



P1140 · Ford

Water In Fuel Condition

P1140 on Ford vehicles indicates the water-in-fuel sensor circuit has detected the presence of water in the diesel fuel system, typically in the fuel filter housing. The powertrain control module (PCM) monitors the sensor and sets this code when it sees a condition consistent with water contamination, which can damage the high-pressure fuel pump and injectors if ignored.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Ford specific	Medium	Intermediate	Fuel and air metering

Symptoms you may notice

- Illuminated water-in-fuel warning light on the dashboard
- Rough running or misfire under acceleration
- Loss of power or reduced engine performance
- Hard starting or stalling, especially when cold
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light if water is minimal
- Excessive white smoke from the exhaust

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Water contamination in the fuel tank or fuel filter housing
- 2 Faulty water-in-fuel sensor or corroded sensor connector
- 3 Damaged wiring between the sensor and the PCM
- 4 Water intrusion through a faulty fuel cap or filler neck seal
- 5 Failed fuel filter housing allowing water to pool at the sensor
- 6 Contaminated fuel from a filling station with poor tank maintenance

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Drain the water from the fuel filter housing using the drain valve and inspect for debris
- 2 Check the water-in-fuel sensor connector for corrosion or loose pins and clean or repair as needed
- 3 Test the sensor circuit with a multimeter for continuity and correct voltage signals
- 4 Replace the fuel filter and refill with fresh diesel fuel, then clear the code and retest
- 5 If water persists, drain and flush the fuel tank and inspect for rust or contamination
- 6 Replace the water-in-fuel sensor if it fails electrical testing
- 7 Verify repair by driving the vehicle and confirming the code does not return



Water In Fuel Sensor Misdiagnosis Traps

- A P1140 code can be set by a faulty sensor even when no actual water is present, so always test the sensor circuit before draining the tank.
- Water often enters through a degraded fuel cap seal or filler neck, which many technicians overlook when only the filter is serviced.
- The water-in-fuel sensor on Ford diesels is integrated into the fuel filter housing on many models, so a leaking housing can mimic a sensor failure.
- After draining water, the code may not clear immediately because the PCM requires several drive cycles with a dry sensor to reset the monitor.
- Using biodiesel blends can attract moisture and increase water separation, leading to repeated P1140 codes if fuel quality is not addressed.

Can I keep driving with P1140?

You can drive a short distance to a service location if the engine runs smoothly, but avoid heavy acceleration or long trips. Water in the fuel system can cause expensive damage to the high-pressure fuel pump and injectors, so have it addressed promptly.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scanner
- Multimeter
- Fuel filter wrench
- Drain pan
- Hand tools for connector and sensor access

Reading P1140

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
1	Manufacturer-specific code (Ford): its meaning depends on the make.
1	Fuel and air metering.
40	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P1093 Tumble Generator Valve #2 LH Malfunction Stuck Close · **P1093** Pre-Catalyst Fuel Trim Too Rich Bank 2
 · **P0087** Fuel Rail/System Pressure - Too Low · **P0088** Fuel Rail/System Pressure - Too High · **P0093** Fuel System Leak Detected - Large Leak · **P2269** Water in Fuel Condition



See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a CVT Works: Belt and Pulley Transmission](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/ford-p1140/>

