

Letters to the Editor

Bristol would benefit from non-idling police cruisers

Re: "Bristol cops ask voters for new ride" (*Independent*, Jan. 23). I would like to suggest that a new Bristol Police Department cruiser be equipped with a device that will reduce the need for parked idling, saving town taxpayers money while benefitting our health and air quality. Other police departments are equipping their fleets with sophisticated battery packs that power all electronics — emergency equipment, computers, etc. — when the ignition is turned off.

Let's just say the new BPD cruiser will idle while parked for five hours

daily. Such a device would reduce this to about one hour daily. The approximate savings in those four idle-free hours, daily and annually (300 day work year):

- 120 miles of engine wear (idling for an hour is the equivalent of about 30 miles of traveling); 36,000 miles annually. Maintenance costs are lowered, and vehicle life is extended.
- 3 gallons of gasoline (a police cruiser idling for an hour burns about 0.75 gallons); 900 gallons annually.
- 80 pounds of CO₂ emissions (a gasoline engine idling for an hour emits about 20 pounds of CO₂);

24,000 pounds annually.

These devices are not cheap, costing around \$5,000 (such as the Energy Xtreme Law Enforcement IP series). But depending on the price the BPD pays for gas, a return on investment of about one to two years can be expected, considering all savings factors. Also, these devices may be eligible for a state or federal grant.

This is potentially a big win-win for the town of Bristol.

**Wayne Michaud
Idle-Free VT Inc.
Bristol**