

Idle Article

Why Is Idling Prohibited in Perth?

You may have noticed 'Idling Prohibited' signs on highways as you enter Perth. They read:

Town of Perth
Idling Prohibited
By-law No. 4091
www.perth.ca

No one would question the wisdom of the rule requiring everyone to drive on the right side of the road. The harm caused by failing to do so is immediate and obvious. The harm caused by air pollution is less immediate and not as obvious, but it is just as real.

Particulates in air pollution, much of which comes from motor vehicles, cause many significant health problems and over 21,000 premature deaths a year in Canada (2008 figures). Children and the elderly are at special risk.

These include:

- Cardiovascular Disease
- Asthma & Bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Lung cancer
- Diabetes
- Possible link to Dementia and Alzheimer's.
- Diesel Exhaust is definitely carcinogenic.

Reducing air pollution from auto exhaust will save lives and reduce medical costs by reducing the frequency and seriousness of these illnesses.

Carbon pollution from auto exhaust and other sources is becoming an expensive and dangerous problem. This carbon ends up in the atmosphere and is changing our climate. The risk of "Climate Chaos" increases with every ton of carbon released to the atmosphere. Evidence of this is extreme flooding, heat waves, droughts, fires and increasingly intense storms. At this time, there is no way to remove that carbon, and it will take centuries to dissipate. The impact on human civilization, which is dependent upon a stable climate, will be progressively worse the longer it takes to achieve zero carbon emissions.

Finally, avoiding idling saves gas and repair money.

Idling wastes gas money for two reasons:

- 1) More than 60 seconds of idling uses more fuel than turning off and restarting your engine.
- 2) The fastest and best way to warm your car up is to drive it gently. Cold engines use more fuel. Cars reach optimum operating temperature more quickly while being driven, which saves fuel.

Idling can increase repair costs related to the catalytic converter. Excessive idling (more than 30 seconds) is harmful for your car because fuel is not as completely combusted in a cold engine. The engine stays cold longer while idling than while being driven because idling is a less efficient way to warm the engine. Over time, the additional pollutants produced while idling will shorten the life of, and possibly plug, the catalytic converter.

Cold weather exceptions:

- If temperatures are extremely cold, below -20°C , extra engine warm-up time thins the oil so it can circulate better.
- If the windshield is foggy or icy, you may need to idle longer with the defrost on to clear your vision. Use your scraper & brush to speed the process.

Try to limit warming up your car to 3 minutes, and only when temperatures are below -20°C .

Thank you for your help in keeping our air clean and atmosphere healthy.