

Idling Cars



A Greening Powassan Fact Sheet

Idling gives you ZERO kilometers per litre (or zero miles per gallon)! Canadian drivers idle their engines for an average of five to ten minutes a day. This needless idling means millions of litres of fuel and therefore millions of your dollars are simply burned away.

You may think you need to warm up your car by letting the motor run, especially in the winter, but this is not the case. Idling will increase your gas costs, as well as maintenance cost from wear and tear on your vehicle's engine. It is a common myth that turning your engine off and on will do more damage than idling will. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Damage to the starting components adds only an estimated ten dollars a year to your driving costs. This will be made up in fuel and maintenance savings from not idling.

- Vehicle exhaust contributes to an increase in air pollution and smog.
- Idling cars produce two times as much pollution as moving cars.
- When you idle your car, the engine is not operating at its peak temperature, this will damage your car.
- Idling can also lead to water condensation in your vehicles exhaust system, leading to corrosion.
- Avoid the use of remote car starters; it creates more unneeded idling time.
- You need no more than 30 seconds of idling to warm up your vehicle's engine.
- The best way to warm up your entire car in the colder winter months is to drive it after starting the engine.
- Transportation accounts for about 1/4 of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and is a major contributor to smog in urban areas
- Minimize your warm-up idling time.
- Use a block heater.
- Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than it would take to restart you car.
- Avoid the use of drive-thrus. Cars in drive-thrus add thousands of kilograms of pollutants into the air. Plus, it is usually quicker to go inside than to wait in the line-up.
- Turn off your car's engine if stopped for more than 10 seconds.
- If every driver of a light duty vehicle avoided idling by five minutes a day, collectively, we would save 1.8 million litres of fuel per day, almost 4500 tonnes of GHG emissions, and \$1.7 million in fuel costs each day (assuming fuel costs are \$0.95/L). (earthday.ca)

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A proud initiative of the Municipality of Powassan