

How can municipalities address truck idling?

In recent years communities throughout California have experienced an increase in truck traffic, due in part to an increase in warehouses within communities, increased e-commerce and imports arriving through our ports, and other reasons. Along with more traffic has come an increase in truck idling. This idling happens for a variety of reasons.

Illegal idling versus allowable truck idling

Illegal idling occurs when a truck is idling for over five minutes within 100 feet of sensitive receptors, like near homes, hospitals, school, and care facilities. But there are reasons why idling is necessary, and as a result, exceptions to the five-minute rule near sensitive receptors exist, like to operate an auxiliary device or a powered lift gate on a truck, and while in traffic.

From over 50,000 idling inspections between 2015 and 2023, CARB found the majority of idling in California to be legal with a 96% compliance rate. Often the idling is considered legal from a regulatory perspective, but that doesn't mean truck idling and traffic isn't still noisy, dangerous, and frustrating for community members.

Options for municipalities

Municipalities can help address this increase in truck idling and its associated impacts on local communities.

- **Restrict truck traffic:** Some cities, like *Carson*, have designated truck routes, limiting trucks in residential areas.
- **Restrict truck parking:** Many cities and counties limit truck parking, post signs designating the parking restrictions for commercial vehicles, and enforce these limitations through parking enforcement.
- **Site warehouses far from residential areas:** The California Dept. of Justice shares *best practices for siting warehouses* to protect community members from further exposure to trucks. For example, there should be at least a 1000-foot buffer between warehouses and sensitive receptors, and barriers shielding community members from the increased truck exposure should be constructed as mitigation measures for the CEQA process.
- **Enforce truck idling regulations:** In addition to CARB, other agencies have been empowered to enforce the idling restrictions in the regulations (13 CCR 2480 and 2485), including local law enforcement. If local law enforcement is uncertain how to enforce the



truck idling regulations, CARB is available to provide training. (Contact information can be found below under "Resources.")

- **Extend enforcement authority:** While only peace officers are given regulatory authority to enforce the truck idling regulations (13 CCR 2480 and 2485), any municipality can extend authority to their other enforcement personnel by adding regulatory authority to their *municipal code, like the City of Fullerton* did to allow parking enforcement to enforce the regulations, or enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CARB to extend enforcement authority.
- **Install No Idling signs:** Unlike restricted parking signs, the truck idling regulations can be enforced whether or not a sign is present. However, some communities have found the installation of the signs to be an effective reminder to truck drivers to be good neighbors. Since contact information can be put on signs, like has been done in the South Coast Air Quality Management District, they can also be a good way to help community members know who to contact to report illegal idling near sensitive receptors in their communities.

Any municipality can make their own CalTrans-approved signs following the specifications laid out in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD; *CA MUTCD / Caltrans*). The manual includes a list of pictures in Chapter 2B with the Caltrans approved No Idling sign (pg. 9; *CA MUTCD Rev 8 Summary of Changes*; SR63 (CA) and SR63A (CA)). Municipalities can reach out to CARB staff for the specifications to make this sign for their communities. Sign costs may vary by vendor, but through Prison Industry Authority (*Customer Support » CALPIA Website*) signs are approximately \$50 per CalTrans-approved sign.



Resources

Please contact CARB's Community Outreach and Enforcement Section at coes@arb.ca.gov or visit bit.ly/CARB-COES for additional anti-idling resources.