

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P018E

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P018E

Fuel Pressure Sensor B Circuit Intermittent/Erratic

P018E means the engine computer has detected an intermittent or erratic signal from the fuel pressure sensor B circuit, which is usually the sensor on the high-pressure side of a gasoline direct-injection system. The computer expects a steady, plausible voltage from this sensor, and it has seen the signal jump, drop out, or behave unpredictably enough to set the code.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

Generic (all makes)

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Fuel and air metering

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Intermittent engine stumble or hesitation under acceleration
- Rough idle or a momentary loss of power that comes and goes
- Hard starting or extended cranking, especially when the engine is cold
- Reduced fuel economy or a faint fuel odor in some cases
- A stored pending code that appears and clears on its own

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 A failing fuel pressure sensor B that produces an erratic signal when hot or under vibration
- 2 Wiring damage such as chafed insulation, a broken wire, or a loose pin in the sensor connector
- 3 Corrosion or water intrusion at the sensor connector or in the harness
- 4 A poor ground connection shared by the sensor circuit
- 5 A failing high-pressure fuel pump that causes pressure pulsations the sensor reports as erratic
- 6 A faulty engine control module (ECM) driver or internal circuit, though this is less common
- 7 Aftermarket electrical accessories or a recent repair that disturbed the sensor wiring



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules and record freeze-frame data to see when the code sets and what the sensor voltage was doing at that moment
- 2 Inspect the fuel pressure sensor B connector and harness for corrosion, loose pins, chafing, or signs of water intrusion
- 3 Back-probe the sensor signal, reference voltage, and ground wires and wiggle the harness while watching a multimeter or scan tool to catch an intermittent fault
- 4 Compare the sensor B reading with a mechanical fuel pressure gauge or a known-good sensor to confirm whether the sensor or the actual pressure is erratic
- 5 Check the high-pressure fuel pump for consistent output and inspect the fuel system for restrictions or air intrusion
- 6 Repair or replace the faulty wiring, connector, or sensor as indicated by the tests, then clear the code and verify the repair with a road test
- 7 If the fault persists after all circuit and component checks, test the ECM circuit or consult a factory service procedure for that vehicle

Why an intermittent fuel pressure code misleads

- A loose or corroded ground can make the sensor signal erratic without ever setting a hard fault, so technicians who only check the sensor itself often miss the real cause.
- The code can be set by a momentary voltage spike from a failing high-pressure fuel pump rather than by the sensor, so replacing the sensor first is a common misdiagnosis.
- Some vehicles store P018E only when the erratic signal occurs during a specific driving condition, such as a cold start or a hard acceleration, so a simple idle test may not reproduce it.
- Aftermarket electrical accessories or a recent repair that disturbed the sensor harness can create an intermittent fault that looks exactly like a failing sensor.
- A weak battery or charging system can cause erratic sensor readings on some vehicles, so checking system voltage is a worthwhile first step before condemning parts.

Can I keep driving with P018E?

You can usually drive the vehicle with this code, but avoid hard acceleration and towing until the fault is diagnosed, because an erratic fuel pressure signal can cause a stumble or stall. If the engine begins to run rough, lose power, or stall repeatedly, stop driving and have it inspected promptly.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and freeze-frame capability
- Digital multimeter with back-probe pins
- Fuel pressure test gauge
- Wiring diagram for the fuel pressure sensor circuit
- Basic hand tools for connector and harness inspection

Reading P018E

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
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- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
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- 1** Fuel and air metering.
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- 8E** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0087 Fuel Rail/System Pressure - Too Low · **P0088** Fuel Rail/System Pressure - Too High · **P018B** Fuel Pressure Sensor B Circuit Range/Performance · **P018C** Fuel Pressure Sensor B Circuit Low · **P018D** Fuel Pressure Sensor B Circuit High

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Six-Speed Manual Gearbox Works](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p018e/>

