

Wheels: Al F. writes by e-mail: “My Oldsmobile Intrigue runs, just fine gas mileage as good as ever, but the service engine soon light stays lit. Had it scanned at local parts store and the report came back “secondary air injection system fault” Some probable causes stated that can cause this diagnostic trouble code include:

1. air duct system fault
2. open or short circuit condition
3. poor electrical connection

I really do not know what to do about this. Any help would be greatly appreciated.”

Halderman: This is a relatively common concern with vehicle equipped with an electric AIR pump. The term “AIR” stands for “air injection reaction” and is a pump that delivers low pressure air into the exhaust to help reduce exhaust emissions. This pump comes on only when the engine is cold and supplies additional air to help oxidize carbon monoxide (CO) into carbon dioxide, and unburned hydrocarbons (HC) into water vapor and carbon dioxide. The electric air pump is located (usually) low under the hood toward the front on the driver’s side. It gets splashed with water and this can cause corrosion problems. It may be covered by your warranty as it is an emission control device.

Wheels: *What should Al do?*

Halderman: I suggest that you take your vehicle to a dealer or shop and ask them to confirm the fault. It may or may not be covered if your vehicle is older than the warranty timeline. The part could be expensive so look at the possibility of finding one at a wrecking (recycling) yard. The replacement of the unit should be straight forward and not involve more than an hour of a technician’s time to replace. Ask that the diagnostic trouble code be erased so you will know if it happened again.

Note that this system is also called the “secondary air injection” (SAI) system so you may have to use this term to get the correct part.

