

Mooney M120J, Blocked Fuel Tank Drains, ATA 2810

A mechanic stated, "This aircraft has been repeatedly repaired to correct fuel leaks. Every drain hole has been covered up, allowing water and fuel to be trapped in the outboard bays. Also, the drain valve receptacle drain holes were covered with sealant, causing water to collect up to one-half inch before it could be removed over the top of the receptacle—instead of the bottom.

"This aircraft experienced a rough running engine on takeoff, most likely (*caused*) by water ingestion. Upon opening the tanks, a large amount of water was found still in the tanks, even after a complete draining, and (*significant*) fuel still trapped in the middle bay. We have often seen this (*fuel drainage problem*).

"I request a re-evaluation of Airworthiness Directive 85-24-03. Currently this AD is a one-time directive to inspect fuel tanks for compliance with Mooney Service Bulletin M20-230. The AD should be made recurring—and mandatory to have all fuel tank repairs made in accordance with Mooney SB M20-230, not just an inspection to (*verify*) original factory compliance."

(Wow! This is a scary description for anyone about to pull back on the stick/column. Our Alerts do get diligent scrutiny from lots of interested folks, but I will specifically send a copy of your report and a draft copy of this month's Alerts issue to an engineer cohort in the Small Airplane Directorate—Ed.)

Part Total Time: (unknown)