

# TO IDLE OR NOT TO IDLE; THAT IS THE QUESTION



The Environmental Commission would like to highlight different areas that you can focus on and point out ways you can help improve your environment. Today's topic deals with you and your automobile.

According to the EPA, driving a car is the single most polluting thing most of us do and in the State of New Jersey it is one of the largest sources of pollutants. These particles and gases are a cause of asthma and allergies, especially among children, and increase the risk of cancer, heart and lung diseases.

Living in Watchung makes the automobile a necessity, but there are many things you can do to lessen your car's impact on the air that we breathe. Read the list below and see if some changes in your behavior can reduce the amount of diesel soot and vehicle exhaust you contribute.

- Idling your car for 10 seconds uses more fuel than turning the car off and on.
- Cars warm up faster when moving.
- It does not harm your car to turn it off and on.
- When idling, you get zero miles per gallon.
- Excessive idling can damage your car's engine.
- If you are waiting in line at a drive-thru you will use less fuel if you put the car in neutral.
- If the weather is nice and the establishment is open, park and go inside to transact your business. Burn calories not fuel.
- Idling for 20 minutes generated the same amount of hazardous emissions as driving nearly 320 miles.
- Idling more than 3 minutes is against the law in New Jersey.





STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

# Idling Regulations & Idling Enforcement

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# What is idling?

The New Jersey DEP definition of idling is:

**Idling is an operating mode where the vehicle engine is in operation while the vehicle is stationary at any location.**

(gasoline and diesel defined slightly differently)

# Why enforce excessive idling?

## To reduce air and noise pollution

On-road mobile sources produce:

51-64% of New Jersey's CO emissions\*

20-23% of New Jersey's volatile organic compounds (VOC)\*

51-58% of New Jersey's overall NOx emissions\*

11% of New Jersey's fine particulate emissions\*

33% of air toxics\*\*

\*<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/baqp/inventory.html>

\*\*<http://www.nj.gov/dep/airtoxics/sourceso05.htm>

# **Other benefits of reduced idling:**

- Less fossil fuel use
- Less equipment wear/maintenance

# **New Jersey's idling regulations:**

- **Were adopted in 1986**
- **Are found here:**

**NEW JERSEY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE  
TITLE 7  
CHAPTER 27  
SUBCHAPTER 14 (diesel)  
SUBCHAPTER 15 (gasoline)**

Last revision was in 2009

# How much idling is allowed?

No person shall cause, suffer, allow, or permit the engine of a diesel or gas powered motor vehicle to idle for more than **3 consecutive minutes** if the vehicle is not in motion.

**However, exceptions allow additional idling when...**

# Idling exceptions

- Vehicle being actively serviced or repaired.
- Below 25 F° for up to 15 minutes  
(no exception in New Jersey for high heat)
- Busses while it is actively discharging or picking up passengers  
may idle for 15 consecutive minutes in a 60-minute period
- Motor vehicle idling in traffic, In queue or congestion.  
(*i.e.* bank drive-thru, dump truck loading)
- Cargo refrigeration requiring engine power  
(most are self powered and therefore not exempt)



# More idling exceptions

- Vehicles actively using Hydraulic/mechanical equipment such as: lift gates, movable beds, compactors, cement trucks, hydraulic rams etc.
- A vehicle equipped with a sleeper berth and model year 2007 or newer engine, or has been retrofitted with a diesel particulate filter.

# **Parking spaces with available electrification technology**

Diesel-powered motor vehicles may not idle for more than three consecutive minutes when parked in a parking space with available electrification technology.

# Auxiliary Power Units



The operation of technology designed to reduce engine idling, such as auxiliary or alternate power units (APUs), generator sets, and bunk heaters are accepted, provided the vehicle's main engine is not operating.

# Who enforces idling?

- The DEP
- The EPA
- Health Departments
- Police (Motor vehicle statute C. 39:3-70.2)

# When a violation is found

- Both the driver and the facility where the idling took place are cited and fined
- Only the driver is fined if anti-idling signs are clearly posted



# Anti idling signs are recommended



- Remind drivers to turn off engines
- Lower risk of penalties

# Penalties

1<sup>st</sup> offense:      Passenger vehicle registration = \$100 each vehicle  
                         Commercial vehicle registration = \$250 each vehicle

Subsequent offenses:      \$200 - \$1,500 each vehicle

**Multiple vehicles and/or offenses can result in large penalties...**

# Penalty examples

**Boston-Based Bus Company Agrees To \$650,000 Penalty For 234 Violations of the Clean Air Act and Anti-Idling Regulations;** (Boston, Mass. – August 4, 2009) – **Paul Revere Transportation LLC**, a bus company based in Boston, has agreed to pay a \$650,000 civil penalty after being found liable by a jury in June for violating federal and state clean air laws for idling their buses for extended periods of time, the Justice Department and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today.

**Waste Hauler Pays \$195,000 for Truck Idling in Massachusetts;** (Boston, Mass. – Aug. 13, 2008) - **Allied Waste Services** of Massachusetts will pay a \$195,000 penalty to settle an environmental enforcement case brought by EPA and the U.S. Department of Justice for excessive motor vehicle idling.

Source: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)



# More penalty examples

**Bus Companies Will Pay More Than \$237,000, Settling Environmental Violations in Three New England States;** (Boston, Mass. - January 10, 2007) - Three bus companies in Conn., R.I. and Mass., jointly owned and operated by **Peter Pan Bus Lines**, will pay \$237,179 in penalties and will install new filters on most of their buses to settle violations of federal clean air and clean water rules.

**Cash Up in Smoke: Another Bay State Waste Hauler Cited for Idling;** (Boston, Mass. – Oct. 29, 2008) – For the third time this year, EPA has cited a Massachusetts waste hauler for exceeding the state’s five minute idling limit. **Waste Management** of Massachusetts, Inc. will pay a penalty of \$27,200 for excessive idling at its Stoughton, Taunton and West Boylston, Mass. depots. In total, EPA has collected \$329,500 in penalties for idling violations from Capitol Waste Services, Allied Waste Services, and Waste Management.

# Typical idling locations

- Schools/sensitive populations
- Bus and truck yards
- Industrial parks
- Along roadways
- Seaports/airports
- Stadiums/arenas/public attractions
- Rest stops
- Any location identified by a citizen complaint

# DEP idling investigations

**When is the DEP enforcing idling?**

- During scheduled idling surveillance
- In response to citizen complaints
- If idling is identified during other field assignments.

# DEP idling investigations

- Typically conducted in marked state vehicles (stickers and tags)
- Inspectors clock vehicles
- Usually the driver & facility manager is notified immediately with a Notice of Violation (NOV)
- Some drivers are served a NOV by registered mail when:
  - Uncooperative
  - NOV is refused
  - Driver is unavailable (sleeping or unoccupied vehicle)

# Common misunderstandings

- Charging air brakes is not exempt  
(unless the mfg. specs indicates charge time is >3minutes)
- Turbo/supercharger cool-down is not exempt  
(unless the mfg. specs indicates charge time is >3minutes)
- Diesel Particulate filter regeneration is not exempt  
(unless following mfg. specs)
- Repairs

# More common misunderstandings

- Does auxiliary equipment need engine power
- Refrigeration systems
- Vehicle can't restart or is in disrepair

# Resources

- Idling complaints: Call the DEP 24-hour Hotline: **877-WARN-DEP**
- NJ Idling regulations: **[www.state.nj.us/dep/aqm/](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/aqm/)**
- General info and to buy anti idling signs: **[www.stopthesoot.org](http://www.stopthesoot.org)**