

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P059E

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P059E

Active Grille Air Shutter A Position Sensor Circuit Intermittent

P059E indicates that the powertrain control module has detected an intermittent fault in the position sensor circuit for active grille air shutter 'A', which is the sensor that reports the shutter's actual opening angle. The circuit works by sending a variable voltage back to the module, and an intermittent signal means the module sees the shutter position jump, drop out, or fail to update reliably even though the shutter may still be moving.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Low	Intermediate	Vehicle speed, idle control and auxiliary inputs

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms.
- A grille shutter that appears stuck open or closed when inspected visually.
- Slight decrease in fuel economy because the shutter no longer closes at highway speed to reduce aerodynamic drag.
- A message on the driver information display stating that the active grille shutter is unavailable or has a fault.
- Intermittent operation of the shutter during a key cycle, where it may sweep normally on one start and not move on the next.
- Possible slight increase in engine warm-up time in cold weather if the shutter remains open when it should close.

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 A chafed, cracked, or corroded wire in the shutter position sensor circuit, especially near the shutter assembly where it flexes.
- 2 A loose or contaminated electrical connector at the shutter actuator or sensor, allowing the signal to drop out intermittently.
- 3 An internal fault in the active grille shutter actuator assembly that causes the position sensor signal to become erratic.
- 4 Debris, ice, or impact damage preventing the shutter vanes from moving freely, which makes the sensor signal appear intermittent.
- 5 A failing position sensor inside the shutter assembly that produces an unstable voltage output.
- 6 Water intrusion into the shutter connector or actuator housing, leading to intermittent shorting or high resistance.
- 7 A poor ground connection shared by the shutter circuit, causing reference voltage instability.



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Inspect the active grille shutter assembly for physical damage, debris, ice buildup, or obstructions that restrict vane movement.
- 2 Disconnect the shutter electrical connector and check for corrosion, water intrusion, bent pins, or loose terminals, then clean and reseal it.
- 3 Perform a wiggle test on the shutter harness while monitoring position sensor data to reveal intermittent wiring faults.
- 4 Measure the position sensor reference voltage and signal voltage with a multimeter, comparing readings to the manufacturer's specification.
- 5 Command the shutter through its full range with a scan tool and watch for erratic or missing position feedback during the sweep.
- 6 Check the shutter circuit ground for excessive resistance and repair any corroded or loose ground point.
- 7 Replace the active grille shutter actuator assembly if wiring and connectors are proven good but the intermittent sensor signal persists.

Intermittent Shutter Faults Often Misread

- A grille shutter that is physically jammed by road debris or winter ice can set an intermittent position sensor code because the module sees the shutter fail to reach its commanded position, not because the sensor itself has failed.
- Technicians who replace the shutter assembly without first performing a wiggle test on the harness frequently find the code returns, since a chafed wire near the shutter pivot is a common root cause that a new actuator will not fix.
- This code does not always mean the shutter motor is bad; a weak or corroded ground shared with other front-end components can produce an intermittent position signal that mimics a sensor failure.
- Some vehicles perform an active grille shutter self-test at every key-on, so an intermittent fault may only appear during that sweep and leave no stored freeze-frame data to review.
- Aftermarket front bumper covers, grille inserts, or accident repairs that disturb the shutter mounting can introduce alignment problems that set this code intermittently without any electrical fault at all.

Can I keep driving with P059E?

It is safe to continue driving with P059E because the fault affects aerodynamic and warm-up efficiency rather than engine safety, but avoid ignoring a shutter that is stuck closed in hot weather since that can reduce cooling airflow. Have the circuit inspected soon if the warning light is accompanied by an overheat message or if the shutter visibly fails to open.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with bidirectional control and live data capability
- Digital multimeter with back-probing pins
- Trim removal tools for accessing the shutter assembly
- Flashlight or inspection mirror for checking the shutter and harness
- Manufacturer service information for circuit voltage specifications

Reading P059E

- 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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- 5** Vehicle speed, idle control and auxiliary inputs.
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- 9E** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P059C Active Grille Air Shutter A Position Sensor Circuit High · **P059D** Active Grille Air Shutter A Position Sensor Circuit Low · **P059F** Active Grille Air Shutter A Performance/Stuck Off · **P05A0** Active Grille Air Shutter A Stuck On · **P05A1** Active Grille Air Shutter A Position Sensor Minimum/Maximum

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How an Automatic Transmission Works, Gear by Gear](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p059e/>

