

CENTRAL OKANAGAN CLEAN AIR STRATEGY

Idling: Facts & Myths

If you're going to be stopped for more than 60 seconds – except in traffic – turn the engine off



myth

Shutting off and restarting your vehicle is harder on your engine and uses more gas than if you leave it running.

fact

Natural Resources Canada has proven that idling for as little as 10 seconds uses more fuel and produces more GHG emissions than stopping and restarting your engine. Frequent restarting has little impact on engine components like battery and starter motor. Wear caused by restarting is estimated to add \$10 per year to the cost of driving, which is money likely recovered several times over in fuel savings when you aren't idling your car.

myth

The engine should be warmed up for long periods before driving and cooled down afterwards.

fact

Idling is not an effective way to warm up your vehicle, even in colder weather. The best way to warm up the lubricants in transmission etc. is to drive your vehicle. Even diesel engines in very cold weather require no more than 30 seconds of idling before starting to drive. Idling causes unnecessary emissions.

CO

+

NOx

+

VOc

=

Vehicle Emissions

myth

Idling is good for the engine.

Excessive idling can actually damage engine components, including cylinders, spark plugs and the exhaust system. That's because an idling engine is not operating at its peak temperature, which means that fuel combustion is incomplete.

fact

Excessive idling can also allow water to condense in the vehicle's exhaust, which can lead to corrosion and reduce the life of the exhaust system.

myth

Idling my car doesn't cost me money or waste fuel.

fact

Inefficient driving behaviors, such as unnecessarily idling and speeding, plus failing to properly maintain vehicles (for example, neglecting to properly inflate tires) means that large amounts of fuel are wasted. Each driver could save hundreds of dollars per year in fuel and maintenance costs by adopting these fuel-efficient practices. Since the time spent idling determines fuel use, idling also contributes to fuel waste.

If each driver in the Central Okanagan avoids idling for at least 6 min a day, each driver would save 50.81 litres of fuel or \$50.81 in fuel costs a year.



1 Litre of fuel used = 2.3 kg of CO₂

myth

Idling doesn't affect my health

Vehicle exhaust can have severe health implications for children, the elderly, persons that work outside, and residents of urbanized areas are particularly vulnerable. Exhaust from gasoline and diesel engines contains many toxics and can be inhaled into the deepest parts of the lungs where it can enter the bloodstream.

fact

This contributes to an increase in premature death, asthma attacks, and emergency-room visits and can increase the symptoms of asthma as well as other chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, including bronchitis and emphysema.

myth

Even if I stop idling, my contribution is insignificant.

fact

Every day there are approximately 123,000 drivers on the road. If each of those drivers stopped idling for 6 minutes per day, the region would save 15,142 tonnes of CO₂ per year which represents 1.9 % of the 33% GHG reduction target by 2020.