

Diesel Idling Factsheet

The Non-Road Diesel Engine Emission Regulation Bylaw No. 1161, 2012 (the Bylaw) limits unnecessary idling, of non-road diesel engines 25 horsepower (19 kW) or greater, to 5 consecutive minutes. Unnecessary idling wastes fuel, causes air pollution and increases engine wear. An idling diesel engine produces much higher emissions than it would while using the same amount of fuel under load. Extended idling causes a build-up of soot inside the engine and results in a puff of black smoke when the engine revs.

Exceptions to the 5 minute idling rule

- If required for safe operation of the vehicle or in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- If required for testing or maintenance.
- If performing emergency work.
- If necessary to perform the purpose of the machine in the course of its operation, including during the operation of a crane, cement mixer, cherry picker, boom lift or similar machine.
- If operated as stated in a written anti-idling policy.

Myths about idling

- It's good for the engine to idle.
- Diesel engines don't burn much fuel at idle.
- Diesel engines create more heat by idling.
- Diesel engines must idle or they won't restart.

Facts about idling

- Excessive idling wastes fuel and wastes money.
- Idling generates harmful emissions.
- Idling creates unnecessary noise.
- Fuel contamination of lube oil is higher at idle.
- Idling reduces engine life.
- Idling time of about 3-5 minutes is all that is required to properly cool an engine after being under heavy load.
- Idling can be minimized through education and implementation of an anti-idling policy.
- An anti-idling policy should save money through reduced fuel consumption and reduced engine wear, and should reduce air pollution.

A good anti-idling policy should educate operators on the economic, social and environmental costs of unnecessary idling of diesel engines.

Please contact us if you have any questions at nonroaddiesel@metrovanancouver.org or 604-451-6655.

Web Resources

1. [Natural Resources Canada](#)
2. [Idle Free BC](#)



EXAMPLE ANTI-IDLING POLICY

Definition

Idling means the operation of a vehicle or machine while not in motion or being used to operate auxiliary equipment that is essential to the operation of the vehicle or equipment.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines for unnecessary idling of vehicles and equipment. Limiting idling times contributes to a healthier work environment, reduces air pollution, reduces fuel consumption and reduces engine wear.

Procedures

- Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations around idling.
- No operator shall idle the engine in excess of 5 minutes.
- Diesel fueled vehicles should be turned off after enough time has passed to allow the proper circulation and cooling of the engine oil, coolant and turbochargers, not to exceed five minutes.
- If the engine must be left running for any reason the operator must remain in the vehicle.

Exceptions

- Idle times of up to 5 minutes are permitted during initial warm up and when the vehicle or machine is being restarted after prolonged shut down.
- Where engine power is necessary for an associated need such as power take off devices, auxiliary hydraulics, compressed air and/or electrical power.
- As required for defrosting or deicing windows and/or as may be required for operator warmth, during periods of extreme cold.
- In situations where safety may be compromised by shutting down the engine.
- If required during maintenance and servicing.
- When in accordance with the manufacturer's operations manual or requirements.

