

Reduce Idling to Prevent Air Pollution

DEQ encourages efforts to reduce idling because vehicle exhaust is a major source of air pollution in Oregon

About 40 to 50 percent of air toxics in Oregon come from vehicle exhaust. Air toxics are pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health problems.

Vehicle exhaust contains:

- Benzene which is known to cause cancer.
- Chemicals that produce smog; smog worsens asthma and other breathing problems.
- Fine particle pollution which worsens breathing and heart problems.

Children are particularly sensitive to vehicle exhaust

Multiple studies link vehicle exhaust to increased rates of cancer, heart and lung disease and asthma. Children are especially sensitive because their lungs are still developing and they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults.

Facts about idling:

- Twenty seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting the engine.
- Restarting a car more frequently has little impact on the battery and starter motor.
- Excessive idling is hard on your engine, contaminates engine oil and makes spark plus dirty.
- Exhaust levels are higher in an idling car than at roadside.

Anti-idling efforts support DEQ's strategic directions which include:

- Promoting sustainable practices.
- Improving Oregon's air.
- Protecting people and the environment from toxics.
- Involving Oregonians in solving problems.



Windshield reminder decal available from DEQ

What you can do to reduce idling:

- Turn off the engine if you anticipate being stopped 20 seconds or more.
- Put a "Turn Off Your Car" reminder decal on your windshield.
- Reduce warm-up idling. Modern engines need no more than 30 seconds of warm-up idling even on the coldest days.
- Spread the word to family, friends, neighbors and schools.
- Start an anti-idling program at your workplace, school or place of worship.

To order windshield reminder decals or for more information contact Susan Drake at 503-229-6918 or by e-mail at drake.susan@deq.state.or.us.

Alternative formats (Braille, large type) of this document can be made available. Contact the DEQ Office of Communications & Outreach, Portland, at (503) 229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011.



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