PURPOSE

This document outlines the policy of a two minute idle time to:

- reduce the air pollution from vehicle and equipment exhaust;
- create a healthier environment;
- promote energy (fossil fuel) conservation;
- reduce noise pollution; and
- reduce wear and service needs on City vehicles and equipment.

Although idling might seem like a small annoyance in the bigger picture of local environmental problems, this bad habit results in wasted fuel, unnecessary pollution and contributes to problems such as climate change and smog. What's more, it's needlessly affecting the health of our citizens, particularly our children, senior citizens and people with respiratory problems.

GENERAL

Each person takes about 20,000 breaths each day with the average American breathing 3,400 gallons of air per day. Children breathe 50% more air than adults.

Vehicle exhaust is the leading source of hazardous air pollution in the State of Washington (National Transportation Library). Airborne particulate matter consists of many different substances suspended in air in the form of particles (solids or liquid droplets) that vary widely in size. Particles less than 10 micrometers in diameter, that include both fine and coarse dust particles, pose the greatest health concern because they can pass through the nose and throat and get into the lungs. Diesel exhaust contains both very small particles and 40 chemical that are classified as “hazardous air pollutants” under the Clean Air Act. One component of diesel exhaust contains microscopic soot, a particle that is about 200 times smaller than the period at the end of this sentence.

Exposure to vehicle exhaust increases the risk of death from heart and lung disease and lung cancer and asthma symptoms increase as a result of exposure to vehicle exhaust.

Idling Facts and Statistics:

- Idling consumes from ½ gallon to 1 gallon of fuel per hour and wastes more fuel than turning off and on your vehicle engine.
- An idling engine delivers 0 mpg.
- It is more efficient to turn off most warmed-up vehicles than to idle for more than 30 seconds.
- Modern vehicles need a maximum of 30 seconds of idle at start up. The best way to warm up a vehicle is by driving it.
- Excessive idling can be hard on your engine because it isn’t working at peak operating temperature. Fuel doesn't undergo complete combustion, leaving spark plugs dirty and contaminating engine oil. Frequent restarting has little impact on engine components like battery and starter motor.
- Although some fuels pollute less than others, they all contribute to air pollution and are therefore equally affected by this policy.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees who are authorized to operate a vehicle/equipment owned, leased or rented by the City of Oak Harbor. The Equipment Rental Division will ensure that this policy is kept up to date.

**EXEMPTIONS:**

a) For vehicle/equipment maintenance and diagnostic purposes;

b) Under extreme weather conditions or any other time when the health and safety of employees or others may be jeopardized;

c) If the unit is not expected to restart due to mechanical problems (to be repaired ASAP);

d) Assisting on an emergency scene; and

e) When the engine is required to power auxiliary equipment (i.e.: hoist, lift, computers, safety lighting, and internal equipment).

**POLICY**

1. The driver/operator shall:

   - Not idle the vehicle/equipment while completing a circle check (unless required for air brake pressure or other critical checks necessary);
   - Not leave the vehicle/equipment unattended while idling;
   - shut down the vehicle/equipment when it is expected to exceed the two minute idle time;
   - Ensure that vehicle/equipment deficiencies are reported immediately to the immediate supervisor or if it is unsafe to turn the unit off;
• Idle the vehicle/equipment only if the motor is required to power auxiliary equipment;
• Idle the vehicle/equipment only under extreme weather conditions; and
• Idle the vehicle/equipment only when the health and safety of employees or others may be jeopardized.

2. Each supervisor shall:

• Educate employees about this policy; and
• Ensure that employees adhere to this policy.

3. Equipment Rental shall:

1. Idle vehicles/equipment only when necessary for maintenance and diagnostic purposes; and
2. Minimize the amount of time vehicles/equipment are idling.

PROCEDURES

1. The driver/operator will:

a) Check the vehicle/equipment prior to leaving the City facility to ensure that safe turn off of the unit can be accomplished;

b) Report any defects to Equipment Rental utilizing the Driver's Inspection Report and so that a determination can be made regarding the safety of the vehicle /equipment if the unit cannot be turned off;

c) Turn off the vehicle/equipment and remove the keys from the ignition when the vehicle/equipment is left unattended;

d) Turn off the vehicle/equipment, unless the vehicle/equipment motor is to be used for auxiliary power; and

e) Turn off the vehicle/equipment when it is expected to exceed the two minute idle time, and it is safe to do so.

2. The Equipment Rental staff will:

a) Fill out the necessary paperwork, when the vehicle/equipment is reported to be unsafe to turn off;
b) Determine if vehicle/equipment is to be operated or to be taken out of service for repair;

3. The Supervisors will:

a) Educate the employees regarding this policy; and

b) Monitor compliance with the policy.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.