

The 13.20 error in HP 9000—Check the DC Controller!

Most HP laser printers depend upon internal sensors alone to detect jams. The LaserJet 9000 has an additional way. Its two fuser rollers have a conductive coating which help make an electrical connection within the printer. If paper accidentally wraps around either roller, the electrical connection is interrupted, producing a 13.20 error code.

Unfortunately, early versions of the DC controller were overly sensitive to the natural variance in the conductivity of the coatings between one fuser and another. They would sometimes display the 13.20 error even when there was no paper wrapped around either roller. HP soon upgraded the DC controller to be less sensitive.

In newer printers, the false 13.20 error can be caused by a defective fuser or bad electrical connections, but more often than not, the printer has an early version of the DC controller.

To check this, print a configuration page and look at the "printer number." This can range from 15 to 1C (in hexadecimal notation). The lower the number, the older the DC controller is, and the more likely it is to cause false 13.20 errors. We do not stock DC controllers with printer numbers lower than 1A, and we do not recommend using the older ones.

If you are having chronic problems with false 13.20 errors and you have one of the older DC controllers, the best thing you can do is upgrade to a newer DC controller. The printer will be far less sensitive to minor variances in the fuser, and you will no longer be plagued by 13.20 errors and fuser warranties.

Hexadecimal Notation

Hexadecimal notation is a different way of writing numbers, often used in computer and printer applications. Instead of the 10 digits (0-9) that we are familiar with, it uses 16 digits (0-9 and A-F). This allows counting up to 16 before we need a second digit. So the numbers from 0 to 16 (in our regular notation) would be 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, A, B, C, D, E, F, 10 in hexadecimal notation.

In hexadecimal notation, the HP LaserJet 9000 printer numbers are, in order from lowest to highest, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 1A, 1B, 1C. Printer number 15 represents the oldest version; printer number 1C represents the newest.

—Dennis Kosterman

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