

Pilot escapes emergency landing unhurt

by UPI

DETROIT -- A pilot landed a six-seat aircraft at a Detroit airport without injury despite a landing gear malfunction, a federal investigator says.

Federal Aviation Administration investigator Eric Nodland said the Detroit-area pilot, whose name wasn't released, reported the right rear wheel of the Piper 32 Lance wouldn't come down Wednesday afternoon. So he circled Detroit's Coleman A. Young International Airport for an hour to burn off fuel before putting the plane down on the 5,090-foot runway and then veering off into the grass, the Detroit Free Press reported Thursday.

William Fox, who owns the airplane, confirmed the incident was caused by malfunctioning landing gear. Fox also said the Air Eagle pilot, who was alone in the aircraft after having dropped off another pilot in Ohio earlier, put his more than 3,000 hours of flying experience to good use.

"He did a marvelous job," Fox told the Free Press. "Any landing you walk away from is a good landing. It's an old saying and it's a good saying."

Jim Williamson, a pilot who witnessed the incident, said the unidentified pilot appeared to have limited the damage to the plane.

"I think he probably did minimal damage to the airplane considering the conditions he was under," Williamson said.

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