



**WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE ORDER
2008-04**

**Establishing a No-Idling Policy for
County Vehicles and Equipment**

WHEREAS, Whatcom County places high priority on policies that improve resource efficiency and environmental responsibility and increasing fuel prices will continue to strain the budgets of Whatcom County departments, while reducing our fuel consumption will help to ease those constraints; and

WHEREAS, reducing fuel consumption will help Whatcom County meet its goal of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of its operations and an idling vehicle achieves zero miles per gallon of fuel, burning approximately one gallon of fuel for each hour of idling time; and

WHEREAS, according to the EPA, idling causes twice as much wear and tear on internal engine components as does driving at regular speeds and frequent restarting has little impact on engine components such as the battery and starter; and

WHEREAS, turning off and re-starting an engine uses less fuel than letting the engine run for 30 seconds and an idling vehicle releases nearly 20 times more air pollution than a vehicle traveling at 31 mi/hr; and

WHEREAS, the morning warm-up required for a vehicle in our moderate climate is generally only 30 seconds and never more than one minute on the coldest days and idling does not warm a vehicle's wheel bearings, steering, suspension, transmission or tires, which means that the best way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the power vested in me by the Home Rule Charter, I hereby order that the idling of Whatcom County vehicles and equipment will be subject to the following restrictions:

- Vehicles shall never be left idling when unattended;
- Engine warm-up periods will not exceed one minute (provided required airbrake pressure and/or other critical settings have been reached);
- Vehicles will be shut off whenever idling time is expected to exceed one minute.

Exceptions to this rule will be made in the following circumstances:

- For vehicle maintenance and diagnostic purposes (to be kept to an absolute required minimum);
- In any situation where the health and safety of employees or others may be jeopardized;
- When the vehicle is forced to remain motionless because of on-highway traffic, when required to yield the right of way to responding emergency vehicles, at an official traffic control device, signal or sign, or at the direction of a law enforcement official;
- If the unit is not expected to be able to restart due to a mechanical problem (must be repaired ASAP);
- Emergency response units while on an emergency scene (and not solely for the convenience of the vehicle operator);
- Engine is immediately required to power auxiliary equipment (e.g. hoist, lift platform, hydraulic tools, inverters, compactors, medical equipment, computers, traffic safety reader boards or devices, county communication equipment, emergency lighting, etc.);
- As part of a state or federal inspection to verify that all equipment is in good working order, provided idling is required as part of the inspection.

DATED this 11th day of July 2008.



Pete Kremen, Whatcom County Executive

Attachment: No Idle Zone sample signage



**NO-IDLE
ZONE**

It All Adds Up To Cleaner Air