



Cities & counties on the front lines of
climate, sustainability, & energy action

Less Idling Equals Forward Progress in Burlington

Feb 01, 2010

filed under: saving money smart transportation climate mitigation



Image credit: Simone Ramella via Flickr Creative Commons

How do you engage your community in efforts to reduce vehicle idling? There is a method, and New England local governments have helped define it. Burlington, VT, established its first ordinance in 1990 and strengthened it at the end of 2009.

Last week, in a Burlington Free Press editorial, Wayne Michaud, director of the Idle-Free VT campaign, encouraged Burlingtonians to “do the right thing and stop idling” by explaining the key benefits of anti-idling ordinances, especially with diesel school buses: cleaner air, healthier children, less fuel and money wasted.

Michaud also laid out the four basic challenges to getting community cooperation on idling reduction:

- Increasing awareness about why anti-idling initiatives are so important.
- Cutting through misperceptions on anti-idling (that vehicles need extensive time to warm up, etc.).
- Understanding the small sacrifices that anti-idling may require (namely, optimal warmth and comfort in cold winter climates)
- Motivating people to save fuel and money

The piece is worth a read for any local government staffer interested in anti-idling initiatives. ICLEI, as you may know, has been promoting the benefits of anti-idling for years, and our free Northeast Clean School Bus Initiative contains toolkits on idle reduction, diesel retrofits, and biodiesel, as well as case studies from Northeast local governments like Hamden, CT, and Brattleboro, VT.

Another great resource on anti-idling is the Idle-Free VT website.