

2008 Jaguar XJ VDP leaky fuel rail - dangerous

Repaired: 14 December 2011

Symptoms:

Gradual increase in raw fuel smell in the cabin over several weeks. In the beginning, it was most evident at startup, then seemed to disappear after a few minutes down the road. No fuel spots on the garage floor. In fact, no evidence of liquid in the engine compartment.

Upon first startup of the day, with the bonnet open, the odor was most evident near the front-left quarter. I learned the fuel filter is in this area. Ah ha, I thought. Eventually a strong fuel smell persisted while

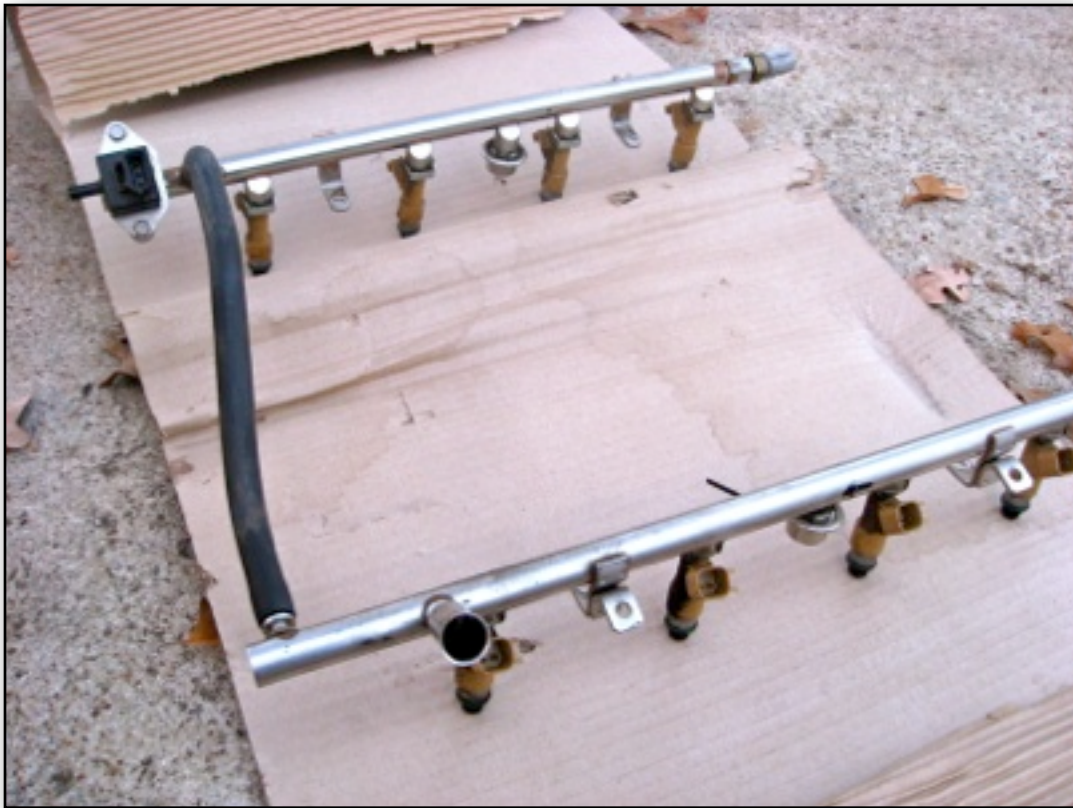
driving. Ultimately, on the way to the auto repair shop, I had to have the windows open just to vent the smell. Not good. I think I waited a bit too long to take it in for repair.



Diagnosis:

The initial shop to which I took it could not find the problem. Though a good shop, they don't specialize in Jaguars. They checked the obvious. It wasn't the fuel filter. They gave up - no charge.

I finally had time to take it to British Auto Specialists (Fort Worth, TX), where I normally get my maintenance performed. I dropped it off on my way to work; then caught a ride to work with a co-worker the rest of the way. British Auto called me later in the morning describing the problem. The fuel rail was leaking out of a particular area designed to



prevent vibration (apparently). As the story goes (I could have some of this wrong), fuel rails on earlier models would tend to vibrate, perhaps due to the high pressure? Jeff (British Auto) referred to something as the "helicopter". I guess the vibration. of earlier models? Anyway, the new fuel rail design was supposed to prevent this (I think). The fuel leak was at the little, upside-down hat between the fuel injectors.

This is a dangerous problem to have. Jeff told tales of the fuel explosions blowing the bonnet clear off. Don't ignore this for long (as if anyone would ignore a fuel smell).

Repair costs:

I am no mechanic. I'm a software guy, not a hardware guy - ha! So here is the damage:

Parts:

Fuel rail assembly: \$755

Labor: 4 hours, \$455

Total: \$1210 (ouch)



Tomcaticus