

NO IDLING @ SCHOOL

Promote savings and cleaner air by advocating for a “no idle” zone at your school.

Idling vehicles waste valuable resources, generate greenhouse gases, and create unhealthy conditions in and around school buildings. Many school districts have established an idle reduction policy for vehicles operating on school property. If your district doesn't have one yet, the draft policy on the next page is a good place to start.



Bus engines burn about a half gallon of fuel per hour when idling. School bus drivers can demonstrate fiscal responsibility just by turning the key. Idling at school is not just a bus issue though; delivery trucks and passenger vehicles also add to the problem.

Idling = ZERO miles per gallon

Temperature levels inside waiting cars and buses fluctuate more as a result of not idling. Students will learn that environmental stewardship requires the ability to adapt; such as, by dressing appropriately for outside weather conditions. Use this as a teachable moment to educate students about ecological issues and personal responsibility. They too can make proactive, simple changes to help improve their environment.

Good information on idle reduction programs and policies is available on the Internet. Visit the DEQ Mobile Source webpage at www.michigan.gov/deqair or the Clean School Bus USA website <http://epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/>.



IT'S A FACT ... Idling a vehicle for 2 minutes uses about the same amount of gas as driving one mile.

HELP PROTECT THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN & TEENS

Take advantage of FREE e-mail/text notifications via the Michigan **EnviroFlash** program.

This information is especially important for schools because educators and support staff need to help students take precautions to reduce health risk when poor air quality conditions are likely to occur.

When people know their Air Quality Index forecast, they can make choices to reduce their exposure to air pollution and reduce the emissions that create it.



Enrollment is quick and easy! Simply click on the EnviroFlash logo @ www.michigan.gov/deq for details. Air quality forecasts, real-time monitor data, animated pollutant maps, tips, and more are available by selecting the **MIair** icon.



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serving Michigan residents*



*Do your share to protect the air
... because MIair is your air*

SCHOOL IDLE REDUCTION POLICY



School District Name:
Policy Number: #
Effective Date:

Applicability: This policy applies to the operation of every district-owned or contracted school bus; and to all passenger and support vehicles operating on school property.

PURPOSE

The goal of this policy is to eliminate all unnecessary idling by school buses and by passenger and service vehicles to ensure idling time is minimized.

RATIONALE – For better health and fiscal responsibility

Diesel and gasoline exhaust from idling buses and cars accumulates inside vehicles and around sidewalks where passengers gather for pick-up and drop off. It also accumulates inside school buildings. These fumes pose a health risk to children, drivers, school staff and the community at large. Exposure to exhaust can cause health problems. It exacerbates asthma and existing allergies. It also damages lungs, causes respiratory problems and stresses the heart. Long-term exposure to exhaust is thought to increase the risk of lung cancer. Vehicle exhaust increases CO₂ levels adding to global warming concerns. Idling also wastes fuel and financial resources. For all these reasons idling must be kept to a minimum.

GUIDANCE

A) School Buses

1. Turn off the engine as soon as possible when the bus arrives at loading areas [to drop off or pick up passengers] in order to eliminate idling time and reduce harmful emissions. The school bus can be restarted when it is ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pick-up area. Exceptions include conditions that would compromise passenger safety, such as:
 - a) Extreme weather conditions
 - b) Idling in traffic
2. At school bus depots, limit the early morning warm-up idling time to recommendations by the manufacturer (generally 3-5 minutes) in all but the coldest weather.
3. Turn off the engine while waiting for students during field trips, extracurricular activities, or other events where passengers are transported off school grounds.
4. In the case of extreme weather, schools are directed to provide a location inside the school building where bus drivers can wait.
5. If bus warmth is an issue during colder weather, idling is to be kept to a minimum and occur outside the school zone. The "warmed" bus may enter the school zone as close to pick-up time as possible to maintain warmth and then shut down.
6. Transportation Operations staff are directed to revise bus schedules so that school bus caravanning can be avoided and the cleanest buses assigned to the longest routes.
7. All drivers shall receive a copy of this information at the beginning of every school year.

B) Passenger and Service Vehicles

1. Request that all service vehicle drivers turn their engines off while making deliveries to school buildings.
2. Instruct passenger vehicle drivers to turn their engines off while waiting for students.

C) Signs shall be posted to remind drivers not to idle when on school property.