

# **Vehicle/Equipment Idle Reduction Policy**

## **Purpose:**

The Town of Matthews makes it a policy to both seek ways to protect the environment while reducing cost to citizens. Matthews, as part of Mecklenburg County violates the national health based air quality standard for ozone. Air pollution can cause or aggravate lung illnesses such as asthma, chronic bronchitis and emphysema. In addition to negative health consequences, air pollution imposes economic costs on the community. Motor vehicles that are allowed to idle unnecessarily release harmful pollutants that contribute to poor air quality in the region. Unnecessary idling is also a waste of fuel and therefore money. By adopting an idle reduction policy for Town owned vehicles and equipment, the Town of Matthews will conserve fuel and money, reduce air pollution, and serve as a role model for environmental stewardship to other area governments, local business and the public.

## **Policy:**

All Town of Matthews gasoline and diesel powered vehicles and equipment, regardless of size, shall be idled only as necessary to perform the required duties of a given employee's position or the essential function(s) of the equipment.

## **Applicability Guidance:**

A driver of a vehicle must turn off the engine upon stopping at a destination, and must not cause or allow an engine to idle at any location for more than five consecutive minutes. An operator of an off-road piece of equipment must not cause or allow the off-road equipment to idle at any location for more than five consecutive minutes.

## **The following circumstances are considered "necessary":**

- Idling while stopped for an official traffic control device or for traffic conditions over which the driver has no control
- Idling to ascertain that the vehicle or equipment is in safe operating condition as part of the daily vehicle inspection or as otherwise needed
- Idling for testing, servicing, repairing or diagnostic purposes
- Idling for a period not to exceed three to five minutes or as recommended by the manufacturer to cool down a turbo-charged heavy-duty vehicle before turning the engine off

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- Idling to accomplish work for which the vehicle/equipment was designed other than transporting goods
- Idling to operate a lift or other power take off driven piece of equipment designed for use with the vehicle
- Idling to operate defrosters, heaters, air conditioners, flashers, light bars or other equipment to prevent a safety or health emergency, but not solely for the comfort of the driver or passengers
- Idling to recharge a battery or other energy storage unit of a hybrid electric vehicle/equipment
- Idling to operate equipment that runs intermittently in normal use.
- Idling for protection and health of a K-9 unit when removal is not feasible or reasonable.

**Approved by Board on February 27, 2006**