



Fact Sheet

Fuel Conservation

Idling: Myths vs. Reality

Myth #1

The engine should be warmed up before driving.

Reality

True, the engine must be warmed up, but idling is not an effective way to do it, even in cold weather. The best way to warm up the engine is to drive the vehicle. With today's modern engines, and the advent of electronic engines, you need just about 30 seconds of idling before driving away, even on the coldest winter days. The vehicle's engine warms twice as quickly if driven instead of idled. Easing a vehicle into a drive will also speed up warming or cooling of the cabin's interior.

Myth #2

Idling is good for your engine.

Reality



Excessive idling can actually damage your engine components, including cylinders, spark plugs, and exhaust systems. An idling engine is not operating at its peak temperature, which means that fuel does not undergo complete combustion. This leaves fuel residue that can condense on cylinder walls, where it can contaminate the oil and damage parts of the engine.

For example, fuel residues are often deposited on spark plugs. As you spend more time idling, the average temperature of the spark plug drops. This makes the plug get dirty more quickly, which increases fuel consumption by four to five percent. Excessive idling also allows water to condense in the vehicle's exhaust, leading to corrosion and reduced life span of the exhaust system.

Myth #3

Shutting off and restarting your vehicle is hard on the engine.

Reality

Frequently restarting has little impact on engine components like the battery and starter motor. Component wear caused by restarting the engine is estimated to add \$10 per year to the cost of driving, money likely to be saved many times over due to fuel savings.

Myth #4

Shutting off and restarting your vehicle uses more gas than if you leave it running.

Reality

Engine studies have shown that idling for more than approximately ten seconds burns more fuel than stopping and restarting (Emissions Research and Measurement Division, Environment Canada, 2000).

As a rule of thumb, if you are going to stop for 10 seconds or more - except in traffic - turn off the engine. You'll save money, and you won't produce harmful carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas.

Sources: Hamilton County Environmental, Environmental Defense Fund

Idle Reduction Ordinance

Franklin County

What is “no-idling” language?

No-idling is the reduction/elimination of unnecessary idling of a vehicle (gas, diesel, other).

Benefits



Reducing/eliminating unnecessary idling from diesel and gasoline vehicles will aid Franklin County in meeting federal air quality standards for ozone and particle pollution; save money; reduce wear and tear on engines, reduce health risks associated with gasoline and diesel, and lessen our dependency on foreign oil.

Saves vehicle owners money:

5 minute reduction a day by cars:

« 866,566 (registered passenger vehicles) X 5 = 4,332,830 minutes / 60 minutes = 72,213.8 hours per day X 365 =

« 26,358,049 hours a year reduced @ 0.8 gallons an hour = 21,086,439 gallons a year saved.

If gas is \$2.31 that is \$48,709,674 kept in the pocket!

1 hour of idling each day for a year = almost 1,500 lbs. of CO₂.

Sample Law

This law would be applicable to all public and private vehicles when the temperature is between 32 degrees and 85 degrees. It would limit idling to no

more than 5 minutes in a 60 minute time frame; and 10 minutes in a 60 minute time frame for vehicles loading/unloading in a designated area.

Exemptions

Some exemptions can include: fire, rescue, military or other emergency/ law enforcement vehicle during an emergency; when maintenance is required on the vehicle; armored vehicle

when in use; mechanical difficulties; when necessary to power work-related mechanical operations (other than propulsion).

Model Cities

Those with a city-wide (public and private) no-idling law:

- Cleveland
- Maple Heights
- South Euclid

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Fuel Conservation Language

- a.) **The purpose of this law** is to protect public health and the environment by reducing emissions while conserving fuel, maintaining adequate rest and safety of all drivers of diesel and gasoline powered vehicles, and removing barriers to economic development imposed by the state's air quality status under the federal Clean Air Act.
- b.) **Applicability.** As used in this section, "vehicle" has the same meaning as in section 4511.01 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- c.) **General requirement.** Except as provided in section (d) of this section,
 - (1) the owner or operator of a vehicle shall not cause or allow a vehicle to idle for more than 5 minutes in any 60-minute period; and
 - (2) the owner or operator of a vehicle that is loading or unloading at a loading dock or loading/unloading area, and the operator of the loading dock or loading/unloading area, shall not cause or allow a vehicle to idle in that area for more than 10 minutes in any 60 minute period.
- d.) **Exemptions.** Section (c) of this section does not apply when:
 - (1) The outdoor temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit or above 85 degrees Fahrenheit. However, idling is limited to 10 minutes in any 60 minute period.
 - (2) To prevent a safety or health emergency, a vehicle idles when operating defrosters, heaters, air conditioners, or when installing equipment.
 - (3) A vehicle idles while forced to remain motionless because of on-highway traffic, an official traffic control device or signal, or at the direction of a law enforcement official.
 - (4) A police, fire, ambulance, public safety, military, other emergency or law enforcement vehicle, or any vehicle being used in an emergency capacity, idles while in an emergency or training mode, or to maintain communications, and not solely for the convenience of the vehicle operator.
 - (5) The primary propulsion engine idles for maintenance, servicing, repair, or diagnostic purposes if idling is required for such activity, or idles as part of a state or federal inspection to verify that all equipment is in good working order, provided idling is required as part of the inspection.
 - (6) Idling of the primary propulsion engine is necessary to power work-related mechanical or electrical operations other than propulsion (e.g., mixing or processing cargo or straight truck refrigeration). This exemption does not apply when idling for cabin comfort or to operate non-essential on-board equipment.
 - (7) An armored vehicle idle when a person remains inside the vehicle to guard the contents, or while the vehicle is being loaded or unloaded.
 - (8) An occupied vehicle with a sleeper berth compartment idles for the purposes of air conditioning or heating during a required rest or sleep period.

- (9) A vehicle idles due to mechanical difficulties over which the driver has no control.
- (10) A vehicle is only operating an auxiliary power unit, generator set, or other mobile idle reduction technology as a means to heat, air condition, or provide electrical power as an alternative to idling the main engine.
- (11) A vehicle is actively engaged in work upon the surface of a street or highway, including construction, cleaning, and snow removal activities, and the operator is in the vehicle.

e.) **Penalty.** Whoever violates this section shall be guilty of a minor misdemeanor.

f.) **Idle Reduction enforcement.** The director of Public Safety (or Chief of Police) may designate appropriated employees to enforce this section and to issue citations for any violations of this section.