strikes are the cause of roughly one in every 20 general aviation accidents. Worse, about one out of five wire strike accidents results in fatalities.

Most wire strike accidents occur in the general vicinity of an airport familiar to the pilot. Wires can be doubly hazardous at dusk or at night near an airport unfamiliar to the pilot.

During daylight hours, a pilot would have to be within 150 feet of the typical size powerline to see it. Needless to say, at night the same wires would be impossible to see.

At night, runway illusions (e.g., a runway sloping uphill from the approach end) can cause a pilot to fly a dangerously low approach when the visual clues from the runway lights make the approach seem normal. As a word of advice, think twice, especially in mountainous terrain, before making a night landing at an unfamiliar airport that does not have a VASI or a PAPI, but does have the notation of wires in the Airport/Facility Directory.

The pilot who loads an airplane over its gross take-off weight and tries to climb out of a high-density altitude airport is a very good candidate for flying into wires off the end of the runway. Takeoffs from soft and wet sod airstrips over powerlines can also be extremely hazardous.

Failure to execute a go-around in time can also result in a wire strike. If a pilot becomes confused or momentarily flustered during a balked landing and go-around, the pilot may permit the plane to drift into the powerlines.

Likewise, if the pilot attempts a go-around with full flaps and the carburetor heat still on, or dumps all the flaps suddenly, there is the increased chance that the pilot will come in contact with something—maybe wires—at the end of the runway.

While not accounting for the greatest number of wire strike accidents, intentional low flying is the greatest killer of pilots and passengers who mix it up with wires. Nearly four out of 10 wire strike accidents involving low-altitude flying result in fatalities.

Most of these involve pilots out sightseeing over lakes and rivers, flying low over houses or objects of interest on the ground, or "buzzing" objects on the ground. Flying low over a lake or river "for the thrill of it" is asking for disaster.

And yet, that is exactly what many pilots apparently do. An unfortunate number of them fly low enough to snag lines or wires just 50 to 75 feet above the surface.

Interestingly, studies have shown that low flights over water are often conducted by persons possessing student or private licenses, or none at all. Seasoned pilots, it seems, are less tempted to fly low over water and hit wires.

On the other hand, pilots involved in wire strikes associated with buzzing are more likely to be experienced pilots. In fact, a majority of pilots hitting wires in a buzz job have a commercial license or better and an average of more than 3,800 hours of experience.

These findings would indicate that the pilot who flies low over a river may not perceive the danger, while the pilot who flies into wires during a buzz job is often one who knows the dangers, but believes himself capable of avoiding it.

Unwarranted low flying is also the probable cause of those wire strike accidents that occur while in cruise over land. In most of those saturations, the ill-fated aircraft were flown at altitudes of less than 200 feet above the ground.

Pilots flying low between hilltops, through river valleys, down canyons, through mountain passes, or in other areas where there is high terrain on either side of the route of flight must always be very careful. Frequently, power companies suspend power lines across valleys, canyons, and passes from towers on the high ground on either side.

Depending upon weather conditions, the towers could be obscured, which could make it virtually impossible for pilots to see the suspended cables until it is too late to avoid them. In some cases, such as with a mountain pass, pilots may not have the airspace necessary to turn to avoid the low-hung cables or the power to overfly them.

A relatively large number of wire strikes also occur following engine failure. During a forced landing, pilots occasionally fly into unseen lines, usually of the telephone or low voltage electric wire variety. In general, these accidents are fatal less frequently than most other wire strike accidents.

Pilots can best avoid wire strike accidents by being alert to the conditions mentioned, which account for most wire strike accidents. This means flying over rivers and lakes at safe altitudes and being especially alert to wire hazards during all airport operations.

Wires are generally not marked as hazards on sectional charts. Rather, those transmission lines that are depicted are there more as an aid to navigations than as a hazard alert. Obstructions lower than 200 feet above ground level are generally not shown on sectional charts.

If any pilot is aware of a wire that is an obstruction at an airport, that pilot should notify the local flight standards district office. It may be possible for the wire to be removed, buried or marked.

At the least, certain operating restrictions may be imposed, such as altering the standard traffic pattern or displacing the thresholds. It may also be possible for the wires to be identified as a hazard in the Airport/Facility Directory.

Another remedy, at least for daylight hours, is to mark the wires with bright orange balls placed along the uppermost wire to alert pilots to the presence of the wires.

And finally, it is clear that a discussion of wire strikes should be a part of every pilot training syllabus. Wire strikes are preventable for the most part, and for that reason, are more tragic when they occur. Almost all wire strike "gotchas" can be avoided, if pilots are aware of the dangers and operated their aircraft sensibly.

I included this article because a partner of a friend of mine in Idaho added himself and his girlfriend to the

statistics when they struck power lines at night over a dam. Both were killed, and the C—150 with one of the bodies sank in the reservoir and hasn't yet been recovered. The passenger as well as a few seat cushions and other debris were found on the water. Be careful out there. Steve

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Tips & Tricks

This space available - - send contributions please!

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Subscription Notice

Yeah, it's that time of year folks. I will do the newsletter for another year unless someone wants to step in and take over. I would be MORE than happy to pass it off. (If you are interested, let me know and we will work something out!) Meanwhile, it is time to chip in again for most folks. On the newsletter address sticker you will find a date that indicates the month you are paid up to. I would like it if folks would figure out how much they owe and send me the dough to pay up until next August. The rate will be \$8.00/year or

0.66/month if you owe for less than a full year. I would like to get everyone due at the same time, it makes the bookkeeping a lot easier. So go ahead and send money even if you don't owe for the whole year. Of course if you want to send more money to help me buy my finishing kit, personal donations will be gladly accepted!!

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Trading Post

- Landing lights for RV4/6/6A. Retrofittable, lightweight, clean, simple installation (under 6 hours). One or 2 lamp per wing versions. 55 Watt Halogen single unit \$69.95, double \$109.95 (add \$7 per lamp for 100 watt). Complete kit includes plexiglass lense, location templates, all mounting hardware (no switches/ wire), detailed instructions Don Wentz, 50641 Firridge Ave., Scappoose, OR 97056 503-543-2298 for information/price list and photos. \$10 discount for Builders Group members.
- KX170B Radio. Bonanza owner wants to upgrade. Has 2, one may be sold. Call Bob at 648-3697.

OSHKOSH Reports anyone???

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