

common idling myths and facts

MYTH: The engine needs to be warmed up before driving.

FACT: Even on cold mornings, excessive idling is unnecessary and even damaging to the engine. The best way to warm up is to idle for no more than 30 seconds (3-5 minutes for buses) and drive slowly for the first few minutes.

MYTH: Idling is good for the engine.

FACT: Idling can be hard on your engine and cause excessive wear. Restarting is easier on the engine than idling.

MYTH: Idling is better than restarting the engine.

FACT: With today's vehicles, you will save fuel by turning off and restarting the engine. Idling for more than 30 seconds (3-5 minutes for buses) wastes fuel and produces more air pollution than restarting.

don't be caught idling. take action!

- Limit warm-up idling to 30 seconds (3-5 minutes for buses), even in cold weather.
- Turn off your engine if you expect to be stopped for more than 30 seconds (except in traffic).
- Turn off your engine at drive-through windows (banks, pharmacies and fast-food restaurants). Or just park and go inside.
- Carpool, walk, bike or take the bus whenever possible.
- Save gas by obeying the speed limit, accelerating gradually and refueling during the cooler evening hours. Do not "top off" the tank.

want to learn more about B²?

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's Bureau of Air Quality staff can help you with B² by:

- developing a plan and timeline for your school;
- training for the identified B² "champions" and students as well as offering suggestions for educating the rest of your school community;
- assisting with overcoming obstacles to policy implementation;
- providing promotional items such as posters, bookmarks, pencils, etc.;
- providing signs for the bus, car and delivery lanes; and
- suggesting additional actions or projects to further improve air quality around your school.

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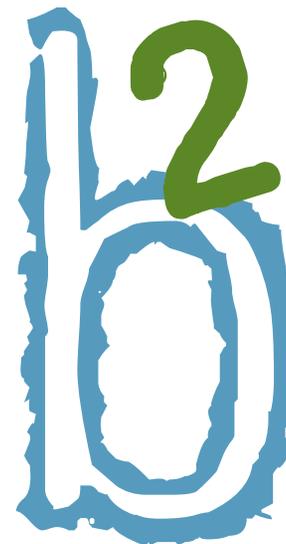
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for schools

an anti-idling

clean air campaign



breathe better



why is idling your vehicle a problem?

Mobile sources such as personal vehicles, school buses and delivery trucks are major contributors to air pollution in South Carolina. An idling vehicle is one whose engine is running, but the vehicle is not moving (that is, parked or standing).

One hour of idling wastes about a half gallon of fuel and releases about 10 pounds of carbon dioxide (the primary greenhouse gas contributing to climate change) as well as other harmful pollutants. The bigger the engine, the more fuel is wasted by idling.

IDLING = 0 miles per gallon

Children breathe more air per body mass than adults and, as a result, inhale more pollutants. Their young lungs are still developing and, therefore, are more sensitive. Pollutants from vehicle exhaust have been linked to asthma, heart disease and certain cancers as well as other respiratory diseases. Asthma is the most common chronic illness in children and a major cause of school absences.

More than 300,000 children in South Carolina ride school buses every day, and thousands more ride in family vehicles. Reducing idling time, especially on the school campus, helps to protect children unnecessary emissions that could harm their health.

what is the B² (Breathe Better) program?

The B² (Breathe Better) program is an anti-idling/clean air campaign. The goal is to protect the health of children by reducing harmful vehicle emissions around school campuses. Solutions involve the efforts of students, faculty, administration, staff, local government and other community partners working together.

Schools around the state are taking actions such as: anti-idling policy for school buses and delivery trucks; voluntary anti-idling policy for parents; posting “no idling” signs around the school campus; and other school projects aimed at improving air quality, such as planting trees and encouraging alternative modes of transportation.

**Turn the key.
Be idle-free!**

how can my school get started with B²?

Your school can begin reducing air pollution around the campus. The following steps will help you get started!

- Introduce the idea to the administration, faculty, staff and/or parents.
- Meet with a B² representative to develop a plan and set a timeline for implementation.
- Identify individuals (teachers, parents, etc.) who are willing to “champion” or lead the program and form a student “Clean Air Patrol.”
- Inform and educate parents and bus drivers about the new anti-idling policy (e.g., school newsletter, fliers, student presentations, etc.).
- Conduct simple data collection to monitor their participation. Give drivers small reward items (provided at no charge) for their cooperation.
- Establish an anti-idling policy for buses and delivery services as well as a voluntary anti-idling policy for cars. Include the policy in the student/parent handbook and on the school Web site.
- Post “no idling” signs (provided at no charge) on campus in the bus, carpool and delivery service lanes to remind drivers about the policy.
- Find other ways to improve air quality at your school such as planting trees, improving landscaping to reduce the mowing area and encouraging alternate ways to get to school (e.g., walk, bike, carpool and ride the bus).



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