

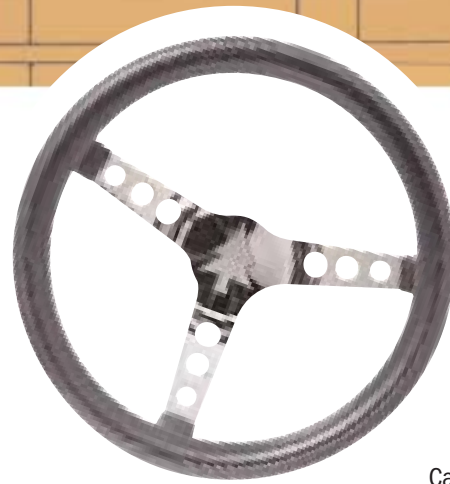
Idle-freezone

In This Issue ... Teaching Idling Drivers the Golden Rule – No Idling at School! Launch a School-based Idle-Free Campaign in Your Community

What's wrong with this picture? Young students emerge excitedly at the sound of the final bell into clouds of unhealthy vehicle exhaust from idling buses, minivans and cars, waiting to take them home. In an era of unprecedented community concern about the safety and well-being of our children, why are school parking lots and passenger pick-up zones often among the worst idling "hotspots" in our communities?

The good news is that schools are also one of the best places to teach idling drivers a lesson about the ABC's of being Idle-Free. As the Idle-Free movement has swept across Canada, more municipalities and community groups have partnered with schools and boards of education to create Idle-Free zones around local schoolyards. And these initiatives are proving that drivers will curb their idling habit, especially when reminded that their children's health is at stake.

Although the school year is heading into the final stretch, now is a great time to develop a school-based Idle-Free campaign for September – just in time for the start of the next school year. In this issue, we focus on winning partnerships and highlight some of the colourful, cool, consciousness-raising campaigns that kids and kids-at-heart have rolled out to reduce idling at their schools. Be sure to check out the latest additions to the Anti-Idling Tool Kit at idling.gc.ca to kick your school-based Idle-Free campaign into high gear!



Reducing Idling ... Saving Trees

In the past, the *Idle Free Zone* has been distributed in both official languages, but in an effort to "walk our talk" and reduce paper consumption, Natural Resources Canada is now distributing the newsletter to our clients across Canada in their first language of choice. Please contact us at idling.gc.ca if you would like to receive future editions in both languages.

Natural Resources Canada Walks the Talk

After dedicating effort to help Canadians stop unnecessary engine idling in their communities, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) took some time last fall to make sure all NRCan employees are heeding the call to be Idle-Free.

"In June 2001, NRCan launched an internal workplace campaign before going national," says Catherine Ray, Senior Program Manager with the Transportation Program of the Office of Energy Efficiency (OEE). "At that time, we set out to reach all NRCan facilities to encourage them to join the Canada-wide project." To make good on that promise and in an effort to persuade them to get their "house in order," a team from the OEE travelled across the country, from Edmonton, Alberta, to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, to deliver the "idling message" to all NRCan employees. "It's important to demonstrate your workplace commitment to reduce idling before you ask your partners or the public to do the same," Ray adds.

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Some of the documents, program names and graphics shown have not been produced by the Government of Canada and are not available in both official languages.



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Students in Unionville and Peterborough, Ontario, issued these mock tickets to peak the interest of drivers and address idling issues in a humorous, non-threatening way.



Students STEP Up to Link Idling and Sustainable Transportation in Peterborough and Markham

Who knows the best way to get the message out to high school kids that idling and sustainable transportation are important issues that affect them? High school kids do – and that’s the premise behind the student-driven approach of the Sustainable Transportation Education Program (STEP).

Through STEP, students at Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational School in Peterborough, Ontario, and Unionville High School in Markham, Ontario, drove home the Idle-Free message to drivers idling in front of their schools by issuing mock tickets. “The students were really motivated by the ticketing campaign, and it was a nice way for them to approach the public and provide a bit of humour while delivering a serious message,” says Bob Roddie, the teacher heading up STEP in Peterborough.

STEP encouraged the students to think about vehicle idling within the broader context of sustainable transportation. “By looking at all the habits we have surrounding transportation and by beginning to change the little behaviours like idling, students really have an opportunity to see how every action is related and linked to another,” explains Roddie.

Anna Chase, who evaluated the project, adds, “By beginning a sustainable transportation project with an idling ticket campaign, students can be motivated to be involved in future sustainable transportation initiatives.” One of the distinctive features of STEP is the opportunity to involve diverse partners in program design and implementation. The program involved support from the Town of Markham, Peterborough Green-Up and Pollution Probe; consultations with Better Environmentally Sustainable Transportation; research through Trent University; and funding from the Climate Change Action Fund.

Lorenzo Mele, Transportation Demand Management Coordinator for the Town of Markham, says, “A vital ingredient to the success of this approach was the involvement of the various groups – each brought in different perspectives and skills that contributed to the overall success.” Mele also stresses the need for a commitment from municipalities to make anti-idling and sustainable transportation efforts happen at the community level. “The Town supported youth in their efforts, and that will lead to longer term impacts,” he adds. “By promoting Idle-Free zones, we open up people’s minds to the issue, which will hopefully trigger more behavioural change towards more sustainable transportation options in the future.”

For more information about STEP and samples of the students’ work, visit www.saferoutestoschool.ca.

Students in Unionville, Ontario, display the banner they created to educate drivers as part of their Sustainable Transportation Education Program.



Kindergarten Kids Send a Clear Message to Idling Adults

The senior kindergarten class at Gledhill Public School in Toronto put their creative talents to work to deliver a serious message to drivers outside their school: “No idling ... it makes kids sick.”

Last June, teachers and parents discussed with students the ill effects of idling and asked them to draw a collective picture about how they felt. The drawing spoke volumes, as the students depicted idling as being bad for the air, animals and plants, not to mention their own health.

They used their combined talents to create a 5.4-metre (18-foot) colourful banner that was mounted on the front wall of the school to “teach people to turn their car engines off because it is dangerous for children’s health,” explains Mary-Margaret McMahon, a parent who oversaw the banner’s development. The banner has become a great source of pride for the children, as they all took part in drawing and painting the final product. “The kids are so proud of their efforts because they understand they are helping to spread the message to clean up the environment,” says McMahon.

The East Toronto Climate Action Group, a local environmental group, funded the banner initiative. The banner provides a shining example of how children, schools and the local community can work together to get the Idle-Free message out to parents. McMahon adds, “The banner was so well received by the community that the East Toronto Climate Action Group intends to fund an anti-idling banner for another local school soon.”



Natural Resources Canada Walks the Talk

(Continued from page 1)

One of the spin-off benefits of focusing on NRCan facilities was that many are shared with other federal agencies, so the Idle-Free message could reach these groups as well. Michel Paquet, from the Canadian Forest Service in Quebec, attended one of the presentations and says, “We appreciated NRCan’s efforts and we’re keen to support them in any further awareness campaigns.” Paquet continues, “These types of presentations will certainly have a positive impact on the way we see things and, subsequently, on the environment.”

The campaign was part of the Federal House in Order (FHIO) initiative, which is the Government of Canada’s plan for federal government departments and their employees to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Through the FHIO initiative, 11 departments and agencies, including NRCan, which account for 95 percent of federal emissions, have agreed to collectively meet a target of reducing GHG emissions within their operations by 31 percent from 1990 levels by 2010.

For more information on the Federal House in Order initiative, visit www.fhio.gc.ca.



OEE staff talk to NRCan employees as part of the FHIO cross-country tour. NRCan believes it's important to have your own staff on board before asking the public to make the same commitment.

Idling – Is It Really Out of Sight, Out of Mind?



Ten Seconds Is the Limit in the Region of Waterloo

The Region of Waterloo has taken a tough stand on idling, implementing a policy where municipal employees in the Region cannot allow a vehicle to idle for more than 10 seconds.

As spelled out in its policy, "Idling is a community issue and requires broad participation. As leaders in the community, it is important that front line staff lead by example to the public to set a higher standard of behaviour."

The 10-second policy is part of a broader Idling Control Protocol created by the Region, its area municipalities and the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Air Quality (CACAQ) to address air quality issues in the Region. The Region and the CACAQ decided that the best way to reach municipal staff, the community at large, schools and workplaces was to encourage individuals to reduce idling through an education campaign, dubbed the Idling Reduction Education Campaign (IREC).

Using the community-based social marketing approach to implement IREC, the Region focused on getting the municipalities and their staff onside early in the process. "We wanted to create an idle-free norm within the community, so by encouraging municipal staff to reduce idling through the policy, we could encourage other citizens to reduce their idling behaviours as well," says David Steffler of the CACAQ.

Before launching IREC, CACAQ conducted a telephone survey to measure knowledge, attitudes and idling behaviours in the Region. Results from a follow-up survey indicated that knowledge and awareness levels about idling increased as a result of the campaign, while the amount and length of idling dropped. The campaign used idle-free "contracts," decals, key chains, posters, signs, transit shelter advertising, public service announcements and street banners to spread the word about idling throughout the Region.

The survey also showed that residents were very supportive of voluntary measures to promote idling reduction, such as the public education campaign (94 percent), signs in visible locations (87 percent) and car decals (76 percent). "The Region chose a voluntary approach, because we wanted to encourage buy-in before considering a by-law and other enforcement options," indicates Steffler. "One of the benefits of coupling the idling policy with an education campaign was that it brought a sense of legitimacy to the campaign. By having municipal endorsement, it was easier for people to believe that idling has negative health impacts and is a serious issue that is being addressed by the Region."

For more information on the Region of Waterloo's Idling Control Protocol or the CACAQ, visit pirg.uwaterloo.ca/cacaq/irec/irec-home.html.

To download copies of the Region's idling contract or banner, visit idling.gc.ca.



Picture this. A man sits in his car waiting for his wife to emerge from a friend's house, while his engine idles away. His car is stopped beside a small garden; birds are singing overhead, and a squirrel is foraging for nuts nearby. It's a beautiful sunny day, there are good tunes on the radio, and the man continues to wait with the engine running, oblivious to the harm he is causing to his environment. Unbeknownst to him as he drums a beat on the steering wheel, the plants, birds and squirrel begin to wilt or keel over as a result of the exhaust blasting out of his tail pipe.

Is this reality, or just one filmmaker's vision of what can happen when we don't think about our actions?

"Out of Sight, Out of Mind" is one of the series of short films by Cameron Tingley, director of The Flying Spot Players, that parodies life's small moments that can have much larger and cumulative impacts on our health and well-being. Tingley and a troupe of film and television professionals chose to focus on idling. "That's because

idling has always been a pet peeve," explains Tingley.

"It's amazing to see how our culture has progressed in the five years since this film was created. In 1999, idling was not even on the table and now it's such a hot topic."

The troupe's humorous approach to tackling the idling issue plays on people's ability to relate to everyday events. Tingley points out, "Although films can't solve the problem, they can become one of the tools in society that can inspire change."

The film provides an excellent complement to other anti-idling resources. Sari Merson says, "The film allows educators to end the lesson on a funny note that stays with students." Merson is with the York Region Environmental Alliance (YREA), a group that has been working with students in Markham and Newmarket to reduce idling. She notes, "The film has been an excellent tool to get kids talking about the idling issue."

The film has now been viewed in over 25 cities in Canada and the United States, often during the spring to coincide with Earth Day and Environment Week.

To view an excerpt from the video, visit idling.gc.ca. Samples of anti-idling presentations developed by York Region elementary students, working with the YREA, can also be viewed here.

"The film has been an excellent tool to get kids talking about the idling issue."

To contact the Flying Spot Players or Cameron Tingley, call (416) 469-3033 or e-mail ctla@sympatico.ca.



No Idling

At School Program Enters its Fifth Year

No Idling at School is one of the most popular components of Ontario's Green Communities' Active & Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) program. It has not only inspired schools to be idle-free, but has also been used by community groups, municipalities and private companies to reduce idling behaviours.

Since the project's creation in 2000, more than 1500 No Idling at School kits have reached the hands of schools and community partners across Ontario, and some have even been sent to interested individuals around the world! The project helps students and teachers develop their own vehicle idling reduction programs in their community by giving them a user-friendly tool kit with a choice of tools, resources and messages. "Some of the slogans are very creative, and one of my favourites is *Turn off your engine – that's*

not fresh air coming out of the tail pipe!," explains Jacky Kennedy, ASRTS Program Manager.

"No Idling is a simple action that has far-reaching impacts on local air quality and global climate change," says Kennedy.

The benefits from the No Idling at School project are clear. To date, Kennedy estimates that the project has resulted in reduced emissions of 210.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide, which has the same effect as stopping 10 cars from running 24 hours a day, seven days a week for almost four months!

For more information on the No Idling at School kit and the option to download some of its materials, visit www.saferoutestoschool.ca.

Changing the behaviour of adults can often be assisted through teaching their children at school. This presentation was created for teachers as part of the "Alberta Reduce Idling Campaign."



Alberta Campaign Results Are In!

With a campaign that spanned two major urban centres, held interventions at a series of gas stations, had the active participation of local schools and city administrators, and had a mass transit advertising campaign, it is not surprising that the "Alberta Reduce Idling Campaign" succeeded in getting the anti-idling message out to Alberta residents.

Paul Hunt, Vice President of Climate Change Central, is excited to report that "there was a notable increase in the level of public awareness about idling, as a result of the campaign." A post-campaign survey revealed that 27 percent of those surveyed had been exposed to the campaign. Further, 75 percent of respondents identified idling as a problem that needs to be addressed – clearly underscoring the need for the campaign.

So what did Climate Change Central do to get the idle-free message out? To start, it developed strong partnerships with Natural Resources Canada and the Sierra Club of Canada – Prairie Chapter to create a plan to get motorists to turn off their engines when parked or stopped for more than 10 seconds, except in traffic. Climate Change Central worked with students, teachers and Sierra Club volunteers at schools in Edmonton and Calgary, where project staff approached and provided information to drivers about the negative effects of idling and asked them to place an anti-idling decal on their vehicle.

"Collaboration between schools, students, teachers, volunteers and organizations such as Climate Change Central helps build a foundation for social change among students and the public," explains Hunt. "We are encouraging people to take action on simple, low-cost things like idling, so that they can eventually become more comfortable with bigger commitments."

Climate Change Central is continuing its Alberta Reduce Idling Campaign this year and is working with other organizations to re-launch a similar program in 2006.

To download materials from Alberta's campaign, visit idling.gc.ca.



Northern Climate ExChange came up with the concept of Auntie Idle: she graces posters and other outreach literature to help educate the Yukon population about idle-free practices.

Did You Know ...

Unnecessary vehicle idling is surprisingly prevalent at Canadian schools. Before school-based Idle-Free campaigns were launched in Greater Sudbury and Mississauga, in Ontario, over 50 percent of drivers were observed idling while parked outside local schools. The good news is that parents and caregivers are supportive when asked to reduce idling at school!



Idling Reduction a Key Strategy to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Halifax

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is launching an 18-month program to reduce vehicle idling in the municipality, marking the latest strategy in an initiative to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and contribute to ensuring a vibrant, sustainable and healthy community.

With an expected launch in spring 2005, the anti-idling program targets everyone who lives, works and plays in the community. In addition to a comprehensive community outreach program, the campaign is building partnerships

with business leaders, health professionals and three levels of government to have as broad a reach as possible.

HRM's reduced-idling program fits well with many of its other initiatives to reduce GHGs and protect the environment. For example, all of the buses on HRM's transit system burn bio-diesel fuel, the solid waste system composts all residential and commercial organic waste to avoid generating methane in landfill, and HRM is rigorously assessing local buildings for energy management.

Yukon Strikes Gold With Auntie Idle

In a territory where winter temperatures plummet below -20°C regularly, the issue of unnecessary idling might seem like the kind of challenge only a seasoned superhero could overcome. In Yukon, that superhero doesn't come dressed in a flowing red cape, blue tights or even a mask, but rather takes the form of everyone's favourite relative – Auntie Idle!

Auntie Idle has been taking to the streets in Whitehorse this year to tell people why they shouldn't leave their car idling. She can also be seen on idle-free zone signs at 140 parking lots, drop-off zones and delivery areas around the city, including at City Hall and local government buildings.

Auntie Idle is the brainchild of the Northern Climate ExChange, a group that is tackling excessive idling in the Yukon through its *Climate Change: Are you doing your bit?* campaign. "We are focusing on making people more aware of the idling issue," indicates Erin Spiewak, Project Coordinator with the Northern Climate ExChange. The campaign promotes three main reasons why Whitehorse drivers should avoid idling – saving money, preventing vehicle wear and tear, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The campaign is also targeting schools, and Spiewak has been busy approaching schools to post the Auntie Idle signs in their loading areas, to remind parents dropping off and picking up children to turn off their engines. "We have about half of the 14 local schools participating in the Auntie Idle initiative to date and are working with the rest to get them on board as well," notes Spiewak.

A diverse set of partners – the Government of Yukon, the Yukon Conservation Society, Raven Recycling, the Energy Solutions Centre, the Yukon Science Institute, the City of Whitehorse and Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program – were involved in bringing the Auntie Idle campaign to life.

For more information about Auntie Idle and her quest to reduce idling in the Yukon, visit idling.gc.ca.



ZONING IN TIPS TO LAUNCH A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL-BASED IDLE-FREE CAMPAIGN

WITH SUMMER RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER, NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO START PLANNING YOUR SCHOOL-BASED IDLE-FREE CAMPAIGN FOR THE FALL. HERE ARE SOME WORDS OF ADVICE FROM SCHOOLS THAT ARE ALREADY TURNING THE KEY ON IDLING.



1-

Get the local school board on board first - To increase the comfort level and receptiveness of individual schools, school boards should be approached first to seek support for your campaign. Taking this step also helps you reach board staff who oversees school bus transportation, enabling buses to be included in the campaign. Following communication with the boards, you can make arrangements with staff at each school - usually the principal - to install signs and proceed with other campaign activities, such as on-site discussions with drivers.



2-

Don't forget about the buses! If your campaign is asking parents and caregivers to reduce idling, a similar request must be made of the bus companies and drivers who are picking up and dropping off students at the schools. School buses are highly visible in the school parking and drop-off areas, and an idling bus can have negative repercussions for your campaign.

3-

Involve the young ones - An Idle-Free campaign is a great opportunity for hands-on learning and participation for young students - harness their energy to develop graphic materials, such as posters or banners, and campaign slogans.



4-

Get the big kids involved too - Getting high school students to take an active role in brainstorming, designing and implementing an Idle-Free campaign gives them a sense of ownership over the project and motivation to take part. Older students can be impressive in approaching drivers to ask them to commit to reduce idling in the school's vicinity.

5-

Build strong partnerships - Partnerships are effective, so consider inviting environmental groups, local transportation demand management groups, local transit companies, universities and other community organizations to help create and deliver your school's program - their expertise and resources are priceless!



6-

Timing is everything - The best time to approach drivers to discuss idling is at the end of the school day, as they are waiting to pick up students. Generally, drivers are less hurried at this time than during the morning drop-off. This is also when they are most likely to be idling, with some drivers arriving 10-15 minutes before the final bell and leaving their engines running until their children arrive at the vehicle.

7-

Connect with the Idle-Free Zone! - Visit the Idle-Free Zone Web site at idling.gc.ca for more ideas and ready-to-use materials to get you started on your anti-idling campaign or to share your successes with the NRCan team. Once on the Web site, refer to "What You Can Do" and then click on "About School-Based Campaigns."



A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words

Share Your Ideas

In a world where we are inundated with printed and Web-based information, a striking and provocative image or picture can drive home a message. The *Idle-Free Zone* newsletter has featured many of the images used in campaigns across Canada to encourage Canadians to be "Idle-Free."

We'd love to know about images or graphic approaches you've used to attract attention. Contact us at idling.gc.ca. We'll feature your ideas in the *Idle-Free Zone*!

Looking Ahead — *Idle-Free Zone* Fall Issue — Idling Across the Nation

The fall issue will focus on results from Natural Resource Canada's (NRCan's) work with the Clean Air Partnership (CAP) in Toronto on the effectiveness of anti-idling by-laws in helping Canadians kick the idling habit.

This winter, NRCan's Office of Energy Efficiency and CAP also launched a national review of idling actions being taken by communities across Canada. The review is being conducted with participating municipalities and community groups to determine what community actions, such as by-laws and public education/outreach campaigns, have been or will be implemented in an effort to increase awareness about the negative impacts of unnecessary vehicle engine idling and to reduce idling behaviour by motorists. Look for the results of this national review in this year's special fall edition of the *Idle-Free Zone* newsletter, and on our Web site (idling.gc.ca).

Need Help With Your Campaign?

- Do you have questions about how to create an Idle-Free program for your school?
- Do you have success stories you want to share?
- Do you have comments on the information we have provided?

Please e-mail your questions and comments to AutoSmart@nrcan.gc.ca, and we will be happy to help!

Contact us —
We're not sitting idle!



Photo: Don Johnston

City of Sudbury's Fleet Is Not Idle!

This year, the City of Greater Sudbury looked to its staff to lead the battle against unnecessary vehicle idling.

EarthCare Sudbury – a unique partnership between the City of Greater Sudbury and over 90 community organizations – has been actively promoting the anti-idling message since 2002 among the public, schools and municipal workers. "For the summer of 2004, EarthCare Sudbury felt it was important to provide a good example for others," says Lisa Scott, formerly EarthCare Sudbury's Environmental Projects Assistant. "Sudbury's fleets are highly visible in the community, so it's difficult to inspire change in others if your own house isn't in order," Scott adds.



When the campaign first began, EarthCare Sudbury's baseline data showed that 70 percent of municipal vehicles were idling for an average of 7.2 minutes. In comparison, data from the summer of 2004 included twice as many vehicles, and only 22 percent were found idling for an average of 5.6 minutes. "The results of the campaign have been great," says Scott. "We can see that more employees are turning off their engines and those that are idling are reducing the duration, which is reducing emissions and saving fuel."

The City of Greater Sudbury has some tips on how to succeed in getting fleets to reduce idling habits. "It's really important to get managers and decision-makers on board, as they are the ones who work with fleet drivers daily," says Scott. "Their participation is critical." Sudbury also ensured that drivers were informed about the issue and encouraged to participate, which in turn kept them excited about reducing emissions across the city.

Greater Sudbury Transit also developed a series of best practices for drivers and their fleet, so they too could do their part to reduce emissions. Transit drivers are not to arrive at transit centres more than seven minutes before their next departure, buses parked for layovers are shut down and during the winter, buses are shuttled back to garages where they can be turned off during layovers.

Scott provides a final word of advice: "It's important to get the word out when fleets have been successful at implementing these changes, because this encourages others to take action themselves."

For more information on the idle-free actions of EarthCare Sudbury, visit www.city.greatersudbury.on.ca/earthcare.

By-Laws or Public Education – Is There a Better Way to Reduce Unnecessary Vehicle Idling?

Municipalities across Canada have raised this question as they consider the best way to reduce idling in their communities, and how to sustain their Idle-Free campaigns into the future.

While NRCan's Office of Energy Efficiency has been encouraging municipalities, community groups and schools to undertake public education and outreach campaigns, a number of communities have elected to take a regulatory approach by adopting idling by-laws.



Recognizing that different communities have taken either regulatory or voluntary approaches and that other municipalities are now considering how best to take action on idling, NRCan, the Clean Air Partnership and Lura Consulting are undertaking a research project to examine and evaluate the effectiveness of anti-idling by-laws, public education and outreach campaigns, or a combination of the two.

Watch for results from this project in future issues of the *Idle-Free Zone* and at idling.gc.ca.

Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency
Leading Canadians to Energy Efficiency at Home, at Work and on the Road

