



The National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety
Central Region
Memorandum for the Record
Vapor Lock Definitions
CEN21LA251
Montrose Colorado
June 5 2021

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- A problem that mostly affects gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines. It occurs when the liquid fuel changes state from liquid to gas while still in the fuel delivery system. This disrupts the operation of the fuel pump, causing loss of feed pressure to the carburetor or fuel injection system, resulting in transient loss of power or complete stalling. Restarting the engine from this state may be difficult. The fuel can vaporize due to being heated by the engine, by the local climate, or due to a lower boiling point at high altitude.

Source: FAA Publication - FAA-H-8083-5

- A condition in which air enters the fuel system and it may be difficult, or impossible, to restart the engine. Vapor lock may occur as a result of running a fuel tank completely dry, allowing air to enter the fuel system. On fuel-injected engines, the fuel may become so hot it vaporizes in the fuel line, not allowing fuel to reach the cylinders.

Source: FAA Publication - FAA-H-8083-3A

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