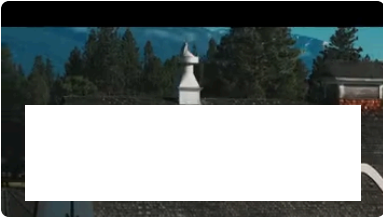




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(04:59)

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2 student pilots killed in midair collision in Canada: "There was a pillar of black smoke"

Updated on: July 9, 2025 / 6:13 AM EDT / CBS/AP

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Two student pilots died on Tuesday morning when their single-engine planes crashed in midair south of Steinbach, in the Canadian province of Manitoba.

Adam Penner, president of Harv's Air pilot training school, said the two were practicing takeoffs and landings in small Cessna planes. He said they appeared to have tried to land at the same time and collided a few hundred yards away from the small runway.

He said the planes are equipped with radios, but it appears the two pilots didn't see each other.

Police are releasing few details but said the pilots were pronounced dead at the scene and that there were no passengers. Royal Canadian Mounted Police could not confirm the identities of the victims during an afternoon news conference.

"I don't have that information," said Manitoba RCMP Cpl. Melanie Roussel. "There's really limited information right now."

However, a family member identified one of the pilots as 20-year-old Savanna May Royes in a statement to CBC News, calling her "the essence of pure joy."

"Savanna's faith and laughter will forever touch everyone who was lucky enough to have known her, during her short life," the family said in the statement.

Penner said the flight school, which his parents started in the early 1970s, has students from Canada and around the world training for professional and recreational purposes. The school trains about 400 student pilots a year.

"For more than 51 years, we have been offering the very best flight training in the safest, most enjoyable way possible," the school says on its [website](#).

Nathaniel Plett, who lives near the flight school, told CBC News that he and his wife heard a loud bang on Tuesday morning.

"I said to my wife, 'That's a plane crash,'" Plett told CBC News. "There was a pillar of black smoke coming up, and a little later [we] heard another bang, and there was an even bigger pop of black smoke."

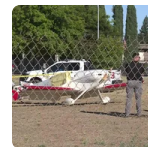
The Transportation Safety Board of Canada has been notified.

Steinbach is about 42 miles south of Winnipeg, the provincial capital.

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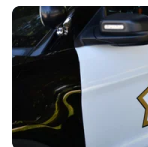
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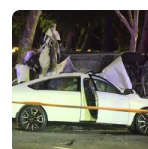
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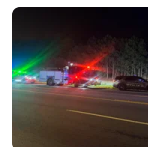
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