

IDLE FREE CENTRAL OHIO

ABOUT

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) idle free campaign encourages central Ohioans to support clean air by reducing unnecessary motor vehicle idling. Idling is when a driver leaves the engine running unnecessarily while the vehicle is parked, contributing to greater air pollution and fuel consumption. The goal of this campaign is to raise awareness about the harmful health effects of unnecessary idling, the cost savings of reduced idling, and the need for policies and education that lead to positive environmental and health outcomes. MORPC encourages businesses, local governments, and other organizations to adopt an idle-free policy. Once a policy is established, MORPC can provide free parking lot signs and other materials to educate visitors and employees.

ELIGIBILITY

Local governments, businesses, schools, hospitals, and non-profits are all eligible to participate. MORPC distributes a limited number of parking lot signs (image below) on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants must be within MORPC's 15 county region (Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Hocking, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Perry, Pickaway, Ross, and Union counties). Each recipient must have an internal idle free policy in place. If a policy does not currently exist, MORPC will provide policy templates and can work with interested organizations to develop the language. The number of signs per participant will be distributed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the size of the site. The signs can either be installed on a pole or onto a building.

OUTREACH

Participants will receive educational materials to send to employees, including sample email messages. MORPC staff will also be available to provide a presentation to employees about the campaign and the air quality program. Participants will be publicized through a press release at the end of the year, and throughout the year at morpc.org/airquality and MORPC's social media pages.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Chemicals from vehicle exhaust are harmful and can make asthma worse.
- Most people waste 1-2 tanks of gas every year by idling.
- Idling more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than restarting the engine.



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SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

WHEREAS, to minimize air pollution and maximize fuel efficiency, it is the responsibility of all city employees to operate city vehicles and equipment in an environmentally and economically responsible manner; and

WHEREAS, one hour of idling consumes approximately one gallon of fuel; and

WHEREAS, idling for one hour equates to approximately 33 miles of engine wear on a standard automobile; and

WHEREAS, idling causes premature engine wear. An idling engine creates minimal oil pressure resulting in insufficient engine lubrication; and

WHEREAS, diesel engines actually cool-down when idling during the wintertime, causing cab heat-loss; and

WHEREAS, drivers are exposed to elevated levels of exhaust while a vehicle is idling due to the lack of air circulation that typically occurs while the vehicle is in motion; and

WHEREAS, idling contributes to poor air quality that may result in non-attainment of federal standards and additional controls; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [insert name of Mayor], declare and institute this Executive Order outlining Vehicle Idling and Fuel Conservation Conduct. City employees operating city-owned vehicles are to:

- Not allow city vehicles and equipment to idle for any length of time unless idling the vehicle is necessary to accomplish a work-related task.
- Minimize idling and conserve fuel whenever possible.
- Ensure an assigned vehicle is properly maintained.
- Ensure tires are properly inflated. Under inflation decreases fuel economy and cuts short the life of the tire.
- Plan and map out trips to minimize distances traveled.
- Avoid “jackrabbit” starts by accelerating gradually and anticipate stops to avoid sudden braking.
- Obey posted speed limits. Excessive speed reduces fuel economy, increases air pollution, creates hazardous driving conditions and is unlawful.
- Carpool whenever possible or practical.
- Schedule meetings wisely, especially if travel is required. Meeting times and locations should be selected so as to minimize the travel of the majority of the participants.
- Reduce the amount of vehicle warm-up time. Consult vehicle manual to determine the manufacturer’s recommendations for guidance on idling in extreme weather conditions.
- Eliminate unnecessary weight in the vehicle.
- Ensure that vehicle emission controls, systems, and components, are not altered or disconnected unless approved by the Administrator of the Fleet Management Division.

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