

CESSNA 152

accident during cruise

Springfield, Missouri

Weather: VMC, dusk

Pilot certificates: private

Instrument-rated: no

Total time: 125 hours

The pilot reported the pleasure flight departed Maple Lake, Minnesota, bound for Little Rock, Arkansas, with en route fuel stops planned. He stated they encountered turbulence and strong, gusty headwinds during the first two legs of the trip, but the conditions had moderated for the third leg. They departed on the third leg about 1740, intending to refuel at Springfield, Missouri (SGF). The pilot reported when the SGF approach controller advised they were 32 miles from the airport, he became concerned about fuel supply. He stated when they were within a few miles of the airport, he noticed the right fuel tank quantity gauge indicated empty, while the left fuel tank quantity gauge showed approximately 1/8 of a tank. He reported a few seconds later the engine sputtered once, then quit completely. The airplane impacted trees, and fell to the ground. The pilot stated there was no mechanical malfunction, the power loss was due to fuel exhaustion. Investigation revealed there was no evidence of usable fuel in the airplane.

Aircraft damage: substantial

Injuries: pilot—minor/none; passenger—minor/none

Probable cause: The pilot's failure to refuel prior to fuel exhaustion. The lack of suitable terrain available for the forced landing is a related factor.