

# **IDLING FACT SHEET**

## **What is idling?**

Idling occurs when a motor vehicle with a diesel or gasoline engine is running but the vehicle is not in motion. Excessive idling causes an unnecessary release of air contaminants into the air in New Jersey, including fine particulates and air toxics. Every year, hundreds of New Jerseyans die prematurely from exposure to diesel exhaust. Fine particle pollution may actually cause more deaths in NJ than homicides and car accidents combined. New Jersey has laws which prohibit the idling of a vehicle for more than 3 minutes, with certain exceptions as explained below.

## **What triggers an idling investigation?**

You can report excessive idling, see below for contact information. The Department or your local health department will initiate an investigation in response to complaints from one or more citizens regarding an illegally idling vehicle.

## **Do all idling complaints result in violations?**

No. In order to verify a complaint and issue an enforcement action, an investigation must be performed and the investigator must verify that the idling exceeds the three minute limit and is not allowed by one of the exceptions in the idling rule. Also, the Department can not enforce the idling rule on the public roadways or on residential property. Idling on the public roadways can be enforced by State and local police departments.

## **How do we investigate an idling complaint?**

1. After receiving a complaint, the inspector will first go to the specified location and attempt to verify the idling at that location.
2. If the inspector observes idling that exceeds the three minute standard, and is not allowed by one of the exceptions in the idling rule, the driver of the vehicle will be issued a field Notice of Violation.
3. The registered owner of the vehicle will then be mailed an Administrative Order, with penalty, to cease any further idling.

## **Will a facility receive a penalty for an idling violation?**

Yes. First offense for a verified violation for idling will result in assessed penalties of \$250. Subsequent or continuing violations may be subject to penalties of up to \$1,000 per violation. Both the registered owner of the vehicle and the owner of the property where the idling occurs may be subject to these penalties.

## **Are there exceptions to the three minute idling rule?**

Diesel vehicles may idle for three minutes with the following exceptions:

- May idle for up to 15 consecutive minutes when the vehicle has been stopped for 3 or more hours and ONLY if temperature is <25 degrees F \*

- Buses may idle while actively discharging or picking up passengers for 15 consecutive minutes in a 60 minute period \*
- As of May 1, 2008, no idling is allowed in a parking space with available electrification technology \*

Three minute idling limit does NOT apply to:

- Motor vehicles stopped in traffic
- Motor vehicles whose primary power source is utilized in whole or in part for necessary and prescribed mechanical operations such as refrigeration units for perishable loads, hydraulic lifts, “cherry pickers”, or similar equipment
- Motor vehicles waiting to be examined by state or federal motor vehicle inspectors or motor vehicles while being repaired
- Vehicles that are actively performing emergency services, such as fire, police, military, snow removal, and utility vehicles
- A motor vehicle with a sleeper berth being used in a non-residential area only until April 30, 2010 \*
- Operation of auxiliary or alternate power systems for cabin comfort

\* Please note that these requirements are new or modified as of July 25, 2007

**Is there additional information published anywhere?**

Yes, the idling rules are available on line at:

[http://www.state.nj.us/dep/aqm/Sub14\\_Rule.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/aqm/Sub14_Rule.pdf) for diesel vehicles

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/aqm/Sub15v2002-12-26.pdf> for gasoline vehicles

There is also some great information at the Departments Stop the Soot website, including a Frequently Asked Questions page. The Stop the Soot website can be found at:

<http://www.StopTheSoot.org/>

**Who can I call if I wish to submit a complaint have a question about idling?**

**CALL IN COMPLAINTS OF IDLING TO THE DEPs 24 HOUR TOLL-FREE ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE at 1-877 WARN DEP ( 1-877-927-6337)**

You may call the regional field office that corresponds to your geographical area (county):

**Northern Regional Office** (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren)

973 656-4444

**Central Regional Office** (Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean)

609 292-3187

**Southern Regional Office** (Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem)

856 614-3601