

## **CONTENTS – Idling Reduction Toolkit**

The Department of Environmental Protection is pleased to provide your community with its “**Idling Reduction Toolkit**” through our Municipal Waste Reduction Grant Program. We hope you will find these materials helpful in developing and implementing an idling reduction campaign. Your interest and participation in this program is important to us, and we look forward to working with you and the other Massachusetts communities that are receiving this grant.

Below is the list of items contained in the Toolkit. Enclosed you will find a CD containing an electronic version of the materials marked with an asterisk (\*). You are encouraged to customize any of these items to best meet the needs of your program.

### **Planning Tools:**

- Suggested Steps for Developing an Idling Reduction Campaign
- Sample idling reduction policy \*
- Fact sheet on idling reduction
- Full text of Massachusetts idling law and regulation
- “Organizing an Idling Reduction Project in Your Community” fact sheet
- Lessons Learned From Idling Reduction Project – Spring 2006 (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission)
- List of links to other resources

### **Education and Publicity Materials:**

- Sample pledge form for an idling reduction campaign \*
- Sample letter to parents (from school) about idling and health effects \*
- Sample news releases: community wide & school-focused idling education campaigns\*
- 30 second PSA on the health effects of idling
- School bus driver training and video
- Recent news articles about MassDEP’s enforcement of the Massachusetts idling law
- “Do Your Share” Powerpoint slides created by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)

### **Artwork for producing additional print materials and signs:**

- Artwork for bumper sticker \*
- Artwork for idling reduction windshield static sticker \*
- Artwork for idling reduction hand card \*
- Designs of two idling reduction signs; one general (5 minute idling limit), and one with “no vehicle idling” graphic \*

Please contact Julie Ross at MassDEP at 617-292-5958 if you have questions or need assistance with your idling reduction program.

# Suggested Steps for Developing an Idling Reduction Campaign



Unnecessary idling is a potential hazard for all of us. Each time we idle our vehicles unnecessarily, we are polluting the air and our lungs. This document is designed to help your community plan a campaign to reduce vehicle idling in a variety of settings: schools, municipal fleet operations, public transit stations and other sites.

- Step 1: Identify a coordinator** to develop and implement your idling reduction program. This could be the school principal or staff, a municipal official, or a member of a town advisory board.
- Step 2: Create partnerships** with as many groups as possible. Depending on the scope of your campaign, partners might include: the local chapter of the American Lung Association, the board of health, environmental groups, police department, school committee, parent-teacher organizations, elder care facilities, hospitals and community health clinics. Educate these groups on the effects of idling with the materials in the Toolkit and ask for an official campaign endorsement for publicity purposes.
- Step 3: Identify sources of idling.** Enlist a few volunteers to conduct observations during school drop-off and pick-up periods, at public transit stations, and other potential excessive idling locations. This will help you determine where anti-idling signs are most needed, or which type of vehicle (buses, caregivers' vehicles, delivery trucks) should be targeted in your campaign.
- Step 4: Decide on the goals and scope of your campaign.** Keep the goals simple and attainable. Although you may wish to eliminate unnecessary idling throughout your community, you might focus initially on a specific location where idling frequently occurs, such as mass transit depots, schools, municipal fleet maintenance yards, or at construction or roadwork sites. If your campaign is school-based, focus on eliminating unnecessary idling from school buses first, then broaden your campaign to educate parents and visitors to schools.
- Step 5: Adopt a policy or resolution on idling reduction.** *(A sample policy is included in your Toolkit)* A policy articulates the reasons your community has chosen to address air pollution from unnecessary idling, and the objectives of your campaign. Whether adopted by the school district, a school, or your elected officials, a policy conveys the message that idling reduction is an environmental and public health priority.
- Step 6: Develop your campaign activities.** Depending on the scope of your campaign, determine the activities you will conduct to reduce vehicle idling. Ideas you might consider include:
- Conduct training for school bus drivers and municipal fleet operators on reducing idling (*refer to the bus driver training module and video in the Toolkit*). Include in contracts with transportation companies a provision requiring idling reduction training for all drivers on an annual basis.
  - Encourage municipal employees, school staff, parents, and bus drivers to reduce idling by using bumper stickers or windshield stickers with an idling reduction message. *Bumper and windshield stickers are available through the Toolkit.*
  - Conduct an "idle-free pledge" campaign by asking members of the school community or municipal employees to sign a pledge to reduce idling. A windshield sticker could also be provided, along with a fact sheet or palm card. *A sample pledge for parents and caregivers is included in the Toolkit.*
  - Post idling reduction street signs at schools, mass transit depots and other high frequency idling locations, reminding drivers that Massachusetts state law prohibits unnecessary idling. *Three different signs are available through the Toolkit.*
  - Involve students in an effort to educate their parents to reduce idling. Talk to students about idling and send a message home to caregivers. *A sample letter is included in the Toolkit.*

- Develop a recognition program to publicly thank and support school employees, bus drivers, municipal staff, and local organizations for their efforts to reduce idling.

**Step 7: Develop a pilot program.** To ensure the success of any campaign, a pilot is recommended (one school, one municipal department, etc). This will help identify missing elements, barriers to idling reduction, and opportunities to improve the overall campaign.

**Step 8: Publicize your idling reduction campaign.** A well thought-out communications strategy is key. *The Toolkit has various publicity materials.* Materials should include a phone number or web site for more information. Consider:

- A public event to launch your campaign. Participants could include elected officials, school superintendent or principals, and other partner groups.
- News releases to newspapers, local radio stations, environmental groups, and health care providers. (*Your Toolkit includes sample news releases for a community-wide or school-focused campaign.*)
- Public Service Announcements on local cable TV stations. *DEP's 30-second PSA on the health effects of idling is included in your Toolkit.* Cable stations may customize the PSA with the local campaign's contact information.
- Palm-cards, fact sheets, and bumper stickers, to distribute to the school community (parents, staff, bus drivers), municipal employees, or general public (at libraries, community meetings and events, health care clinics, etc). *Refer to sample materials in your Toolkit.*

**Step 9: Adopt Best Management Practices (BMPs).** Municipal departments, school transportation departments (or their contractors) can adopt BMPs for their vehicle fleets to limit idling, improve fuel efficiency and reduce driver and citizen exposure to emissions. *Refer to the Best Management Practices document in your Toolkit.*

**Step 10: Evaluate your campaign and report on successes.** Several months after implementation, conduct follow-up observations and/or surveys to see if the targeted drivers have reduced idling. Other measures of success might include the number of idling reduction pledges signed or the number of bus drivers trained. Issue quarterly news releases or updates on campaign activities to maintain awareness.

## Resources:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: *Diesel Exhaust and Your Health*  
[http://www.epa.gov/ne/eco/diesel/health\\_effects.html](http://www.epa.gov/ne/eco/diesel/health_effects.html)

Community Campaign - Help Make Mississauga an Idle-Free Zone!  
<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/idle-free>



## Sample Idling Reduction Policy

This policy applies to [Insert target audience: residents, municipal fleet, school] vehicles operated by or within the town/city of [name of municipality].

### Objectives

- 1) To eliminate unnecessary idling of vehicles in order to reduce the community's exposure to exhaust from gasoline and diesel engines.
- 2) To educate and inform municipal employees and residents about the health and environmental effects of gasoline and diesel exhaust.

### Purpose

Idling vehicles pollute the air and present several health and environmental hazards. Gasoline and diesel vehicles produce carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and oxides of nitrogen (NOx). Carbon monoxide causes respiratory distress and in high concentrations can be lethal; carbon dioxide is a primary contributor to global warming; and VOCs and NOx and form ozone, ground-level smog and impair lung function. In addition, diesel exhaust contains fine particulate matter, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated as a likely carcinogen. The elderly, chronically ill and children are all particularly vulnerable to these health effects because their lung function is respectively decreased, impaired or still in development.

In addition, Massachusetts General Law (MGL Chapter 90, Section 16A) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) idling reduction regulation (310 CMR 7.11(1)(b)) both prohibit unnecessary vehicle idling by stating that the engine must be shut down if the vehicle will be stopped for more than five minutes. Exemptions include: 1) the vehicle is being serviced and the idling is required to repair the vehicle; or 2) the vehicle is making deliveries and needs to keep its engine running (to power refrigerators, for example); and, 3) the vehicle's accessory equipment needs to be powered, such as a fork lift or a truck's rear dump bed, or a wheelchair lift in a bus or van. To provide additional protections for children, MGL Chapter 90, Section 16B further restricts unnecessary idling in school zones.

In order to reduce the health and environmental effects of vehicle exhaust, comply with the state's idling reduction regulation and law, and decrease our use of fuel by reducing unnecessary idling, the following actions shall be implemented to the maximum extent practicable:

[Municipality would insert specific actions it will implement in its Idling Reduction Campaign such as: posting of signs in public areas, educating municipal employees and residents, establishing best management practices for municipal vehicle operations, etc.]

This policy is hereby approved by the [Governing Body], this [date], to eliminate unnecessary idling.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Official

**The goal of the Massachusetts Anti-Idling law is to improve air quality by reducing unnecessary air pollution from idling vehicles. The law limits unnecessary engine idling to five minutes. Drivers sometime wonder when idling might be considered necessary. The following questions and answers are intended to help drivers determine when engine idling could be considered necessary and when they should shut the engines down.**

### **Why is there an anti-idling law?**

It's basic common sense: there is already too much pollution in the air. Massachusetts consistently has days when air pollution exceeds ozone standards.

### **Is all engine idling prohibited?**

No. While the law does prohibit unnecessary idling, it also recognizes that there are times when idling is simply unavoidable and lists three specific exemptions: when an engine is being repaired and operating the engine is necessary for the repair; when a vehicle is making deliveries and associated power is necessary; and when the engine is used to provide power to another device.

### **What are some examples of how the exemptions work?**

The two more common situations facing most drivers are the exemptions allowed for making deliveries and to run a device that does not have its own power. Common sense will help drivers determine whether engine idling is necessary or not.

- *Deliveries*  
School buses that must run their engines to operate flashing lights while picking up or dropping off passengers are a good example of necessary idling. State law requires the operation of flashing lights while loading and unloading children at school or on regular school bus routes. With no other power source to operate the lights other than running the engine, idling the engine is necessary.
- *Additional devices, or auxiliary power units*  
Refrigerator units on trucks with perishable goods or vehicles operating special equipment, such as a lift on the back of a truck to move goods in and out of the truck or wheelchair lifts in buses or vans that may require engine power to operate are common examples of equipment that are operated with the engine power. Another example might include "bucket" trucks that allow a worker to reach wires on telephone poles or tree branches for trimming.

### **Are there other times when it's OK to idle not listed in the law?**

The law prohibits unnecessary idling, then lists three exemptions to that rule. So there are other times when idling is permitted as long as the idling is absolutely necessary.

For example, running the engine to operate the windshield defroster to clear a windshield of ice on an extremely cold day is a good example of necessary idling. It's a safety problem if you cannot see where you're going and if the windshield is not warm enough to melt snow and freezing rain while driving. Running the engine while actively clearing snow and ice off the vehicle and to warm the windshield and interior of the vehicle is necessary idling.

Our common sense also tells us that heaters and air conditioning units almost always bring the vehicle's interior into a comfortable range in a short time. We also know that heaters and air conditioning units work faster when the vehicle is being driven, not when it is left idling. So most vehicles, most of the time, will reach a comfortable temperature within the first five minutes of driving. Some heavy vehicles, such as buses or trucks, may need some additional time to bring interior temperatures into a comfortable range.

## **What are a few examples of unnecessary idling?**

- Sitting in your car in a parking lot with the engine on during mild or cool weather is unnecessary. The interior of your car will stay warm for 5 to 10 minutes on all but the coldest days.
- Leaving the vehicle running while unattended to let the heater warm it or the air conditioner cool it for extended periods of time is unnecessary idling (it is also in violation of motor vehicle law). Five minutes should be the maximum amount of time unless weather conditions are extreme, and the engine should not be left running while the vehicle is unattended for any length of time.
- Operating devices not related to transporting passengers or goods. Letting the engine run for an hour or more to play a movie or to charge a cell phone causes unnecessary pollution, is a nuisance for others nearby and puts excessive wear and tear on the engine.

## **Am I causing more pollution by stopping and starting the engine?**

No. Once the engine has warmed up, an idling engine causes more pollution by running than by stopping and starting up again. Studies indicate that the trade-off for light- and medium-duty gasoline powered vehicles is about 10 seconds (i.e. the vehicle will produce more pollution idling longer than 10 seconds than it will by shutting down and restarting the engine). The time trade-off on medium- and heavy-duty diesel engines is about 30 seconds.

## **Won't I wear out my starter if I keep stopping and starting the engine?**

Fleet managers of companies with strict anti-idling policies report that they do not replace starters in their vehicles more frequently than vehicles that are left running for extended periods. In fact, more damage occurs to engines that are left idling over long periods of time.

## **Who would I complain to if I see a vehicle idling unnecessarily?**

The best place to start is your local Board of Health. Other possibilities include local police, DEP or the EPA.

Enforcement personnel cannot respond to every complaint about idling vehicles, and there are instances when it is not obvious why a vehicle needs to idle longer than five minutes.

But many of the complaints about excessive idling are about the same vehicles in the same locations routinely left idling, many times out of habit. For people living or working near those vehicles the exhaust that they are subjected to is not just a nuisance, it's a real health problem.

## **Where would I find copies of the law and regulation?**

The law is Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 90, Section 16A and the regulation is 310 Code of Massachusetts Regulation (CMR) 7.11. The wording is the same for both the law and the regulation. Enforcement authority and fine structures differ somewhat between the law and the regulation.

## **Do the Anti-idling law and regulation apply to all vehicles?**

The law and regulation apply to all motor vehicles. All motor vehicles contribute to air pollution and can create a nuisance if the exhaust is affecting others. Why should people be allowed to pollute the air unnecessarily?

# The Massachusetts Anti-Idling Law

## Massachusetts General Law (MGL), Chapter 90, Section 16A, 310 Code of Massachusetts Regulation (CMR), Section 7.11 and MGL, Chapter 111, Sections 142A – 142M

The Statute, MGL, Chapter 90, 16A says:

“No person shall cause, suffer, allow, or permit the unnecessary operation of the engine of a motor vehicle while said vehicle is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of five minutes. This section shall not apply to:

- Vehicles being serviced, provided that operation of the engine is essential to the proper repair thereof, or
- Vehicles engaged in the delivery or acceptance of goods, wares, or merchandise for which engine assisted power is necessary and substitute alternate means cannot be made available or,
- Vehicles engaged in an operation for which the engine power is necessary for an associated power need other than movement and substitute alternate power means cannot be made available provided that such operation does not cause or contribute to a condition of air pollution.”

The Regulation, 310 CMR 7.11, tracks this language.

**Note: the regulation applies to all motor vehicles.**

### Penalties

- Penalties can range from \$100(MGL Chapter 90, Section 16A) to as much as \$25,000 (MGL Chapter 111, Section 142A);
- Drivers and/or companies can be held responsible for paying the fine;
- Local police have the authority to enforce the law, as do health officials or other officials who hold enforcement authority.

# Organizing an Idling Reduction Project in Your Community

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## Audiences

### *Parents*

Parents of school-aged children are violators of idling laws across the state. Due to public school budget cut backs many children need to be driven to and from school each day. Parents are now made to fit this into their daily schedules. While visiting one local elementary school PVPC Staff notice several parents conducting business calls and using laptops from their running cars.

Parents who sit in front of their child's school with their cars idling may not even be aware that idling against the law and that the exhaust fumes from their cars a perforating the window and vents of the school harming polluting the air the children breathe.

### *Municipal employees*

There are several reasons to target this audience. First and most important, municipal employees, especially those driving marked vehicles, should attempt to set the example for the rest of the community. Second, most often than not the vehicle is being fueled by very limited tax dollars and a reduction in the municipal fuel waste could save the town hundreds of dollars

### *School bus drivers*

Many school bus drivers have already received training on idling reduction through the Mass DEP. However at this time it is not required. So check with all the local bus companies and see if they will train their employees on anti-idling laws.





## Tasks

Identify a coordinator

Identify target audience

Establish budget or grant opportunities

Recruit volunteers

Plan events and outreach

Publicize your efforts



## Timeline

An idling reduction campaign can take as little as three months up to a year or longer. Depending on your target audience, the time of year may matter. For example, targeting parents would not be possible during summer vacation.

An appropriate time frame would be 4-5 months. In this time you can organize a group of volunteers, secure funding for materials, and perform outreach to your target audience.

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
Designate a coordinator	✓			
Gather a group of volunteers and contacts – possible partners	✓			
Determine specifics of program (audience)	✓			
Secure budget and funding		✓		
Order materials			✓	
Schedule Advertise public events			✓	
Hold public outreach events				✓

# Summary of Results

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## **A. FINDINGS**

The goal of this DEP-funded pilot project was to provide locally based oversight and technical assistance to launch successful school-based idling reduction programs. Based on this stated goal we deem this project a success. As planned, the evaluation is largely based on the subjective comments of participating officials, all of whom were very pleased with the project. The Jackson Street School reported a reduction in idling of school buses. Project staff were unable to document idling time pre-project due to an unanticipated short time between announcement of receipt of the project award and the project launch. While we were unable to successfully negotiate a reader survey of public awareness with the local regional newspaper, the Daily Hampshire Gazette, we did receive unprecedented media coverage of the project—including all the important idling reduction facts we were trying to convey. Based on municipal officials' comments, anecdotal evidence of behavior change reported by parents and students, and the widespread media coverage, we deem this project a resounding success.

## **B. BUDGET ISSUES**

We had exactly as much funding as we needed in the time available to conduct an extremely successful program.

## **C. CHALLENGES**

This program ran exceedingly smoothly. We started the program with logistical challenges: a very short time frame combined with the challenge of working in three different communities with three different school districts and three different school bus companies. But, target audiences were so eager to receive the information and take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save gas and lessen children's risk of asthma that the "challenges" melted away as the project progressed.

Project staff believe the design of DEP's new climate action program is largely responsible for the success and unusually smooth operation of this project. Because funds are targeted at communities that are participating in the International CCP initiative, the three participating communities were well informed and committed to the success of the project. One community, Easthampton, is not yet an active member of CCP, but many municipal employees, as well as the Mayor, Mike Tautznik, are knowledgeable about global climate change as well as the cost effectiveness of clean energy and the importance of taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. All three communities really wanted assistance to reduce idling and indeed each one of the three participating schools had already taken action on their own to either reduce idling, promote alternative modes of transportation to school or educate the school community about global climate change and the negative health effects of vehicle idling.

This project had an unusually large amount of staff time funded—which again, turned all the possible challenges into opportunities as we had paid staff time to speak with and then maintain an ongoing correspondence/communication with each municipality's chief elected official, staffperson charged with idling reduction, school district and bus company contact, participating school Principal, and the three Parent-Teacher Organizations. Project staff hope that the success of this pilot multi-community initiative will enable other communities and regional planning agencies to replicate our success

with a smaller investment of state resources. The letters we have prepared and included in the Appendix, combined with the action plan and DEP's excellent educational and outreach materials should make this possible.



#### **D. LESSONS LEARNED**

Targeting funds to communities that are already committed to addressing a problem yields a very receptive community and dramatically increases likelihood of project success.

Changing parents' behavior via educating their elementary school-aged children is much easier than trying to educate the parents directly. We copied the success of seat belt encouragement programs targeted at children.

The media loves covering programs targeting children. We had media coverage from local television stations, radio stations and all three local newspapers. The stories were picked up by newspapers around the state.

Targeting municipal employees is another good way to reach a select group of a community's population. This group of people generally has considerable influence in the community. In addition, they are easy to reach as one can stuff idling reduction information in their paycheck mailings and post the idling reduction signs where they park every day.

Idling reduction is a topic that blends well with many issues of importance today that a majority of people care about: global warming and high energy costs. Reducing, or indeed stopping idling altogether, saves people money and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. It's a win win and people respond to this message. It's a real action everyone can take in the face of a huge problem that most people care about.

# Recommendations

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## **A. SIMILAR PROJECTS**

We strongly recommend replication of this initiative. Project staff were pleasantly surprised over and over again at the positive response to this program. It is clear that targeting education at children via the schools is an extremely effective way to deliver this important information. As for the logistics of running a three community effort in three different elementary schools—the advice we have is to make sure there is adequate funding for staff time to assure clear and consistent communication with all the players. It is very important to contact all the layers of local municipal and school district bureaucracy and make sure to validate all the work they have already done related to taking action to reduce waste, enhance air quality, reduce driving and promote childhood health and safety. Contact chief elected officials, municipal staff interested in/committed to idling reduction—who may be located at the Board of Health, the Conservation Commission, Planning and Development, and/or Public Works. You must also contact the School Superintendent, School Transportation Coordinators, School Principals, and PTOs. In some communities the Department of Public Works does not install signs on school property. The school department may have its own sign department.

Idling reduction is a very important initiative to which most people respond very favorably.

## **B. FUTURE PROJECTS**

Having our idling reduction consciousness raised, project staff would now like funding to develop idling reduction campaigns targeted at: Ambulance drivers, Fire Fighters, Police, and delivery people, especially pizza delivery people. The 10-second rule was a huge eye opener for all recipients of this education campaign and should be expanded to a much wider audience.

## Links to Web Resources

### ***Health Effects***

Health effects of ozone and fine particulate pollution:  
<http://www.stateoftheair.org/2011/health-risks/>

Health effects of diesel pollution:  
<http://www.ehhi.org/reports/diesel/diesel.pdf>

### Air Quality in Massachusetts

For a report on Massachusetts's air quality, see:

[http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/air/air\\_repts.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/air/air_repts.htm)  
For forecasts of ozone and particulate pollution in Massachusetts, see:  
[www.mass.gov/air](http://www.mass.gov/air)

### ***Conducting a No-Idling Campaign***

Natural Resources Canada:  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/communities-government/idling.cfm>

### Pollution Reduction Control Strategies

EPA's list of verified engine retrofit technologies:  
<http://epa.gov/cleandiesel/verification/verif-list.htm>  
Clean Diesel information: <http://www.clean-diesel.org>

Information on biodiesel:  
<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/renewablefuels/420f10009.htm>  
Diesel Technology Forum:  
<http://www.dieselforum.org/retrofit-tool-kit-homepage/>

### Funding Resources

EPA's Clean School Bus USA Program:  
<http://epa.gov/cleandiesel/grantfund.htm>  
Federal Highway Administration's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program:  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cmaqpgs/index.htm>



## THE GREEN TEAM Idling Reduction Pledge

In our classroom we are learning about the benefits of clean air and actions that we can take to improve air quality. One way you can ensure cleaner air in our community and around our school is to turn off your vehicle's engine when waiting to pick up your child or running errands.

Please sign and return the pledge below to let your child know that you are joining with other parents in our school's GREEN TEAM effort to improve air quality and help everyone breath easier. By reducing idling you will:

- **Protect students, school staff and drivers from harmful exhaust fumes**
- **Reduce air pollutants that contribute to smog and global warming**
- **Reduce fuel consumption**
- **Reduce engine wear and tear**
- **Save money on fuel and engine repairs**



**Brought to you by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection**



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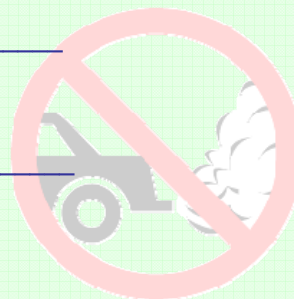
## IDLING REDUCTION PLEDGE

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby pledge to my child, \_\_\_\_\_,  
Parent/Guardian's Name Student's Name

that I will IMPROVE AND PROTECT AIR QUALITY in our community by turning off my vehicle's engine when I am parked or waiting.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

Witnessed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Student



(Put on School letterhead)

Date

Dear Parent/Caregiver:

\_\_\_\_\_ school/ school district is pleased to announce the start up of an idling reduction program (for buses, cars...) Exhaust fumes from cars and buses contain fine particles that can trigger asthma attacks. Children are more susceptible to asthma because their lungs are not fully developed and they breathe 50 percent more by volume than adults. Asthma is the most common chronic illness among children. More than 250,000 adults and 110,000 children in Massachusetts have been diagnosed with asthma (about 6% of the population), the highest reported rate of asthma in the country! We need to all work together to reduce air pollution from vehicles.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has initiated a program with the school community to educate students, teachers, parents, and bus drivers about the effects of needless idling and exhaust fumes. School zones often have high levels of exhaust fumes from buses, delivery vehicles and cars dropping off and picking up students. \_\_\_\_\_ school district has set up an idling reduction training program for our bus drivers and is installing idling reduction signs where buses and cars often idle. Please help us protect the health of our children and make our air cleaner by following these simple guidelines:

- Turn off your engine when waiting for more than 10 seconds
- Keep your engine tuned for efficient fuel consumption and to lower emissions.
- If possible, park your vehicle and come meet your child.

For more information on air quality in Massachusetts, please visit DEP's website at:

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/>

If you have any questions about this program, please contact\_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

School Principal or Superintendent

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
(Date)

CONTACT: (Name)  
(Telephone Number)

**Idling Reduction Campaign Seeks to Educate Drivers**  
**(COMMUNITY) SCHOOLS LAUNCH EFFORT TO REDUCE**  
**STUDENTS' EXPOSURE TO HARMFUL VEHICLE EXHAUST**

Idling bus and other vehicle engines for too long while parked on school property not only increases children's exposure to harmful air pollution, but it is also against the law. That's according to officials in (*community*), who have begun a campaign to educate drivers about the importance of turning their engines off while waiting to pick up or drop off children at local schools.

State law limits most engine idling to five minutes or less. The restriction applies to both gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles.

"Whether you are behind the wheel of a school bus, a delivery truck, an SUV or a car, you should turn off the engine as soon as you pull into a school driveway or parking lot," said (*community*) Superintendent of Schools (*full name*). "Excessive engine idling needlessly exposes our children to air pollution that can lead to serious health problems over time.

Diesel exhaust contains fine particles that can penetrate deeply into the lungs and cause breathing difficulties, respiratory infections, and attacks of asthma and chronic bronchitis. Gasoline exhaust contains toxic carbon monoxide and a range of pollutants that contribute to smog and make breathing difficult for everyone.

Children are particularly at risk because their lungs are still developing and pound for pound, they breathe 50 percent more air than adults do.

Students and bus drivers can be exposed to diesel fumes when getting in and out of school buses and passenger vehicles, and even inside them when the engines are running. Exhaust from idling buses, trucks, SUVs and cars accumulates in and around schoolyards, and even inside school buildings when air intake vents are located near bus stops — so teachers, staff and parents can be exposed, too.

"This is why (*community*) schools are serious about letting drivers know how important it is for them turn off their engines, particularly when waiting for student dismissal times," Superintendent (*last name*) said.

(more)



In their effort to reduce air pollution from school buses and private passenger vehicles, (*community*) school officials have:

- Posted "idling limit" signs wherever school buses and private passenger vehicles linger.
- Directed drivers to turn off engines as soon as they arrive in school driveways and parking lots.
- Provided space inside schools where drivers who arrive early can wait for student dismissal times.

Massachusetts law limits vehicle idling to no more than five minutes in most cases. A vehicle may idle longer only if absolutely necessary. The law provides exemptions for vehicles that are being serviced, making deliveries of refrigerated goods, operating power accessories such as hydraulic or wheelchair lifts, or running emergency or safety lights or equipment that require more than auxiliary power.

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the local police and health departments are empowered to enforce the state's idling restrictions. If you notice a vehicle idling its engine for more than five minutes on or near local school property, please notify one of these agencies or contact the (*community*) school department at (*telephone number*).

# # #

# Idling Reduction Toolkit Press Articles

## The Berkshire Eagle

### 'Idle' movement spreads Lenox man's effort is going statewide

By Jack Dew, Berkshire Eagle Staff  
October 2, 2007

LENOX — Richard Gregg's statewide campaign to get drivers to stop idling their cars started at the most local of places: his children's elementary school.

Gregg has been named the chairman of the American Lung Association's Idle-Free Massachusetts campaign, which is trying to build on the efforts he started in Lenox and get people to stop idling their engines, wasting gas while they spew pollution into the atmosphere.

"This little campaign that started out with a few conversations here in Lenox has now gone statewide," Gregg said yesterday. "And we have already had talks about how we will take the idle-free campaign throughout the region. As I say to my children, hard work pays off."

Gregg was waiting to pick up his children at Morris Elementary School in 2001 when he first noticed all the cars that sat, engines running, while the parents waited for their kids. He saw the same thing at the Kripalu Center, where he was then the director and CEO.

"I started looking around and realizing that at the convenience store, the post office — no matter where — people were leaving their vehicles idling for a long period of time," he said. "What comes out of the tailpipe isn't called pollution for nothing. It is highly toxic for both human health and the environment."

In Lenox, the town adopted a resolution declaring it an idle-free community, and Gregg launched an education initiative, with posters, fliers and even face-to-face meetings, asking people to turn off their engines.

Williamstown soon followed suit.

Now, the Legislature is considering a state law that would ban cars from idling on school grounds. Violators would face a \$100 fine for the first offense and a \$500 fine for subsequent offenses.

Gregg said the goal is to raise awareness.

"We have only made a dent here, because, if you travel around, you will still see lots of idling going on. But like the secondhand tobacco issue, we are raising consciousness, and I am thrilled that the American Lung Association has allowed me to become a partner with them."

State Sen. Benjamin B. Downing, D-Pittsfield, who introduced the proposed law last month, said Gregg pitched the idea of banning idling statewide at a Step It Up climate-change rally in April. They hashed out the possibilities, and Downing emerged with a draft to ban idling on school campuses.

"(Gregg) is an energetic leader and very ambitious in what he wants to do in the commonwealth around environmental issues," Downing said.

Downing called the law "a starting point. There are a variety of different, simple things that we can do to lessen our carbon footprint and ensure a healthier environment and, in the long run, save money and hopefully preserve our communities."

## **The Boston Globe**

### **Dirty Air Poses Threat To Boston Commuters**

Reporting Mish Michaels  
January 17, 2008

BOSTON (WBZ) — There's a health concern for commuters driving into Boston that has little to do with speed or road rage.

The problem is in the air.

The problem lies with diesel fumes pouring out of vehicles, and it's taking a toll on our health.

"It's getting into the bloodstream. It's causing heart attacks. It's causing premature deaths all across Massachusetts," said Danielle Connor of Clean Water Action.

The problem comes from tiny particles in the fumes that we breathe in. Dr. Bruce Hill of the Clean Air Task Force has measured diesel pollution on Boston roadways, including the southeast expressway.

"We found the levels were roughly four times higher in your car than in the downtown area at the same time," Hill said.

When Hill used a device that measured exhaust particles as he followed a truck in traffic, the particle levels rose dramatically.

"It's just flat unhealthy to be following this truck right now," Hill said.

Massachusetts is fifth in the nation for diesel pollution. Suffolk County is the third worst county in the country.

"Everyone is affected -- taking a train, driving a car, school children going to learn," Connor said.

Some Chelsea High School students want people, including lawmakers to know about the problem.

They recorded the number of diesel trucks driving through a Chelsea neighborhood.

"We counted 33 diesel trucks passed by in about 35 minutes," said Rebecca Kelly of Chelsea Green Space.

But there is a simple solution to all the pollution. It's just a matter of installing a particulate filter in the exhaust system.

Woburn-based GEO 2 Technologies developed a filter to retrofit diesel trucks. The cost averages \$5,000 and

effectively eliminates about 90 percent of the particles coming out of the vehicle.

"The problem is real. The solution is here," said Jeremy McLarmid of Environment Northeast.

A bill is now before the legislature that would require retrofits for all state-owned and contracted vehicles. The problem is the cost.

"What would be the cost of lives if we do nothing," WBZ's Mish Michael's asked McLarmid.

"It's 500 premature deaths a year in Massachusetts alone," he answered.

That's a high price to pay for simply commuting to work.

Drivers can protect themselves from harmful fumes during your commute by keeping the windows shut and the air on re-circulate.

As for state school buses, money has been allotted to retrofit all of them within the next two years.

## The Boston Globe

### Waste hauler pays \$107,300 fine for excessive truck idling

#### EPA cites East Boston firm's violations in Revere lot

By Katherine Conti, Globe Staff

February 3, 2008

A local waste hauler has paid federal environmental officials a \$107,300 fine for two days of excessive truck idling.

The US Environmental Protection Agency issued the penalty against Capitol Waste Services, Inc. of East Boston after a two-day investigation of its Lee Burbank Highway lot in Revere revealed more than 100 instances of excessive idling, a violation of federal and state air-quality standards, said a spokeswoman for EPA's New England regional office.

Capitol Waste officials, who recently renewed their hauling contract with Revere, did not appeal the fine and agreed to reduce idling as part of the settlement, said Jeanethe Falvey, EPA spokeswoman.

Capitol Waste owners did not return phone calls for comment.

The company was one of several waste haulers observed last summer by EPA investigators as part of the agency's ongoing National Clean Diesel Campaign, which promotes the reduction of emissions for existing diesel engines through several strategies, including idling reduction, Falvey said.

State regulations prohibit motor vehicles from idling for more than five minutes.

"The pollution from idling engines contributes to ozone smog, fine-particle pollution, and climate change, all of which pose immediate and long-term threats to human health," said Robert Varney, EPA regional administrator. "Our enforcement of anti-idling regulations sends the message that excessive idling will not be tolerated."

This was the EPA's largest fine for excessive idling against a New England company since 2004, when it fined a North Andover furniture company \$109,120. Capitol's violations were observed in the morning, with "excessive warming up of the vehicles," Falvey said.

"This kind of fine, there have only been half a dozen cases throughout New England with about this amount," Falvey said.

"We're obviously very concerned about low-income populations taking on these kinds of health hazards. . . . Capitol settled on the exact penalty that was proposed, which is pretty rare. We've had situations with other companies that agree to fix the problem. If they're doing a lot to help the situation, they get a discount on the penalty," he added.

The city's health agent, Nicholas Catinazzo, said Capitol Waste has been "very good and cooperative with the city."

"I have yet to have a problem with Capitol Waste. They've done a wonderful job for us," he said. "They've cleaned up their site wonderfully."

But Catinazzo acknowledged that the city has never enforced the state idling law.

Catinazzo added that EPA officials did not contact him about the idling violations at Capitol's Revere lot.

T.J. Hellmann, coordinator for an environmental nonprofit program in neighboring Chelsea, said he is encouraged that the EPA is enforcing anti-idling regulations, especially in Revere, which, like Chelsea, has its share of air pollution from diesel trucks and planes from nearby Logan Airport.

In Chelsea, city and environmental officials have successfully enforced idling laws on school buses and even Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority buses.

"Idling is a huge concern and something that's a real simple fix," Hellmann said.

"It doesn't make sense from a business or public health standpoint," he said. "On the business side, you waste money because you're wasting gas, and from a public health standpoint, it's an unnecessary release of small-particulate matter. . . . When something like this happens, it's a wake-up call for other businesses."

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## **The Lowell Sun**

### **Law would ban idling vehicles at schools**

By Hillary Chabot  
September 25, 2007

BOSTON - It started when a teacher complained of an upset stomach at the McCarthy Middle School in Chelmsford.

The illness rippled across the school, hitting a total of 12 teachers and students with a wave of dizziness and nausea. Eight were rushed to the hospital during the 2005 incident.

After extensive tests, the illness was blamed on a blast of carbon monoxide from an idling delivery truck.

New legislation introduced last week by Sen. Ben Downing, D-Pittsfield, would ban all idling vehicles on school grounds.

Downing discussed the bill at a forum about greenhouse-gas emissions yesterday.

"It's one of the simple things we can do to start to address what is far beyond a local issue, to lessen our carbon footprint," Downing said.

But for school officials in Chelmsford, it also could have prevented a lot of sick students and teachers.

"I think it's a great idea," said Chelmsford Business Manager Robert Cruickshank. "We've seen from a school standpoint that anything idling outside the buildings creates a problem inside" as far CO levels.

Currently, vehicles can idle on school grounds for no more than five minutes.

The new law would force them to shut down immediately or face a \$100 fine for the first offense, and a \$500 fine for subsequent offenses.

More than 75,000 students ride 9,000 school buses a day in Massachusetts, and idling can compromise both bus and building air quality, Downing said.

The bill was sparked by a movement in the Berkshires where two communities voluntarily became idle-free on school grounds.

"This is the best way to ensure clean and healthy air for our children, teachers, staff and school-bus drivers," said Rick Gregg, founder of the "Idle-Free" Lenox campaign.

Opponents complain the measure is too difficult to enforce, but Downing believes if it's strictly enforced in the beginning it will become second nature for drivers to turn off their vehicles.

Rep. Geoffrey Hall, D-Westford, supports the measure.

"Knowing that that can happen at any school it certainly make sense," said Hall, who represents a portion of Chelmsford.

## **The Republican**

### **Anti-idling law applies to all vehicles**

March 14, 2007

Did you know there's been an anti-idling law on the books in Massachusetts since the 1970s? It prohibits the idling of any motor vehicle for more than five minutes.

And there are penalties if you are caught - ranging from \$100 to \$25,000.

There are a couple of exceptions - like when a vehicle is being repaired or when the engine's power is necessary for the delivery of a product or service.

But for all buses, trucks, SUVs, vans, sedans, coupes, sports cars - any vehicle - idling for more than five minutes, under ordinary circumstances, is a no-no.

Recently, the town of Longmeadow took part in a new program sponsored by the state Department of Environmental Protection and adopted an idling reduction policy. Kudos to all those who made this possible.

According to Irwin Pers, chairman of the town's Recycling Commission, Longmeadow received a small grant from the DEP to implement the program. Other towns in Western Massachusetts that received similar grants are Agawam, Amherst, Northampton, South Hadley, Westfield and Wilbraham.

After attending a state seminar, the Recycling Commission met with the town's Board of Public Health, the Select Board and the School Committee to develop a plan. "We agreed that the program, at least initially, would not be punitive, but educational," Pers said.

The group decided to concentrate on the pickup and drop-off areas around the schools, where parents line up to drop their children off before school and pick them up at the end of the day. That includes most parents, because there is very little busing in Longmeadow. And many of them sit waiting in those lines for 15 to 20 minutes with their vehicles running.

In early December, the Recycling Commission posted signs near the schools that read "Idle-free Zone." They also published information about the program in school newsletters, sent fliers home to parents and distributed press releases.

"We decided to begin with the schools because kids, with their developing lungs, are most susceptible to the health effects of vehicle exhaust," Pers explained. "Anecdotal information says that people are complying."

In addition to the effort to reduce idling around the schools, there will be a push to get operators of municipal vehicles to reduce their idling.

You can help the effort by not idling your car for more than five minutes anywhere.

The reasons for reducing idling should be obvious to everyone. Vehicle exhaust produces both carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. Carbon monoxide causes respiratory distress, like asthma, which is on the rise, and carbon dioxide is a primary contributor to climate change.

In a very recent publication on global warming, the world's leading climate scientists issued the grim statement that there is more than a 90 percent certainty that humans are to blame for the climate change that is beginning to alter how we live on this planet. They went on to say that if we are to get greenhouse gases under control, then we must begin making changes immediately.

Reducing idling is a simple thing everyone can do. Besides helping the environment, it's a fact that reducing idling is better for your health, for your vehicle's engine and for your pocketbook.

So consider these "do's and don'ts."

When one of your passengers runs into a store for a quick purchase, turn off your engine while you wait in the car.

Don't use a remote starter if you'll be letting your vehicle idle for more than five minutes.



Don't leave your car running while you dash into the coffee shop to grab a quick cup.

And don't start your car in the morning, go back in the house and forget about it. You don't need to warm up any vehicle for more than five minutes.

You'll be doing something good for your health and for the environment.

And besides, it's the law. Christine White, of Longmeadow, is a free-lance writer for The Republican.

## Palm Card Sample

<p><b>Do your share for clean air</b></p>  <p><b>Turn off your engine when waiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exhaust fumes from cars, trucks and buses contain fine particles that can trigger asthma attacks. These exhaust fumes are produced unnecessarily when vehicles idle. Children are particularly vulnerable because their lungs are still developing and they breathe 50 percent more, by volume, than adults.</li><li>Idling vehicles also produce nitrogen oxides, which contribute to smog, and carbon dioxide, which contributes to global warming.</li><li>Excessive idling is not good for your car. It is better to shut off your engine if you stop for more than 10 seconds, unless you are in traffic. Limit warm-up idling in winter to 30 seconds – the best way to warm up your vehicle is to drive it.</li><li>It is against the law in Massachusetts to idle unnecessarily for more than 5 minutes.</li></ul> <p>The Department of Environmental Protection is working with communities across Massachusetts to reduce our exposure to air pollution from idling vehicles. For more information on air quality, please visit MassDEP's Web site at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.mass.gov/dep/air">www.mass.gov/dep/air</a></p>	<p><b>6 Smart Driving Tips</b></p>  <p>The following tips will help you reduce the impact your driving has on the environment and will save you money!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Reduce Speed:</b> Fuel economy decreases rapidly when driving over 60 mph. Every 5 mph you drive over 60 mph decreases fuel economy by seven to 23 percent and adds 12 to 42 cents a gallon at the pump.*</li><li><b>Keep Your Tires Inflated:</b> Fully inflated tires can add 3 percent to your fuel economy or save up to 6 cents per gallon.</li><li><b>Don't Top Off Your Tank:</b> Your car is equipped with a pollution-control device that can be deactivated when you continue to pump gas after the nozzle clicks off.</li><li><b>Tune Up Your Engine:</b> A well-tuned engine improves gas mileage an average of 4 percent.</li><li><b>Replace the Dirty Air Filter:</b> A clean air filter increases gas mileage by about 10 percent.</li><li><b>Turn Off Your Engine When Waiting, Don't Idle:</b> Idling gets no mpg, plus it is illegal! Idling 10 minutes per day uses an average of 26 gallons per year, costing you an additional \$65 at the pump.</li></ol> <p>*Savings based on fuel cost of \$2.50 per gallon.</p> <p> Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper</p>
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**Windshield Static Sticker Sample**

**Do your share  
for clean air**



**Turn your engine off  
when waiting**

**Idle Free Zone Street Street Sign**



**Bumper Sticker**

**I Care About Clean Air.**

**I run my engine only when necessary.**

This is a project of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs with support by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

**No Idling Logo**

