

Zama Newsletter

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No Prime Carburetors

In this issue I will discuss the causes and remedies for carburetors that are not priming.

I usually receive at least one or two emails/phone calls weekly in technical support concerning a carburetor that has stopped priming after a rebuild kit was installed or after the unit has been in storage.

The most common reason a carburetor will not prime is due to one of the check valves being stuck open. Most Zama carburetors will have check valves located in the body of the carburetor and in the primer base assembly (section directly below the primer bulb).

What causes a check valve to be stuck? The two main reasons is dirt or debris and using compressed air.

Please keep in mind that a check valve is small circular disk that is made out of rubber or in some cases a clear plastic type material. Many customers use compressed air to try and clean or dry a carburetor and this can cause a check valve to stick open. Zama does not recommend using any compressed air on any Zama carburetor.

Carburetor cleaner can be used but Zama recommends not spraying directly in any orifices. If using carburetor cleaner, Zama recommends directing the spray at an angle so the pressurized fluid does not directly hit the check valve.

My answer in technical support when a customer has a carburetor not priming is to disassemble the carburetor and soak the primer base assembly and the body of the carburetor in gasoline for one to two hours.

Why use gasoline? I recommend gasoline only because it is what the carburetor uses and you just need a fluid that will help float the check valve loose.

Once the carburetor has soaked, remove from the gasoline and let it air dry. Do not use any compressed air to dry the carburetor. Reassemble and check priming function. The soaking process may need to be repeated until the check valve is operating normally.

There is also a test you can perform on some carburetors to determine the location of the stuck open check valve. The following test I will be explaining will only work with cube type carburetors that are not simple start carburetors or have a single adjustment needle. How do you know if you have a simple start carburetor? If your carburetor has a simple start, it will have a choke shaft but no choke valve attached to the choke shaft.

Also the following test will not work on Zama rotary carburetors. If a rotary carburetor is not priming it will almost always

be in the primer base assembly.

To isolate the stuck open check valve you will need to be able to close the H and L adjustment needles.

To perform the test slowly close the L needle, please remember to count the number of turns it takes to close each needle. When the test is over you will need to open the needles prior to soaking or running the carburetor.

Once the L needle is closed, try to prime the carburetor. If the carburetor primes then the stuck open check valve is located in the idle circuit and the body of the carburetor needs to be soaked as previously mentioned.

If the carburetor does not prime, leave the L needle closed and close the H needle. Does the carburetor prime with both the H and L needles closed?

If the carburetor primes with the H needle closed then the stuck check valve will be located in H circuit and the body of the carburetor will need to be soaked.

If the carburetor does not prime with both needles closed, the stuck check valve will be located in the primer base assembly. You may try soaking the primer base assembly or you could replace the primer base assembly. Please contact your local dealer for availability on the primer base assembly.

For those customers with remote primers, the primer itself may have stuck check valves and will need to be checked.

To test your remote primer remove from unit and using a piece of fuel line attached to the short stem (inlet) on the primer bulb. Insert into gasoline and see if the primer assembly primes.

If the remote primer primes then the issue is more than likely the carburetor.

If the remote primer does not prime then the remote primer will need to be replaced. One other cause that can prevent the carburetor from priming is to have the fuel lines incorrectly connected. For future reference, a connector near the adjustment needles is usually the outlet connector and a fuel line will connect there to the short stem on your remote primer. The inlet fuel line with filter attached will connect to the other connector. The return line going back to fuel tank will connect to the long stem on the remote primer. ■

Technical Support

In this section I will address any issues or topics relevant to authentic Zama carburetors. If you have questions or are experiencing a certain issue or concern with a Zama carburetor. Feel free to email that question/concern to me at aftersales@zamacorp.com. I will do my best to answer your questions in a separate response and may also include your question in the next newsletter. In this issue I have included some of the more common questions concerning Zama carburetors

Technical Support Q & A

Q: I need technical support for a Stihl carburetor. Can you help me?

A: No, Zama is no longer allowed to answer technical support questions concerning Stihl. This service is now provided by Stihl at 1 888 326-9643 or Stihlcs@stihl.us. Zama aftersales no longer sells Stihl carburetors or kits.

Q: I am needing a new service manual. Are they still available?

A: No however I am currently updating the 2011 service manual and hope to have it released by the end of 2021. You may also find relevant information for your Zama carburetor at our website Zamacorp.com.

Q: Can I purchase a Husqvarna carburetor from Zama?

A: No, at this time Husqvarna carburetors are exclusive to their dealers. Zama does sell the rebuild kit for most Husqvarna carburetors.

Q: Do you sell a replacement for the Walbro 188-512 primer assembly?

A: Yes, Zama offers two direct replacements. Part number Z000-056-A013-B (red bulb) and Z000-056-A022-B (clear bulb). Both have a list price of \$2.00 each. A list price that is considerably lower than Walbro's list price.