Anti-Idling Education & Enforcement Program

10 Points

Updated March 2023

Updates include clarified look back and approval periods.

A car is idling when the engine is turned on but the vehicle is not in motion. This practice is not only unnecessary, but also is harmful to the environment and our health. New Jersey has had a no-idling regulation for diesel-fueled commercial vehicles since 1972. This law was updated in 2009 to include a provision that states that, with limited exceptions, *no* motor vehicle (diesel or gasoline fueled) may have its engine running if motionless for more than three consecutive minutes. Despite these provisions, idling continues to occur in communities throughout New Jersey. This action provides guidance on how your town can tackle this important issue.

For certified communities, this action can count toward a Gold Star in Health. See the Gold Star Standard section of this action for more information.

Why is it important?

When we “turn the key” on idling, we reduce the risk of asthma and heart disease and we help improve air quality. Contrary to popular belief, modern cars do not require a warm-up period, and turning a car on and off does not harm the engine. In two minutes, an idling car burns enough gas to travel one mile and on average, a car emits one pound of carbon dioxide (CO2) every mile it’s driven. During the course of a year, the average motor vehicle emits nearly 12,100 pounds, or 6 tons, of emissions into the atmosphere. Estimates are based on data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) Office of Transportation and Air Quality and assume an average fuel consumption of 21.5 miles per gallon.

Nearly 95 percent of auto emissions are CO2 and increased atmospheric levels of CO2 are known to be a main contributor to global climate change. As of January 2011, the EPA officially began regulating the emission of major sources of CO2 and other climate change- causing greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. This includes new regulations for increased fuel efficiency for cars and light trucks. However, even with fuel efficient vehicles, it will continue to be important to reduce CO2 emissions by simply turning off vehicles instead of allowing them to idle.

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 primary component of fine particle pollution and is known to cause or exacerbate a variety of heart and lung ailments.
- Allergies and asthma - Children breathe approximately 50 percent more air per pound of body weight 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. 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.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.

Extra Expense

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

Who should lead and be involved with this action?

Law enforcement personnel, the governing body and mayor of the municipality, the business district or chamber of commerce, schools, school bus companies, PTAs, student groups and clubs, County Environmental Health Officers and Environmental Commissions should lead or be involved with this action.

Timeframe

Completion of the steps necessary to organize and implement an anti-idling education and enforcement program can take between three and five months. 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 low and may consist of only printing and signage costs, in addition to minimal staff time that might be required to foster the program.

To help estimate the costs, take into consideration that the NJ Department of Environmental Protection’s no idling signs cost $14.50+shipping (note: some counties have sign shops that might lower this cost); add to that the cost of purchasing a sign post (if needed), as well as staff time for installation and enforcement activities.

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

Below we have listed the requirements for earning points for this action.

1) To earn points for an anti-idling program, towns must: a) identify and map priority anti-idling locations throughout the community **AND** complete at least **three** of the following actions: b) pass an Anti-Idling Resolution by act of the municipal governing body; c) post No Idling signs at priority anti-idling locations; d) develop a detailed enforcement plan for priority anti-idling locations; e) produce educational materials and distribute them to the community; and/or f) provide detailed a report on the results/findings of your monitoring and evaluation efforts. The Resolution must be in effect during the **current or previous year** of the municipality's application for certification to receive credit for this action; and all other actions (items a) and c) to f) above) must have also occurred during the **current or previous year** of the municipality’s application for certification.

2) Anti-idling Resolutions must reflect all of the elements listed in the “What to Include in an Anti-Idling Resolution” in Section B below. For all other actions, they must be documented in the manner listed in the required program documentation section under the “What to submit to earn points for this action”. To receive points, a municipality must demonstrate that it played a role in supporting the anti-idling program.

We have provided extensive guidance and recommendations for implementing this action in the section that follows. You do not need to follow this guidance exactly as long as your final product meets the submission requirements.

A. Recommended Action Plan

The following item is mandatory to earn points for this action.

- Identify and prioritize frequent idling locations throughout the community, including schools, banks, drive-throughs, convenience stores, bus and truck depots, and other businesses with fleet vehicles (private waste companies, construction companies, etc.). These locations must be mapped. (This item is mandatory to earn points for this action and must identify frequent-idling locations throughout the community, not just at one facility or building.)

At least THREE of the following items must be completed to earn points for this action.

- Develop and pass an Anti-Idling Resolution by act of the municipal governing body. Resolutions can be used to bring attention to the idling issue and put it on the priority list for enforcement by local authorities. Refer to Section B below entitled “What to Include in an Anti-Idling Resolution” for details on required components.
- Post No Idling signs at priority anti-idling locations. Where the targeted locations involve private businesses, you will need to reach out to the business/property owners regarding the no idling initiative and ask for their participation and permission to install the sign(s).
- Create an enforcement plan for priority anti-idling locations throughout the community to reinforce the existing DEP regulation that idling for longer than 3 minutes is illegal, with instructions on how to enforce it. Refer to Section C below titled “Anti-Idling Enforcement” for more information.
- Produce educational materials and distribute to residents and businesses via public service announcements, newsletters, websites, educational materials, etc. It is advisable to do special outreach to businesses with fleet vehicles to encourage participation in the community’s no idling initiative. 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 anti-idling signs and pledge forms. See Resources section below for examples and detailed information. Work with others to educate residents about the policy. For example, ask local school administrators to distribute literature at school drop off and pick up locations, and encourage businesses to post “No-Idling” signs in their parking lots and drive-throughs etc. Work with police to hand out warnings and have a policy to ticket multiple offenders.
- Monitor, evaluate and report on your efforts by keeping track of outreach efforts and the number of warnings or tickets, and observe target locations for improved compliance.

B. What to Include in an Anti-Idling Resolution

The following items are considered best practices and must be reflected in the Resolution submitted to get credit for the action. Please note that the Idle Free New Jersey program by Clean Water Action has developed a model No-Idling Resolution for municipalities that is available at http://cleanwateraction.org/files/publications/nj/noidlingresolutionmuni.pdf and makes an excellent starting point. At a minimum, all Anti-Idling Resolutions should:

- Reflect an intent to reduce all motor vehicle idling, including gasoline and/or diesel powered vehicles.
- Encourage all gasoline and/or diesel powered motor vehicle operators - to turn off their engines after 10 seconds.
- Target anti-idling efforts at frequent-idling locations such as school drop-off and pick-up areas, drive through windows, gas stations, parking lots, etc.
- Include municipally-owned vehicles in the anti-idling campaign, granting an exception where safety is a concern.
- Support broad education of the public about the health, environmental and economic impacts of idling and ways to reduce idling.

C. Anti-Idling Enforcement

1. Enforcement Authority

The NJDEP's "Stop the Soot" program gives a good overview of anti-idling enforcement authority at http://www.stopthesoot.org/sts-idle-enforce.htm. To summarize:

Local/State Police

The following statutes underpin local and state police authority to enforce motor vehicle idling for diesel and gasoline engines:

- Motor vehicle statute C. 39:3-70.2 was revised by the 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 the Air Pollution Control Act C. 26:2C-1 should be cited.
- Recent revision raises the 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).

In addition, it is important to note that:

- Idling can be enforced on public roadways.
- Penalty monies go to local police/municipality.
- State police also conduct roadside enforcement/inspection program(s) 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.

2. Penalties/Fines:

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.

- Per Title 39 of the Motor Vehicle Code (39:3-70.2): Any person who operates a motor vehicle or owns a motor vehicle, other than a school bus, which the person permits to idle in violation of rules and regulations, or to be operated upon the public highways of the State when the motor vehicle is emitting smoke and other air contaminants in excess of standards adopted by the Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to the "Air Pollution Control Act (1954)," P.L.1954, c.212 (C.26:2C-1 et seq.) shall be liable to a penalty of not less than $250 nor more than $1,000 per day, per vehicle, which shall be enforced in accordance with the provisions of chapter 5 of Title 39 of the Revised Statutes and P.L.2005, c.219 (C.26:2C-8.26 et al.).
- The owner of any school bus that is operated or is permitted to idle in violation of rules and regulations adopted pursuant to the Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to the "Air Pollution Control Act (1954)," P.L.1954, c.212 (C.26:2C-1 et seq.) or any applicable rules and regulations adopted pursuant to P.L.2005, c.219 (C.26:2C-8.26 et al.) shall be liable for a penalty of not less than $250 nor more than $1,000 per day, per vehicle, which shall be enforced in accordance with the provisions of chapter 5 of Title 39 of the Revised Statutes, except that no penalty may be assessed against any driver of a school bus who is not the owner of the school bus.

3. Exemptions:

- Limited exceptions to the mandatory 3-minute idling regulation 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, buses 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. Note that 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 running the engine when it is in the best interests of public safety or the safety of firefighters, such as heating a vehicle to keep personnel warm when they're working outside in low temperatures, or cooling a vehicle to for personnel working in extreme heat.

What to submit to earn points for this action

In order to earn points, your submission must meet the following standards:

1) To earn points for an anti-idling program, towns **must** identify and map priority anti-idling locations throughout the community **AND** complete at least **THREE** of the following actions:

- pass an Anti-Idling Resolution by act of the municipal governing body
- post No Idling signs at priority anti-idling locations
- develop a detailed enforcement plan for priority anti-idling locations
- produce educational materials and distribute them to the community
- provide detailed a report on the results/findings of your monitoring and evaluation efforts.

All actions items above must have occurred during the **current or previous year** of the municipality's application for certification. (The Resolution could have been adopted prior to that period, but must be in effect during the **current or previous year** of the municipality's application for certification).

2) Anti-idling Resolutions must reflect all of the elements listed in the "What to Include in an Anti-Idling Resolution" in Section B below. For all other actions, they must be documented in the manner listed in the required program documentation section under the "What to submit to get credit/points." To receive points, a municipality must demonstrate that it played a role in supporting the anti-idling program.

Submit the following documentation to verify the action was completed to the above standards. (Log in to the password protected webpage where you submit your online application for certification to write in the text box and upload documents).

In the text box, please provide a short narrative (300 word max) describing the anti-idling program, the project team involved and any outreach, educational and/or enforcement efforts undertaken to date. Be sure to clarify the municipality's role in supporting the anti-idling program.

- Upload: Copy of the map of prioritized anti-idling locations in the community. Please note that this map must identify frequent-idling locations throughout the community, not just at one facility or building.
- Upload: **at least three** of the following, depending on the actions your community is submitting for consideration.
    - Certified copy of the anti-idling resolution as adopted by the governing body.
    - Photographs of any no idling signs that have been installed at priority anti-idling locations. Photos must be taken on-site to show that signs have been installed.
    - Copy of a detailed enforcement plan for priority anti-idling locations. This should give an overview of what kind of enforcement activities have been agreed upon, particularly with the police, as well as any other activities or events.
    - Copy of any educational materials produced and distributed along with a description of how you worked with others to educate residents.
    - Copy of a detailed report on the results / findings of your monitoring and evaluation efforts for your Anti-Idling Program.

Approved Action Expiration Date

Approved actions will be set to expire at the end of the calendar year following the action's approval. For example, if the action was approved in 2023, it will be set to expire on December 31, 2024.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

There is a limit of six uploaded documents per action and individual files must not exceed 50 MB. Excerpts of relevant information from large documents are recommended.

All action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submissions should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

Gold Star Standard

Successful completion of this action will meet the requirement of an Additional action for earning a Gold Star in Health. For more information on earning a Gold Star in Health see the Gold Star Standards section of the website.

Spotlight: What NJ municipalities

Oakland Borough, Bergen County, NJ

Created an anti-idling campaign around its school facilities, taking action by: observing/recording the idling practices at the schools; sending out surveys to teachers; sponsoring a poster contest to raise awareness on the effects of idling; distributing pens and pencils with their anti-idling slogan; installing no idling signs at the schools and Board of Education; placing an informative note on Channel 77 (local cable news channel).

Resources

Clean Water Action – Idle Free New Jersey -

http://cleanwateraction.org/node/155

New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 7, Chapter 27, Air Pollution Control

http://www.nj.gov/dep/aqm/rules27.html

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection -- General Information on Idling Stop the Soot –

http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/index.htm

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection -- How clean is YOUR air?

Check out the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP)'s website for a daily reading of your region's air quality.

http://www.njaqinow.net/Default.ltr.aspx

No-Idling pledge forms –

For parents at http://www.nj.gov/dep/stopthesoot/No-Idling%20Pledge%20-%20Parents.pdf

For school districts at http://www.nj.gov/dep/stopthesoot/No-Idling%20Pledge%20-%20School%20Districts.pdf

For bus companies at http://www.nj.gov/dep/stopthesoot/No-Idling%20Pledge%20-%20Bus%20Companies.pdf

PS Clean Air Agency -

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

Sample No-Idling signs –

http://www.state.nj.us/dep/stopthesoot/signsamples.pdf

Transportation Management Associations -

Your local Transportation Management Association (TMA) can provide expertise and guidance regarding your No Idling Program. Visit the TMA Council of New Jersey's website to find out how to contact your town's local TMA:

http://tmacouncilnj.org/