



Idling Questions and Answers

What is idling?

Cars, vans and trucks are idling when their engines are running, but the vehicles are parked, sitting in a drive-through line or waiting for passengers. Idling is harmful, wasteful and costly. Idling pollutes the air at ground level – where we breathe.

How is idling harmful?

Vehicles emit many harmful pollutants such as carbon monoxide. Vehicle emissions contribute to ground-level ozone air pollution, a dangerous lung irritant.

Heavy-duty diesel vehicles also create high levels of particulate pollution. Exposure to this exhaust can cause lung damage and respiratory problems. It can also make asthma and allergy symptoms worse, especially for children.

How does idling hurt your wallet?

Letting the engine of any vehicle idle wastes fuel and money, giving you ZERO miles to the gallon.

How do state regulations affect you?

Since idling affects air quality and creates health concerns, the state of Missouri limits idling for heavy-duty diesel vehicles in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas. The regulation applies to all public, commercial and institutional diesel vehicles weighing more than 10,000 pounds. Examples include work vans, delivery trucks and buses, both short and long. These vehicles must limit idling to no more than five minutes in any 60-minute period. See the inside for more information.



MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

PO Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
For the web at dnr.mo.gov/env/apcp
800-361-4827

Air Pollution Control Program - 573-751-4817
St. Louis Regional Office - 314-416-2960
Kansas City Regional Office - 816-251-0716

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Turn Off the Engine. Protect Air Quality. Save Gas and Money.

Help Reduce Emissions from Idling Vehicles.



Idling Facts

Myth - I need to warm up my vehicle's engine several minutes before driving.

Fact - Idling is not an effective way to warm up your vehicle. A 30-second idle at start-up to properly circulate engine oil is sufficient, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

Myth - It takes more gas to start my car than it does to let it run.

Fact - Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than restarting.

Myth - Repeatedly turning my engine on and off wears out the starter.

Fact - Idling is harder on your engine than restarting. Frequent restarting causes only about \$10 worth of wear and tear a year.

Myth - I should leave a diesel engine on when stopped for deliveries.

Fact - Deliveries often take longer than expected. It makes sense for drivers of all vehicles to turn off their engines during deliveries.



State of Missouri Idling Restrictions

Idling of heavy-duty diesel vehicles is limited in St. Louis, Jefferson, Franklin, St. Charles counties and the city of St. Louis. The Kansas City area includes Clay, Platte and Jackson counties. These vehicles must limit idling to no more than five minutes in any 60-minute period. Local ordinances may be stricter; for example, St. Louis County limits idling to no more than three minutes.

Exceptions and Exemptions

Exemptions from state regulations, 10 CSR 10-5.385 and 10-2.385, include emergency or law enforcement vehicles. In addition, idling may be necessary to operate equipment to prevent a safety or health emergency. Learn more at sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/10csr/10csr.

Help Keep Our Air Safe to Breathe

Schools

Reducing idling at schools is important because air pollution affects children the most. Children's lungs are sensitive and still developing; in fact, children breathe 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than adults do. In addition, school districts can reap significant savings. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, when just one school bus driver cuts idling time by five minutes per day, a district saves 7.5 gallons of fuel each year. Imagine the cost benefits if all drivers did this.

Some school districts in the state have started programs to reduce idling by bus drivers and by parents who pick up and drop off children. Learn how to start an idling reduction campaign by visiting epa.gov/cleandiesel/clean-school-bus#prog and epa.gov/region8/idle-free-schools. These sites provide toolkits, which include videos, sample policies, parent letters, pledge forms and other resources.

Fleet Managers

Municipal governments and companies that operate heavy-duty diesel vehicles can have a significant impact on public



Students at the Center for Creative Learning in the Rockwood School District, St. Louis County, started an idling reduction program. They passed out reminder cards to the bus drivers, wrote letters to parents and were instrumental in helping the Rockwood School District adopt an anti-idling policy.

health and the environment by limiting idling. The American Trucking Association reports that engine idling not associated with normal driving makes up 30 to 50 percent of truck operating hours.

Fleet managers can improve air quality by adopting and promoting policies to minimize engine idling. Learn about idle reduction technologies, and strategies to educate and remind drivers at afdc.energy.gov/conserv/idle_reduction_basics.html and cleancities.energy.gov/technical-assistance/idlebox/.