

FACTS ABOUT

Limits On School Bus Idling At Schools

The Idling Problem

Daily, more than 26,000 school buses and numerous other buses and heavy-duty vehicles operate at or near schools. Unnecessary idling exposes children, parents, teachers, and near-by residents to diesel particulate matter and other toxic air contaminants, as well as the associated potential cancer risk and other adverse health effects.

What are the Potential Adverse Health Impacts?

- Eye and respiratory irritation
- Enhanced respiratory allergic reactions
- Asthma exacerbation
- Cancer

Should Children Stop Riding the School Bus?

No, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, school buses are one of the safest forms of transportation.

The Solution

A statewide regulation limits school bus idling and other idling at or near public and private schools engaged in the education of pupils at or below the 12th grade level, regardless of fuel type and whether or not children are present or school is in session (13 CCR 2480).

When at School

School bus, transit bus, and commercial motor vehicle drivers are required to turn off the engine upon arriving at a school, and restart it no more than 30 seconds before departing.

When Within 100 Feet of a School

School bus drivers are required to turn off the engine when within 100 feet of a school, and restart it no more than 30 seconds before departing. Transit buses and commercial motor vehicles are prohibited from idling for more than 5 minutes.

Other Locations Beyond 100 Feet of a School

School bus drivers are prohibited from idling more than 5 minutes at locations beyond schools, such as school bus stops, or school activity destinations. In addition, another regulation that applies to commercial diesel vehicles prohibits idling a vehicle's engine for more than 5 minutes at any location (13 CCR 2485).

What to look for?

Vehicles Subject to Idling Restrictions

- School Buses, School Pupil Activity Buses and Youth Buses: transporting school aged children to or from public or private school or school activities
- Charter Buses and Transit Buses
- Commercial Motor Vehicles: delivery vehicles, maintenance vehicles, and construction vehicles

Fuel Types

All fuel types are subject to the regulation, however, electric engines and other zero-emission vehicles are exempt.

- Diesel
- Gas
- CNG

How do I report an idling violation?

- Submit an online complaint form at www.arb.ca.gov/enf/complaints/complaints.htm
- Call the ARB at 1-800-END-SMOG (1-800-363-7664)
- Contact your local air pollution control or air quality management district at www.arb.ca.gov/capcoa/roster.htm

Are there exemptions?

Yes, there are idling exemptions including, but not limited to:

- In the midst of traffic
- To ascertain safe operating conditions of the bus or vehicle
- For vehicle testing, service, repair, or diagnostic purposes
- To operate equipment needed by persons with disabilities and heaters or air conditioners for children with exceptional needs
- See Regulation for details (visit www.arb.ca.gov/regact/sbidling/fro.pdf)

What are the penalties for non-compliance?

The driver of the vehicle is subject to a minimum civil penalty of \$300 and possible criminal penalties as specified in the Health and Safety Code.

Do passenger vehicles emit harmful pollutants too?

Yes, idling of passenger vehicles emits harmful pollutants too. Although this regulation does not apply to passenger vehicles, **you should turn off your engine whenever you can if you park near a school.**

For More Information

Please contact the ARB Public information office at (800) 242-4450.

To obtain this document in an alternative format or language please contact the ARB's Helpline at (800) 242-4450 or at helpline@arb.ca.gov. TTY/TDD/ Speech to Speech users may dial 711 for the California Relay Service.