

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0144

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0144

O2 Sensor Circuit High Voltage (Bank 1 Sensor 3)

P0144 means the engine computer detected a persistently high voltage on the downstream oxygen sensor circuit for Bank 1 Sensor 3, which is the post-catalytic converter sensor on that bank. A high voltage signal tells the computer the sensor is reporting a rich exhaust condition or that the signal wire is shorted to voltage, so the computer flags the circuit as out of range.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Intermediate	Fuel and air metering

Symptoms you may notice

- Illuminated check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- A slight decrease in fuel economy as the computer adjusts fuel trim based on a false rich signal
- Rough idle or hesitation if the false rich reading skews the air-fuel mixture
- Failed emissions test due to the oxygen sensor monitor not completing or reporting a fault
- In rare cases, black smoke or a strong fuel smell from the tailpipe if the engine runs overly rich

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Short to voltage on the signal wire between the sensor and the computer
- 2 Contaminated or failed oxygen sensor internally shorted to its heater circuit
- 3 Chafed or damaged wiring harness rubbing against a hot or sharp component
- 4 Corroded or loose connector pins at the sensor or computer
- 5 Failed engine computer driver circuit for the sensor signal
- 6 Exhaust leak upstream of the sensor drawing in air and confusing the reading
- 7 Rich-running engine condition from a leaking injector or high fuel pressure that the sensor correctly reports



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules and record freeze-frame data to confirm the code and check for related oxygen sensor or fuel trim codes
- 2 Inspect the sensor wiring and connector for chafing, corrosion, or contact with the exhaust; repair as needed
- 3 Measure the sensor signal voltage with a digital multimeter and compare it to the manufacturer's specification
- 4 Check the sensor heater circuit resistance and supply voltage to rule out an internal sensor short
- 5 Perform a propane enrichment test or use a scan tool to watch the sensor voltage respond to a known rich condition
- 6 If the signal wire shows battery voltage with the sensor disconnected, trace the harness for a short to voltage and repair it
- 7 Replace the oxygen sensor only after confirming the circuit and fuel trims are otherwise normal, then clear codes and verify the monitor runs

Why a high voltage reading is not always the sensor

- A short to voltage on the signal wire is the most common cause of P0144, and it often happens where the harness passes near the starter or alternator wiring.
- Technicians frequently replace the downstream sensor only to find the code returns because the real fault is a chafed wire hidden behind the engine block.
- A genuinely rich exhaust mixture from a leaking injector can drive the downstream sensor voltage high and set P0144 even though the sensor is working correctly.
- On some vehicles, a failing upstream sensor can cause the computer to overcorrect fuel delivery and push the downstream sensor into a high-voltage range.
- The downstream sensor on Bank 1 Sensor 3 is often located after a secondary catalytic converter on V6 and V8 engines, so exhaust leaks at the converter flange can mimic a sensor fault.

Can I keep driving with P0144?

You can usually drive the vehicle short distances to a repair shop, but avoid heavy acceleration or towing because a false rich signal can cause the engine to run leaner than intended and overheat the catalytic converter. If the check engine light starts flashing or you notice rough running, stop driving and have it towed.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and freeze-frame capability
- Digital multimeter with back-probing pins
- Wiring diagram for the oxygen sensor circuit
- Jack and jack stands or ramps for access to the sensor
- Oxygen sensor socket and hand tools



Reading P0144

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 1** Fuel and air metering.
- 44** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0131 O2 Sensor Circuit Low Voltage (Bank 1 Sensor 1) · **P0132** O2 Sensor Circuit High Voltage (Bank 1 Sensor 1) · **P0133** O2 Sensor Circuit Slow Response (Bank 1 Sensor 1) · **P0141** O2 Sensor Heater Circuit Malfunction (Bank 1 Sensor 2) · **P0172** System Too Rich (Bank 1)

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How the PCV System Works: Crankcase Ventilation](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0144/>

