



Attention Elmhurst Academy Drivers!

Help keep our air clean
and turn off your idling engines.

Idling is when a driver leaves the engine running and the vehicle parked. Everyday in the U.S. millions of cars and trucks idle needlessly, sometimes for hours. You may not be able to avoid keeping your engine running when you're stopped at a traffic signal or stuck in slow-moving traffic. But other times idling is unnecessary. An idling car can release as much pollution as a moving car.



We are proud to announce that Elmhurst Academy parking lots are now **"No Idle Zones."**

Reasons to stop idling:

- **Make the air healthier** by cutting down on hazardous pollution in your town or community.
- **Help the environment.** For every 10 minutes your engine is off, you'll prevent one pound of carbon dioxide from being released (carbon dioxide is the primary contributor to global warming).
- **Keep money in your wallet and save fuel.** Save between 1/5 to 7/10 of a gallon of fuel for every hour of not idling.

What harm does idling do?

First, idling pollutes the air and harms health. Idling tailpipes spew out the same pollutants that form unhealthy smog and soot as those from moving cars. Nitrogen oxide, particulate matter, carbon monoxide and volatile organic compounds are the main health-harming pollutants in vehicle emissions. Diesel engines emit more than 40 hazardous air pollutants.

These pollutants have been linked to serious human illnesses, including:

- asthma,
- heart disease,
- chronic bronchitis
- cancer.



Children, the elderly and those with asthma and other chronic health problems are especially vulnerable to the health dangers of exhaust.

Pollution from idling contributes to global warming. Idling cars and trucks emit carbon dioxide (CO₂), a main heat-trapping gas. In New York City alone, idling cars and trucks each year produce 130,000 tons of carbon dioxide, a new EDF report shows (see [Idling Gets You Nowhere \[PDF\]](#)). To offset this amount of

global warming pollution, we would need to plant an area the size of Manhattan with trees every single year.

Idling wastes fuel and money. An idling car uses between 1/5 to 7/10 of a gallon of fuel an hour. An idling diesel truck burn approximately one gallon of fuel an hour. With average U.S. prices for diesel fuel topping \$2 a gallon (as of 2/2/09), that's about \$2 burned.

Four ways to be idle-free

- **Turn off your ignition if you're waiting more than 10 seconds.** Contrary to popular belief, restarting your car does not burn more fuel than leaving it idling. In fact, idling for just 10 seconds wastes more gas than restarting the engine.
- **Warm up your engine by driving it, not by idling.** Today's electronic engines do not need to warm up, even in winter. The best way to warm the engine is by easing into your drive and avoiding excessive engine revving. After just a few seconds, your vehicle is safe to drive! The vehicle's engine warms twice as quickly when driven.
- **Warm up the cabin interior by driving, not idling.** Easing into your drive is also the best way to get your vehicle's heating system delivering warmer air faster. Sitting in an idling car means you are breathing in more of the dirty exhaust that leaks into the car cabin. Any warmth you may get from a car heater is not worth the damage to your health. If parked and waiting, it is healthier to get out of your car and go inside a store or building.
- **Protect your car engine by idling less.** Frequent restarts are no longer hard on a car's engine and battery. The added wear (which amounts to no more than \$10 a year) is much less costly than the cost of fuel saved (which can add up to \$70-650 a year, depending on fuel prices, idling habits and vehicle type). Idling actually increases overall engine wear by causing the car to operate for longer than necessary.

Information from <https://www.edf.org/climate/reports/idling>

Thank you for supporting our "No Idle Zones" while at Elmhurst Academy.

With Our Thanks,

The Elmhurst Academy NGS ~ Nature, Gardening and Sustainability Committee