



Tim Snopek/Special to The Freeman

A transport plane carrying 53 dogs from the southern U.S. to Wisconsin made a crash landing on the Western Lakes Golf Course Tuesday morning.

Plane with 53 dogs and 3 people crash-lands on local golf course

Aircraft makes emergency landing at Western Lakes Golf Club, no life-threatening injuries

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CITY OF PEWAUKEE — On Tuesday morning at 9:04 a.m., Lake Country Fire & Rescue and the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department responded to Western Lakes Golf Club, W287-N1963 Oakton Road, after an aircraft carrying 53 dogs and three people made a crash landing on the course.

The aircraft belly landed on the fifth hole of the course and went through multiple trees before coming to a stop several hundred feet after where they originally tried to land the plane. The wings of the plane came off as a result, according to Matthew Haerter, assistant chief with Lake Country Fire & Rescue.

"This was a relatively catastrophic landing," said Haerter.

The three adults were transported to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, and out of the 53 dogs on the plane, only some received minor injuries.

The transport plane was bringing at-risk, adoptable animals from Southern shelters to the Humane Animal Welfare Society (HAWS) of Waukesha County and several partnering shelters. HAWS regularly welcomes the life-saving transports.

"We have a number of dogs that are now going back to HAWS to be triaged, and our medical team was on the ground here and is on the ground at the shelter right now to help these dogs," said Maggie Tate-Techtman, director of organizational development at HAWS. "These dogs will be available for adoption in the coming days as soon as they are ready for that."

Due to the removal of the planes' wings, a significant fuel spill occurred during the crash. Officials estimate approximately 300 gallons of jet fuel went into the ground and a marsh with associated aircraft parts as well.

The majority of the fuel was carried in the wings. That fuel dispersed into the atmosphere during the crash landing and was not a significant issue once it came to rest, according to Haerter.

"That became a very good thing for the people and the canines that were on board because it separated the hazard from the aircraft," said Haerter.

The vast majority of the fuel that



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Several of the dogs that were aboard the plane that crashed at Western Lake Golf Course on Tuesday morning were slated to go to HAWS of Waukesha.



Faith Rae/Freeman Staff

One of the dogs rescued from the plane crash at Western Lakes Golf Course on Tuesday morning is held by a Wisconsin State Trooper.

came out of the aircraft evaporated, and for the time being, the sheriff's department and LCFR are working to secure and isolate the area.

The Department of Natural Resources is on the site to mitigate the issue and fire personnel are standing by to assure that there is not reignition of any issues with the aircraft.

The incident remains under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board and Federal Aviation Administration.

Observations on the scene

Officers and fire personnel traveled the course in golf carts and squad cars to collect the dogs involved in the crash. Partnering

shelters of HAWS, including the Elmbrook Humane Society, Jefferson County Humane Society, Washington County Humane Society and the Sheboygan County Humane Society, all arrived at the golf course to assist.

According to Washington County Humane Society Lead Animal Care Technician Jennifer Fischer, all of the shelters were waiting at the Waukesha County Airport for the transport to arrive when they got the news that the plane had landed elsewhere.

Fischer and other team members worked at putting dogs into their vans. Washington County's van has built-in caging, which came in handy for the dogs who lost their crates during the crash.

"One of the dogs that was in his crate just has a little bleeding from his toe, but nothing major at this point," said Fischer, pointing to the worn-down crate.

According to Tate-Techtman, they have a behavior department that works with the dogs and will assist those who need extra care from the crash. The team was already prepared for transitioning the dogs as they were coming to a new home. From here on out, there will be a lot of comforting and caring for them.

"Between our behavioral care as well as our medical care, I'm very confident we can make all of them comfortable," said Tate-Techtman.

Haerter highlighted the help the

departments received from personnel at Western Lakes Golf Club. Course employees of the course were on the scene and were able to direct fire and police personnel directly to the crash landing site.

"The pilot and his co-pilot did an amazing job getting this aircraft on the ground the way they did," said Haerter. "I think all of us collectively have a soft spot in our heart especially for dogs that have been rescued, and now to think that they have to go through this before they find their forever home. This could have turned out so much worse, and their skill in addition to the amazing response at Western Lakes here was incredible."

Two horses, three dogs die in Nashotah stable fire

NASHOTAH — Two horses and three dogs died in a stable fire on Tuesday morning.

Lake Country Fire & Rescue responded to 345 Nashotah Road, Nashotah at 3:14 a.m. for the report of the stable fire, according to the fire department. Western Lakes Fire District began

extinguishing the fire with LCFR and multiple responding partners arriving shortly thereafter. There are no fire hydrants in this area causing water tenders to be needed for the extinguishment operation, which continued for just under two hours. A total of 30 firefighters operated at the inci-

dent. The fire was confined to the stable, which was a total loss. No other property was affected. No injuries to property owners or firefighters.

Two horses and three dogs were inside the stable at the time and died in the fire.

The fire is not suspicious and remains under investigation. LCFR will monitor the aftermath of the fire today and there is no need to call 911 if smoke is seen. LCFR thanks Western Lakes, Merton Fire, Hartland Fire, Delafield Police, Oconomowoc Police, Waukesha Sheriff, and

Waukesha County Communications Center for their assistance. LCFR reminds residents to exercise extreme caution as the heating season begins by assuring any heating appliance is at least three feet away from all combustibles and using electrical cords rated for the appliance.