EVAPORATIVE EMISSION CONTROL SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

EVAP System Operation

The evaporative emission (EVAP) control system limits fuel vapors from escaping into the atmosphere. Fuel tank vapors are allowed to move from the fuel tank, due to pressure in the tank, through the vapor pipe, into the EVAP canister. Carbon in the canister absorbs and stores the fuel vapors. Excess pressure is vented through the vent line and EVAP vent solenoid valve to the atmosphere. The EVAP canister stores the fuel vapors until the engine is able to use them. At an appropriate time, the control module will command the EVAP purge solenoid valve ON, allowing engine vacuum to be applied to the EVAP canister. With the EVAP vent solenoid valve OFF, fresh air is drawn through the vent solenoid valve and the vent line to the EVAP canister. Fresh air is drawn through the canister, pulling fuel vapors from the carbon. The air/fuel vapor mixture continues through the EVAP purge pipe and EVAP purge solenoid valve into the intake manifold to be consumed during normal combustion. The control module uses several tests to determine if the EVAP system is leaking.

Large Leak Test

This tests for large leaks and restrictions to the purge path in the evaporative emission (EVAP) system. When the enabling criteria has been met, the control module commands the EVAP vent solenoid valve ON and the EVAP purge solenoid valve ON, allowing vacuum into the EVAP system. The control module monitors the fuel tank pressure (FTP) sensor voltage to verify that the system is able to reach a predetermined level of vacuum within a set amount of time.

Small Leak Test

The engine off natural vacuum (EONV) diagnostic is the small-leak detection diagnostic for the evaporative emission (EVAP) system. While previous leak detection methods were performed with the engine running, the EONV diagnostic monitors the EVAP system pressure or vacuum with the ignition OFF. Because of this, it may be normal for the control module to remain active for up to 40 minutes after the ignition is turned OFF. This is important to remember when performing a parasitic draw test on vehicles equipped with EONV.

The EONV utilizes the temperature changes in the fuel tank immediately following

a drive cycle to use the naturally occurring vacuum or pressure in the fuel tank. When the vehicle is driven, the temperature rises in the tank. After the vehicle is parked, the temperature in the tank continues to rise for a period of time, then starts to drop. The EONV diagnostic relies on this temperature change and the corresponding pressure change in a sealed system, to determine if an EVAP system leak is present.

The EONV diagnostic is designed to detect leaks as small as 0.51 mm (0.020 in). The diagnostic can determine if a small leak is present based on vacuum or pressure readings in the EVAP system. When the system is sealed, a finite amount of pressure or vacuum will be observed. When a 0.51 mm (0.020 in) leak is present, often little or no pressure or vacuum is observed. If the test reports a failing value, DTC P0442 will set.

Canister Vent Restriction Test

If the evaporative emission (EVAP) vent system is restricted, fuel vapors will not be properly purged from the EVAP canister. The control module tests this by commanding the EVAP purge solenoid valve ON, commanding the EVAP vent solenoid valve OFF, and monitoring the fuel tank pressure (FTP) sensor for an increase in vacuum. If the vacuum increases more than a calibrated value, DTC P0446 will set.

Purge Solenoid Valve Leak Test

If the evaporative emission (EVAP) purge solenoid valve does not seal properly fuel vapors could enter the engine at an undesired time, causing driveability concerns. The control module tests for this by commanding the EVAP purge solenoid valve OFF and the vent solenoid valve ON, sealing the system, and monitors the fuel tank pressure (FTP) for an increase in vacuum. If the control module detects that the EVAP system vacuum increases above a calibrated value, DTC P0496 will set.

Check Gas Cap Message

The control module sends a class 2 message to the driver information center (DIC) illuminating the Check Gas Cap message when a malfunction in the evaporative emission (EVAP) system and a large leak test fails.

EVAP System Components

The evaporative emission (EVAP) system consists of the following components:

EVAP Canister

The canister is filled with carbon pellets used to absorb and store fuel vapors. Fuel vapor is stored in the canister until the control module determines that the vapor can be consumed in the normal combustion process.

EVAP Purge Solenoid Valve

The EVAP purge solenoid valve controls the flow of vapors from the EVAP system to the intake manifold. The purge solenoid valve opens when commanded ON by the control module. This normally closed valve is pulse width modulated (PWM) by the control module to precisely control the flow of fuel vapor to the engine. The valve will also be opened during some portions of the EVAP testing, allowing engine vacuum to enter the EVAP system.

EVAP Vent Solenoid Valve

The EVAP vent solenoid valve controls fresh airflow into the EVAP canister. The valve is normally open. The control module commands the valve ON, closing the valve during some EVAP tests, allowing the system to be tested for leaks.

Fuel Tank Pressure Sensor

The fuel tank pressure (FTP) sensor measures the difference between the pressure or vacuum in the fuel tank and outside air pressure. The control module provides a 5-volt reference and a ground to the FTP sensor. The FTP sensor provides a signal voltage back to the control module that can vary between 0.1-4.9 volts. A high FTP sensor voltage indicates a low fuel tank pressure or vacuum. A low FTP sensor voltage indicates a high fuel tank pressure.

