

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P026C

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P026C

Fuel Injection Quantity A Lower Than Expected

P026C is a generic powertrain code indicating that the engine control module has detected a fuel injection quantity for a specific cylinder that is lower than the commanded or expected amount. The computer monitors injector performance through crankshaft speed fluctuations or fuel trim corrections and sets this code when the delivered fuel volume falls short of the target.

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

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Rough idle or engine misfire, especially when cold
- Reduced engine power or sluggish acceleration
- Increased fuel consumption as the computer attempts to compensate
- Occasional engine stumble or hesitation during acceleration
- Hard starting or extended cranking time

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Clogged or restricted fuel injector on the affected cylinder
- 2 Weak or failing fuel pump delivering insufficient pressure
- 3 Clogged fuel filter restricting flow to the injectors
- 4 Faulty fuel pressure regulator causing low rail pressure
- 5 Electrical issue with the injector circuit, such as damaged wiring or corroded connector
- 6 Internal injector mechanical failure or wear
- 7 Contaminated fuel or fuel system deposits affecting injector spray pattern



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Perform a visual inspection of the fuel injector connectors and wiring for damage or corrosion
- 2 Check fuel pressure with a gauge and compare to manufacturer specifications
- 3 Test the injector resistance and compare to the specified value
- 4 Use a noid light to verify injector pulse signal from the computer
- 5 Run a fuel injector balance test to compare flow rates across cylinders
- 6 Clean or replace the faulty fuel injector as needed
- 7 Replace the fuel filter and verify fuel pump operation if pressure is low

Don't overlook fuel pressure and wiring

- A clogged fuel filter often causes low fuel quantity across multiple cylinders, but P026C may set for only one cylinder if the restriction is mild and the computer detects the greatest deviation on that cylinder.
- Injector balance tests can reveal a weak injector even when resistance checks pass, because electrical integrity does not guarantee proper fuel flow.
- Corroded injector connectors or chafed wiring can cause intermittent low fuel delivery that may not trigger a misfire code, leading to a misdiagnosis of a mechanical injector fault.
- Low fuel pressure from a failing pump can mimic a bad injector, so always verify rail pressure before condemning any injector.
- This code can be set by a fuel pressure regulator that leaks internally, reducing pressure to the rail without external leaks.

Can I keep driving with P026C?

Driving with P026C is generally safe for short distances, but avoid heavy acceleration or towing until the fault is repaired, as prolonged driving with a lean condition can damage the catalytic converter and cause misfires.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scanner
- Fuel pressure gauge
- Digital multimeter
- Noid light
- Injector balance tester
- Basic hand tools



Reading P026C

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 2** Fuel and air metering (injector circuits).
- 6C** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0171 System Too Lean (Bank 1) · **P0261** Cylinder 1 Injector Circuit Low · **P0264** Cylinder 2 Injector Circuit Low · **P0267** Cylinder 3 Injector Circuit Low · **P0300** Random/Multiple Cylinder Misfire Detected

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [Excavator Simulator: Hydraulics You Can Operate](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p026c/>

