CITY OF CHARLOTTETOWN POLICY

Anti-Idling Policy

Policy Number: *P-ES-1*

Originating Department: *Environment & Sustainability*

Approved By: *City Council*

Date of Approval: *November 8, 2021*
Amended: *August 12, 2025*

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 The City of Charlottetown recognizes that idling vehicles contribute exhaust gases to the environment which forms ozone pollution, which can cause eye, nose and throat irritation and, in higher concentrations, asthma, bronchitis and decreased lung function. Long term exposure to these gases is hazardous to the health of all living things. The City of Charlottetown also recognizes that excessive idling wastes fuel and money.

The City of Charlottetown is committed to being environmentally responsible in the operation of its' fleet. By doing so, we will contribute to achieving the City of Charlottetown's Climate Action Plan: "Reduce emissions from private vehicles and City fleet".

Accordingly, this policy has been developed by the City of Charlottetown to protect the health of all concerned and to demonstrate climate leadership.

The City of Charlottetown acknowledges its leadership role in the community and aims to be a good role model. The move to go idle free also compliments the City of Charlottetown's desire to create a healthy family, community-friendly environment, and City's Climate Action Plan. The City of Charlottetown believes that such an environment and image will be advantageous in influencing healthy attitudes and positively promoting sport and recreation programs.

Legislation and the legal duty of care around Canada also provide clear reasons to have idle-free facilities. Under common law the City of Charlottetown has a legal duty of care to ensure that employees, volunteers, and residents are not exposed to potentially harmful situations.

2. SCOPE

2.1.1 City of Charlottetown staff while performing City duties.

2.1.2 City of Charlottetown vehicles.

2.1.3 Mayor and Council members.

2.1.4 Transportation partners.

2.1.5 This policy always applies, the only exemption to this policy is for Fire, Police, emergency service vehicles while participating in emergency activity, and zero emission vehicles.

2.1.6 In cases of extreme weather (-20 degrees Celsius and below) police patrol vehicles may be allowed idling time to ensure proper function and uninterrupted service of necessary auxiliary emergency equipment (examples: Approved Screening Devices (ASD's) and Carbine rifles). In this case, reducing idling time should be considered and resources managed efficiently.

3. POLICY PROCEDURE

3.1 All City vehicle users must turn off their engine if they intend to idle for more than 60 seconds. The failure to turn off the engine by an individual when not exempted can cause temporary or permanent restrictions on using City Vehicles.

3.2 Procurement of new City vehicles should include Stop-Start systems. All City vehicles with Stop-Start Systems should always have the system on, unless there is a clear operational reason why this is not practical.

3.3 While participating in an emergency activity where idling more than 60 seconds is required, the person responsible should use their lightbar.

3.4 When the ambient outdoor temperature is colder than zero degrees Celsius or warmer than 27 degrees Celsius, if the vehicle is required to be occupied, the maximum idling time would be five minutes per hour, or whatever duration exceeding five minutes is required to raise the cabin temperature above 10 degrees Celsius, or to lower the temperature below 25 degrees Celsius. The engine must be shut off when this temperature is reached.

3.5 In cold weather, older diesel vehicles (models before 2017) are allowed to idle up to 10 minutes (600 seconds) to prevent cold start. To prevent cold start, other vehicles may idle up to three minutes, if advised in the owner's manual.

4. REVIEW

4.1 This policy will be reviewed and updated as required.

5. FACTS ABOUT IDLING

5.1 Excessive idling wastes fuel and money and generates needless greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. If drivers of light-duty vehicles avoided idling by just three minutes a day, over the year Canadians would collectively save 630 million litres of fuel and 1.4 million tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, and $945 million in fuel costs (assuming a fuel cost of $1.50/L).

5.2 Warming up the vehicle means more than warming the engine. The tires, transmission, wheel bearings and other moving parts also need to be warmed up for the vehicle to perform well. Most of these parts don't begin to warm up until you

drive the vehicle. At most, even on cold winter days, no more than two to three minutes of idling is usually enough warm-up time before starting to drive.

5.3 Any more than ten seconds of idling uses more fuel than is required to restart the engine. However, the break-even time to offset any potential incremental maintenance costs to the starter or battery is under 60 seconds. So, as a guideline, if you're stopped for more than 60 seconds (except in traffic) turn off the engine.

5.4 For the average vehicle with a 3-litre engine, every 10 minutes of idling costs over one quarter of a litre (over 1 cup) in wasted fuel. Keep in mind that every litre of gasoline you use produces about 2.3 kilograms of carbon dioxide.

5.6 A poorly tuned engine uses up to 15 percent more energy when idling than a well-tuned engine. Keeping your vehicle properly maintained according to the manufacturer's suggested maintenance schedule is a key to fuel efficiency and reduced GHG emissions.