

## Why does the City care if I idle?

The Philadelphia Region is in nonattainment with standards set under the federal Clean Air Act for ozone and fine particulate matter, also known as soot. The pollutants found in exhaust not only affect our environment, they also affect our health.

Emissions from idling vehicles can cause or contribute to a variety of health problems, including cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory ailments like asthma. In Philadelphia, thousands of people suffer from Asthma, including about 30% of our City's children aged five to thirteen (Source: Philadelphia Allies Against Asthma).



Philadelphia could experience an increase in “Unhealthy” air quality days in the coming years if trends continue.



If you witness a vehicle idling illegally, are aware of any idling “hot spots” or if you have any other questions or concerns about air quality in our city, please contact Air Management Services, a unit of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

Air Management Services  
Air Quality Complaint Line:

**215-685-7580**

[www.phila.gov/health/  
AirManagement](http://www.phila.gov/health/AirManagement)



## Diesel Idling in Philadelphia

A Diesel Vehicle Operator's Guide to Idling Compliance

*When in Doubt,  
Shut it Down.*

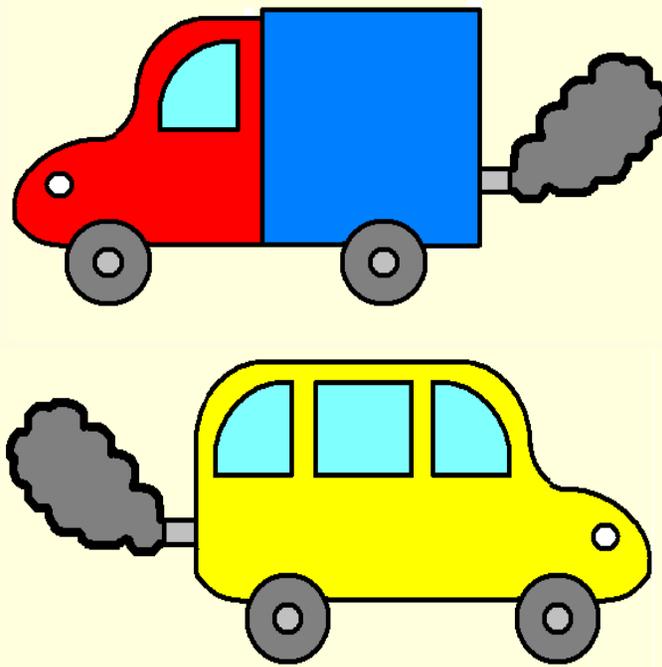


*Brought to you by  
Air Management Services, a unit of the  
Philadelphia Department of Public Health*

Heavy duty diesel vehicles that weigh over 8,500 pounds are prohibited from idling longer than five minutes. Those who do not comply may be subject to fines. The purpose of the idling ordinance is to help improve air quality in the City of Philadelphia.

Idling longer than five minutes is permitted under the following circumstances:

1. Buses with air conditioning and non-operable windows may idle for up to 20 minutes to maintain adequate cabin temperature as required by law.
2. Vehicles stopped in traffic are exempt.
3. Emergency or public utility vehicles performing emergency work.
4. Vehicles engaged in public road repairs or maintenance for a governmental entity.
5. Vehicles being serviced, for which idling is part of the service.



This law does not apply to gasoline-powered cars. However, no matter what type of vehicle you drive, remember:

**YOUR VEHICLE GETS ZERO MILES PER GALLON AT IDLE.**

Idling can waste as much as a gallon of fuel per hour, and puts additional wear and tear on your engine. Eliminating just 10 minutes of idling a day can save you hundreds of dollars per year, depending on what type of vehicle you drive.

## MYTHS & FACTS ON IDLING:

**Myth:** *Idling is cheaper than restarting.*

**Fact:** Restarting a vehicle uses about as much fuel as ten seconds of idling, not minutes as many people believe.

**Myth:** *I have to warm the car up on cold days, don't I?*

**Fact:** The best way to “warm up” your vehicle is to drive it. Idling is an inefficient method of bringing your vehicle to its optimum temperature.

**Myth:** *Idling isn't that harmful to the air.*

**Fact:** Idling vehicles emit more pollution per gallon of fuel when they are idling than they do when they are in motion. This is because at idle, engines generate less heat and are unable to burn off pollutants efficiently.

**Myth:** *Idling prevents damage to my car.*

**Fact:** Damage to a vehicle's starter amounts to about \$10 a year. Far more damage is done to your engine while idling your vehicle than would occur if you simply restarted it.

**Myth:** *I need to idle to get fast food.*

**Fact:** Fast food restaurant drive-throughs don't actually save time. On average, patrons are served in about the same amount of time at the drive-through versus the counter. However, using the drive-through will cost you more because you are wasting fuel.