



FACT SHEET: MAKING SCHOOL NO-IDLING GUIDELINES WORK

Adopting a no-idling guideline such as an administrative procedure (recommended) or policy for vehicles other than school buses on school grounds can really make a positive difference in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving energy, and protecting the health of students. The EPA¹ tells us that:

“Monitoring at schools has shown elevated levels of benzene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde and other air toxics during the afternoon hour coinciding with parents picking up their children. Children’s lungs are still developing, and when they are exposed to elevated levels of these pollutants, children have an increased risk of developing asthma, respiratory problems and other adverse health effects. Limiting a vehicle’s idling time can dramatically reduce these pollutants and children’s exposure to them.”

Adopting this guideline can present an enforcement challenge, requiring school staff or others to perform idling driver interventions in school pickup lines and parking lots. But taking a few other proactive steps can result in a successful procedure or policy, while limiting unpleasant, time-consuming interventions. Here is how it can work:

- **Letter to parents:** once annually, informing them of the guideline – resource here¹
- **Reinforcement reminders:** remind school community about the guideline in school newsletters several times a year
- **Delivery vehicles:** inform them of the guideline and consider including its provisions upon contract renewal
- **Idling driver contact event:** consider conducting once a school year for two consecutive days. Can be a great student-led educational exercise with guidance of staff or parents – resource here¹
- **No idling signs:** new no idling signs, stating no-idling is the law, can be ordered at AHS VOWP Print & Sign Shop by contacting Dustin.Horne@state.vt.us 802-334-8995
- **The law:** Vermont’s prohibited idling of motor vehicles law², limits idling of all vehicles to five minutes in any 60 minute period (with exceptions). While the goal remains that there be no idling around school buildings, this new law makes a guideline more effective and allows administrators more enforcement leverage.



¹ EPA Region 8 Idle Free Schools <http://www2.epa.gov/region8/idle-free-schools>

² Prohibited idling of motor vehicles <http://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/23/013/01110>