

New Zenith Replacement Carburetors

By Rick Botti



Manufactured in the original Detroit, Michigan plant. Zenith continues to make updraft carburetors that can be used as replacements for our worn and missing units. Pictured here is a model 68 updraft type carburetor. In appearance, it looks much like a small Tillitson Model X from the 1930's. Cast on one side it reads; Zenith Made in USA and features a simple easy to use high-speed adjustment and typical idle setscrew. It bolts right up using 2 3/8" bolt spacing. These units are made with a variety of jetting and mounting configurations for Industrial, Marine and Farming applications and adapt to different engine demands. Each configuration is given a tag number, two of which I'll talk about here.

The tag numbers tested were #13922 and #14544 with 2 3/8" bolt spacing. The working difference is their internal jetting and Venturi size. The 13922 was designed as a replacement for the original Zenith carburetor used on the Model A Fords made from 1928-31. The Ford motor is 200 cubic inches; as a result this unit has a large adjustable main jet and Venturi. This should operate well with the 14L (185ci), 15L (185ci), and W8 (200ci), Continental engines.

The 14544 was designed for use with engine displacements ranging from 25-170 cubic inches. It's equipped with a smaller adjustable main jet and it's this jetting that makes it more suitable for smaller displacement engines like the W4 (130ci), W5 (152 ci) and 14L (169ci). Note: from 1926-28 14L engines were 169 ci, in 1929 the factory increased displacement to 185ci. Starting a cold motor was quick and easy, I gave it full choke and advanced the throttle just enough to ensure steady running until the engine warmed up. Both units idled low and smooth and even High-speed Performance (45mph) was good. Both units did take some trail and error to dial in, but there would have been fewer adjustments if I had just read the directions first. Well, at least I can admit it. But this is really a good thing, because the main jet can be adjusted to accommodate a wide range of engine conditions.

Both seemed well built and looked as though they came from the Durant era. The #14544 unit came with an air horn adapter that allowed me to use my own air filter and an adjustable choke cable kit that hooked right up to my stock choke pull. Since the #13922 was designed for use on the Model A, it didn't come with an air horn or choke cable kit, however these are available separately. Time was an issue, so I didn't try to fabricate a way to connect the stock throttle lever to the carburetor. But for

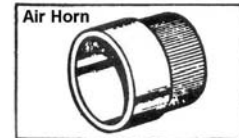
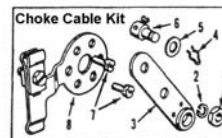
testing purposes, I ran a cable from the Zenith to the steering column.

Both tests were conducted first with an aftermarket electric fuel pump and then with the stock vacuum tank. The fuel pump was a low-pressure type (6-8lb) connected inline to a fuel pressure regulator that could be set as low as 1/2 lb. With a little trail and error, I found normal city driving never required a setting higher than 2 lb., even when I took the car up to 50mph. Settings less than 1 1/2lb starved the engine under acceleration, so 2 was the magic number for this configuration. Next the stock vacuum tank was installed and the fuel line ran directly to the Zenith with very good results. In fact I've kept that setup for normal operation.

Time and circumstance didn't allow testing more than these two carburetors. But there are others available that may be more suitable to your engine. For example, some W5 engines have a 2 5/16-bolt spacing where a 12522 would work and some engines may benefit from the model 267 also not covered here. Bob Porter wrote an excellent two page article published in the November 2002 issue of the Durant Partner that covered models 267 and 68 with detailed specs for each.

Zenith Carburetor #13922	Inquire for Price
Zenith Carburetor #14544	Inquire for Price

Accessories for the 13922 (included with 14544)	
C8-28 Air Horn Adapter	Inquire for Price
C106-2 Choke Cable Kit	Inquire for Price
C109-60 Choke Lever Kit	Included



If you'd like to save wear and tear on your current carburetor order one from the club at a wholesale price. Please send your check or money order payable in US funds to:



Frank Witkowski
576 Cleary Road
Hookstown, PA 15050 USA

Phone: (724) 573-4294
Email: witfrank@bellatlantic.net

When ordering specify either 13922 or 14544 and number of units needed. If ordering a 13922 remember to include an air horn or choke cable kit if needed, see chart above for pricing information. Frank also has new carburetors for 1930-32 Durants, just ask.