



Advisory

TO: OWNERS/OPERATORS OF UTILITY VEHICLES

Number 403

September 9, 2009

UTILITY VEHICLE IDLING

The purpose of this advisory is to inform you of two potential exceptions to the California Air Resources Board's (ARB) statewide regulation (13 CCR 2485) to limit diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicle idling. This regulation prohibits owners and operators of diesel-fueled vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of greater than 10,000 lbs. from idling the vehicle's main engine for more than 5 minutes at any location. There are certain situations, however, where an exemption to this rule may be granted to utility vehicles. The following information should assist owners and operators of utility vehicles in identifying situations where idling would be or would not be appropriate.

The following two circumstances may exempt certain utility vehicles from the idling regulation. First, idling in order to operate flashing lights while in roadways may be considered exempt for safety reasons. We understand that flashing lights enhance safety for operators and that idling the vehicle's main engine is required to facilitate constant flashing lights. This exemption will only be granted for jobs that occur on roadways, and other hazard areas.

Second, idling when necessary to avoid a safety emergency may also be considered exempt. We understand that operators often work with high-voltage equipment and must remain in constant contact with other operators of the electric grid via radio in order to avoid safety mishaps, such as electrocution. For jobs performed at night, spotlights also are used to increase safety. In order to ensure safety of these operators, the engine may need to remain running beyond the regulation's five minute limit.

Under these two circumstances, ARB, at its own discretion, may provide utility vehicles with an exemption from California's idling restrictions. However, unnecessary idling while the vehicle is not being used in an official capacity remains prohibited.

Drivers found in violation of this regulation are subject to a minimum civil penalty of \$300, as specified in the Health and Safety Code. A hold on the vehicle's registration may be placed for Notices of Violation that are not cleared.

For further information on this Advisory or about the state's commercial diesel-fueled vehicle idling rule, contact Nancy O'Connor at (916) 322-8325.