



Anti-Idling Education and Enforcement Program

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Many of us do it, but are unaware of our actions or their impacts. A car is idling when the engine is turned on but the vehicle is not in motion. This is not only unnecessary, but also harmful to the environment and our health. New Jersey has had a No-Idling regulation for diesel-fueled commercial vehicles since 1972. The current regulation, effective since 1985, and updated in 2007, states that, with limited exceptions, *no* motor vehicle (diesel or gasoline fueled) may have its engine running if stopped for more than three consecutive minutes.

Who should lead and be involved with this action?

Law enforcement personnel, the business district or chamber of commerce, schools, PTAs, student groups and clubs, and Environmental Commissions should lead or be involved with this action.

Timeframe

The following tasks can be accomplished simultaneously:

- Pass a resolution - approximately 1 month.
- Identify priority locations to target the program – approximately 1 month.
- Produce literature (web and paper) to educate the community – approximately 1 month.
- Post signs at idle-frequent locations – approximately 2 months (weather dependent).
- Produce a detailed enforcement plan - approximately 3 months.

Project Costs and Resource Needs

The cost to implement this action is very low and may consist of only printing and signage costs, in addition to staff salaries. This action mostly requires staff time to accomplish the following:

- pass a resolution,
- identify priority locations to target the program,
- produce literature (web and paper) to educate the community,
- posting signs at idle-frequent locations, and
- produce a detailed enforcement plan.

Why is it Important

Idling for only 10 seconds uses more gas than it takes to restart the car. Contrary to popular belief, turning a car on and off will not harm the engine. Idling also has negative health impacts such as exacerbating asthma. When we “turn the key” on idling, we lower dangerous health risks and help improve air quality. In two minutes, an idling car burns enough gas to travel one mile. On average, a car emits one pound of CO₂ from driving one mile. Over the course of a year, the average driver emits nearly 12,100 pounds, or 6 tons, of emissions into the atmosphere. Estimates are based on data from the the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) Office of Transportation and Air Quality and based on average fuel consumption of 21.5 miles per gallon.¹ Nearly 95 percent of auto emissions are from carbon dioxide (CO₂). CO₂ emissions are not yet regulated by federal or state government, but increased atmospheric levels of CO₂ are known to be a main contributor to global climate change.

Idling can lead to the following negative impacts:

Environmental Damage

- Air pollution.
- On average, an automobile emits one pound of CO₂ emissions from driving one mile. CO₂ is a major contributor to global climate change. Transportation uses account for 30 to 40 percent of the nation’s total CO₂ emissions.

Health Damage

- Vehicle exhaust contaminates the air with harmful particles and chemicals. Fine particle pollution in NJ may cause more premature deaths than homicides and car accidents combined. Diesel exhaust is a

¹U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Emission facts: Average annual emissions and fuel consumption for passenger cars and light trucks,” *Consumer Information*, Apr. 2000; <http://www.epa.gov/oms/consumer/f00013.htm>.

primary component of fine particle pollution and is known to cause or exacerbate a variety of heart and lung ailments.²

Allergies and asthma

- Children breathe approximately 50 percent more air per pound of bodyweight than adults. Recent scientific studies point to evidence that diesel emissions not only exacerbate asthma but that prolonged exposure can cause asthma and set up a propensity for asthma in the unborn.

Heart disease and heart attacks

- Moderate air pollution can trigger heart attacks.³ Even the moderate air pollution routinely found in many U.S. cities may trigger sudden deaths by changing heart rhythms in people with existing cardiac problems. At pollution levels commonly found in U.S. cities, inhaling particles appears to disrupt the body's ability to regulate the pumping of blood. As particulate counts rise on any given day, a vital indicator called heart rate variability decreases in some people, disturbing the beat-to-beat variations that are supposed to meet the demands of activities ranging from sleep to exercise. The inhaled particles also provoke immune cells and cause inflammation in the lungs and heart that may exacerbate heartbeat disturbances.

Cancer

- Long-term exposure to combustion-related fine particulate air pollution is an important environmental risk factor for cardiopulmonary and lung cancer mortality.⁴
- Prolonged exposure to diesel exhaust probably increases the risk of lung cancer and maybe other cancers, too. Parts of diesel exhaust, such as soot and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), have been shown to cause cancer.⁵

²R.J. Pandya *et al.*, "Diesel exhaust and asthma: Hypotheses and molecular mechanisms of action," *Environmental Health Perspectives Supplements*, vol. 110, Feb. 2002; <http://www.ehponline.org/docs/2002/suppl-1/103-112pandya/abstract.html>.

³M. Cone, "New studies: Moderate air pollution triggers heart attacks," *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 2000; <http://www.commdreams.org/headlines/060500-01.htm>.

⁴C.A. Pope, III, *et al.*, "Lung cancer, cardiopulmonary mortality, and long-term exposure to fine particulate air pollution," *J. Amer. Medical Assn.*, 2002; <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/287/9/1132?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&fulltext=particulate+pollution&searchid=1&FIRSTINDEX=0&resourcetype=HWCIT>

⁵American Cancer Society, "Diesal exhaust," *Prevention and Early Detection*, 2009; http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_1_3x_Diesel_Exhaust.asp?sitearea=PED.

Extra Expense

- Gas and money
- Idling wastes gas and drains wallets. By turning the key off, drivers can save gas and money.

What to do, and how to do it (“How to”)

Recommended Action Plan

1. Identify idle frequent locations such as schools, banks, drive-thru, convenience stores, etc.
2. Develop and pass a resolution. Resolutions can be used to bring attention to the idling issue and put it on the priority list for enforcement by local authorities.
3. Create a municipal policy to reinforce the regulation that idling for longer than 3 minutes is illegal and include instructions on how to enforce it. See “notes” section for more information about enforcement.
4. Ensure your municipal policy includes a requirement for municipal-owned vehicles, including police vehicles, that does not infringe on safety. Note: although some emergency circumstances require idling police or ambulance vehicles, other situations do not. A policy that directs officers and personnel as to when and when not to idle can help save money and reduce pollution without compromising safety. For example, in Plymouth, MA, fire department support vehicles are not allowed to idle while personnel conduct inspections, deliver or pick up supplies, pick up personnel, or when a vehicle arrives at a destination. Exceptions include when running the engine is in the best interests of public safety or the safety of firefighters, such as heating a vehicle to rehab personnel or keep them warm when they’re working outside in low temperatures, or cooling a vehicle to rehab personnel working in extreme heat.
5. Ensure that your policy includes municipal and school contractors, such as garbage trucks and schools buses, to comply with the regulation. Note: school bus companies will be fined for violations, not individual drivers.
6. Educate residents via public service announcements, newsletters, websites, etc. While for legal purposes, No-Idling policies should use a 3-minute maximum idle time stipulation, be sure to educate the public that even idling for more than 10 seconds is inefficient. Additional tools and ideas for spreading the word include:
 - Information and resources for No-Idling actions at <http://cleanwateraction.org/node/155>.⁶

⁶Clean Water Action, “Steps to passing the pledge in your municipality,” *Idle Free New Jersey: Municipalities*, accessed Jan. 2009; <http://cleanwateraction.org/node/155>.

- No-Idling signs.
 - Sample Signs at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/signsamples.pdf>.
 - Order Form at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/signorderform.pdf>.
- No-Idling pledge forms:
 - For parents at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/pledge-parents.pdf>.
 - For school districts at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/pledge-schooldistricts.pdf>.
 - For bus companies at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/pledge-buscos.pdf>.
- Or try this: Summit, NJ, created a public service announcement to raise awareness of “No-Idling”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1z5LTKaF1Pw&eurl=http://www.suammitgreen.org/index.html>. The ad is currently being played on their local channel TV 36.

7. Work with others to enforce the policy. Ask local school principals to distribute warnings at school drop off and pick up locations, and encourage businesses to post “No-Idling” signs in their parking lots, etc. Work with police to hand out warnings and have a policy to ticket multiple offenders.
8. Evaluate your efforts by keeping track of outreach efforts and the number of warnings or tickets, and observe target locations for improved compliance.

Notes: Enforcement

LOCAL/STATE POLICE AUTHORITY:

- Enforcement of motor vehicle idling (diesel and gasoline):
 - Motor vehicle statute C. 39:3-70.2 recently revised by legislature to clarify that violation includes idling in addition to visible smoke or contaminants in excess of standards.
 - Both Motor Vehicle and Traffic Act, C. 39:3-70.2, and Air Pollution Control Act, C. 26:2C-1 should be cited.
 - Recent revision raises minimum penalty amount for violation of C. 39:3-70.2 from \$25.00 to \$250.00.
 - Does not apply to motor vehicles idling in traffic or in a queue of motor vehicles that are intermittently motionless due to traffic or other conditions over which the driver has no control (as at the Port).
- Idling can be enforced on public roadways.
- Penalty monies go to local police/municipality.
- State police also conduct roadside enforcement/inspection program of heavy duty diesel vehicles (they have done this for many years).

COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS:

- County environmental health officers who are delegated authority to enforce Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) laws under the County Environmental Health Act (CEHA) have authority to enforce idling on private property.
- NJDEP has delegated authority to enforce motor vehicle idling (diesel and gasoline) anywhere except on public highways.
- All idling requirements are found in NJDEP regulations.
- N.J.A.C. 7:27-14 for diesel vehicles (most recently revised in 2007).
- N.J.A.C. 7:27-15 for gasoline vehicles.

CONSEQUENCES OF IDLING:

- Idling causes hazardous damage to both the environment and human health. By ignoring this regulation your residents not only endanger our planet and those around them, but also put themselves at risk for a hefty fine.
 - 1st Offense - \$200
 - 2nd Offense - \$400
 - 3rd Offense - \$1,000
 - 4th Offense - \$3,000

EXEMPTIONS:

- Limited exceptions to 3-minute idling include vehicles stopped in traffic, vehicles waiting for vehicle inspection or being repaired (if the engine must be running to facilitate the repairs), emergency vehicles in emergency situations, busses discharging or picking up passengers, vehicles with a power source used for necessary and prescribed mechanical operation (refrigeration, maintaining suspension, mechanical lifts, etc.), or certain long-haul trucks when parked overnight or during mandatory rest periods.
- Vehicles that are actively performing emergency services. Examples include fire vehicles, police vehicles, public utility vehicles, military tactical vehicles, and snow removal vehicles, during the time that such vehicles are actively performing emergency services.

What to submit to get credit/points

Municipalities that pass a resolution and include **two** of the following actions in their no-idling program will earn 10 points.

1. Identify and map priority locations to target program.
2. Produce literature (web and paper) to educate community.
3. Post signs at idle-frequent locations.
4. Develop detailed enforcement plan.

Submit a copy of the resolution and the following appropriate materials: maps detailing priority locations, educational materials, documentation of posted signs, or a description of related enforcement activities.

Spotlight: What NJ towns are doing

- Switlik School, Jackson
Students at the Switlik Elementary School in Jackson, NJ, stood up for No Idling. A group of students presented their campaign to the town council, explaining the harm idling vehicles create and the benefits of turning a car key off. The council agreed to do more to enforce the law. An educational No-Idling campaign has also been initiated. All students and teachers involved were recognized for their efforts and success.
- The NJ Pediatric Asthma Coalition (NJ PAC) Award has been presented to 104 NJ schools. One of the qualifying actions is to enforce a No-Idling Pledge. See <http://www.pacnj.org/>.

Resources – General resources

General Information on Idling

Stop the Soot – NJDEP - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/index.htm>

Clean Water Action – Idle Free New Jersey -

<http://cleanwateraction.org/node/155>

EPA Compilation of Anti-Idling Regulations -

<http://www.epa.gov/smartway/documents/420b06004.pdf>

PS Clean Air Agency -

<http://www.pscleanair.org/actions/vehicles/individuals.aspx>

How clean is YOUR air? Check out the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP)'s website <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/airmon/> for a daily reading of your region's air quality.