

Lexington County Public Works Stormwater Division

Effective Date: October 1, 2010

Subject: Anti-Idling Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to prohibit unnecessary idling of County vehicles and equipment

Background:

The County of Lexington (“County”) utilizes a fleet of over 261 medium- and heavy-duty (diesel-powered) vehicles and more than 406 automobiles and light-duty (gasoline-powered) vehicles to carry out its daily operations. Exhaust from these vehicles contains a variety of pollutants, such as Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) which are precursors to ground level ozone, and other pollutants, particulates and chemicals that contribute to poor air quality. Air pollution is a public health concern in the Central Midlands Region. The pollutants found in vehicle exhaust can cause or aggravate lung illnesses such as acute respiratory infections, asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and lung cancer.

In addition to health impacts, air pollution imposes significant economic costs and negative impacts on our quality of life. Unnecessary idling of the County’s fleet wastes approximately 0.5 gallon of fuel per hour for both diesel and gasoline vehicles. If the County’s fleet of vehicles were to idle for 5 minutes a day it would waste approximately 7,225 gallons of gas a year and result in unnecessary fuel expenditures. From an air quality perspective, the same amount of idling produces 1,273 lbs/year of NO_x emissions, 546 lbs/year of VOC emissions and 31 lbs/year of particulate matter emissions. Vehicle idling can also produce avoidable wear and tear on engines. Because an idling engine operates below its optimum temperature, residue deposits can form within the engine to reduce fuel efficiency by 5% and diminish engine life. Lower operating temperatures can cause premature corrosion damage to exhaust piping and mufflers.

Lexington County can play an important role in improving air quality by limiting the amount of time engines are allowed to idle within its jurisdiction. Public agencies have the responsibility to lead the effort to improve air quality by adopting ordinances and policies that are cost effective in reducing ozone precursor emissions and toxic air contaminants. The County of Lexington’s Anti-Idling Policy is designed to improve air quality while realizing significant savings in fuel and operating costs

Policy:

1. No driver of a county vehicle shall cause or allow their vehicle or equipment to idle for a period that exceeds ten minutes of non use.
2. The policy shall not apply to:
 - a. Emergency service vehicles, such as fire apparatus, police vehicles, or ambulances;
 - b. Airport support equipment;

- c. Vehicles being serviced or repaired;
- d. Idling when necessary to operate auxiliary equipment that is required to accomplish the intended use of the vehicle;
- e. Idling vehicles or equipment that are being used for public education or display purposes;
- f. Idling to provide heat within the cab of an occupied vehicle if the outside temperature is less than 40° F and there is no accessible temperature-controlled area within a reasonable distance; or
- g. Idling to provide cooling within the cab of an occupied vehicle if the outside temperature is more than 80° F, there is no accessible temperature-controlled area within a reasonable distance, and the vehicle is equipped with air conditioning.