

Washington School Idle-Free Zone Campaign



Unnecessary vehicle idling is a contributor to air pollution and an increased health risk in our state. Ironically, one of the areas where unnecessary idling occurs the most is at schools by parents waiting to drop off and pick up their children.

To illustrate this point, consider this - just one vehicle dropping off and picking up one child at one school puts about three pounds of pollution into the air per month. In addition, idling consumes from ½ gallon to one gallon of fuel per hour, and uses more fuel than turning off and on your engine.

During the rest of the school year and thereafter, Washington School students will be part of a comprehensive "No Idling" program. We encourage you to sign the enclosed "No Idling" pledge form and return it to school with your child by May 8. The class with the highest pledge participation will earn an ice cream party.

We ask that you become an active participant in improving air quality and reducing health risks by eliminating idling in school zones, at ATM machines, at drive-thru lanes, while waiting for a train to pass, and while running into a dry cleaner or other place of business for a "quick stop."

The simple but critical change in behavior of idling your vehicle no longer than 30 seconds will drastically improve the air quality in our neighborhood and the air our children breathe. Idling for more than 3 minutes is also against the law!

Did you know.....

- Vehicle exhaust is the leading source of toxic air pollution in the state of New Jersey.
- Idling consumes from ½ gallon to 1 gallon of fuel per hour and wastes more fuel than turning off and on your vehicle engine.
- It is more efficient to turn off most warmed-up vehicles than to idle for more than 10 seconds.
- Children are affected by vehicle exhaust more than adults. They are closer to tail pipes, and breathe faster and more deeply when they play, allowing pollution to reach more sensitive areas of the lungs. Children breathe 50% more air per pound than adults.
- When idling, your engine is not working at peak operating temperature. This leaves spark plugs dirty, contaminates engine oil, and releases more particulates.
- Engines need no more than 30 seconds of idling on winter days before starting to drive.

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