

Idling your vehicle's engine is one of the worst possible driving habits.

Every year, the City of Peoria spends tens of thousands of dollars for its vehicles to go absolutely **nowhere**. That's what happens when a vehicle's engine idles: It gets **ZERO** miles per gallon. That wastes money, increases maintenance costs, and puts more harmful pollutants in the air.

Join your co-workers by taking the "5 Minute Pledge." If we all pledged to reduce the amount of time we idle our engines by just five minutes each day, we could save almost \$30,000 this year!!*



* Based on \$3/gallon.



More Engine Idling Facts

- Once a vehicle is running, the best way to warm it up is drive it. With computer controlled, fuel-injected engines, you need no more than 30 seconds of idling on winter days before driving away.
- The catalytic converter - the device that cleans pollutants from the vehicle exhaust - does not function at its peak until it reached between 750 and 1500 degrees Fahrenheit. The best way to warm the converter is to drive the vehicle.
- Driving a vehicle cuts warm-up times in half. This reduces fuel consumption and pollutant emissions.
- Every 10 minutes of idling costs you at least 2/10 (0.2) of a gallon of gas - and up about 7/10 (0.7) of a gallon for an 8-cylinder engine.
- Idling your vehicle with the air conditioner on (to keep the interior cool) can increase emissions by 13 percent.
- In winter conditions, emissions from idling vehicle are more than double the normal level immediately after a cold start.

Source: Hamilton Co. (OH) Dept. of Environmental Services

Don't Be A Zero



Take the
5 Minute Pledge



Every ten minutes of idling wastes
1/5th gallon of fuel
(up to 7/10th gallon if your car is
an 8-cylinder).

When do we idle when we shouldn't?

- “Warming up” the car, especially in winter.
- Waiting for another employee to join you.
- After arriving early to a meeting.
- Standing outside the car, talking to someone.
- In the drive-thru at lunch (better to park and go inside), or worse, while you are eating at a restaurant.

When is it OK to idle?

- In traffic at a stop light or railroad crossing.
- If it is required by your job (to power equipment like a lift-gate).
- When directed by your supervisor.
- For a few moments to help defrost a windshield.
- When safety demands it.

Fact: Most in-vehicle components – radios, computers, etc. – can operate for at least 15 minutes without draining the battery. Also, a car will stay comfortably warm or cool for 10 minutes. When you will be sitting for a long time, shut down then restart!

Myths About Idling

Myth #1

The engine should be warmed up before driving.

Reality

True, the engine must be warmed up, but idling is not an effective way to warm up your vehicle, even in cold weather. The best way to do this is by driving the vehicle. With today's modern engines, and the advent of electronic engines, you need no more than about 30 seconds of idling before driving away, even on the coldest winter days.

Myth #2

Idling is good for your engine.

Reality

Excessive idling can actually damage engine components, including cylinders, spark plugs, and exhaust systems. An idling engine is not operating at its peak temperature, which means that fuel does not undergo complete combustion. This leaves fuel residue that can condense on cylinder walls, where they can contaminate the oil and damage parts of the engine. For example, fuel residues are often deposited on spark plugs. As you spend more time idling, the average temperature of the spark plug drops. This makes the plug get dirty more quickly, which increases fuel consumption by four to five percent. Excessive idling also lets water condense in the vehicle's exhaust, leading to corrosion and can reduce the life of the exhaust system.

Source: Hamilton Co. (OH) Dept. of Environmental Services

Myth #3

Shutting off and restarting your vehicle is hard on the engine.

Reality

Frequently restarting has little impact on engine components like the battery and the starter motor. Component wear caused by restarting the engine is estimated to add \$10 per year to the cost of driving, money likely to be saved many times over due to fuel savings.

Myth #4

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

Reality

The bottom line is that over 10 seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting the engine. As a rule of thumb, if you are going to stop for 10 seconds or more - except in traffic - turn off the engine. You'll save money, and you won't produce harmful Carbon Dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas.

