



Clean Air Zone

How parents, guardians, and community members can help get into the zone

What is *Clean Air Zone Idaho*?

Clean Air Zone Idaho is a statewide program aimed at reducing children's exposure to school bus diesel exhaust by reducing idling of buses and other vehicles and encouraging use of alternative fuels in school buses.

Goals of *Clean Air Zone Idaho* are to:

- Provide a healthier environment for Idaho's school children by reducing emissions from diesel-powered school buses;
- Improve air quality in and around school buildings and throughout local communities; and
- Assist school districts in obtaining funding to use cleaner fuels, replace existing buses with cleaner models, and/or retrofit buses with advanced emission control technologies.

What are the Health Impacts of Diesel Exhaust?

School buses are the safest way for children to get to school. However, diesel exhaust aggravates asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and exacerbates allergies. Based on human exposure studies as well as lab data, EPA has concluded that diesel exhaust is a probable carcinogen or cancer-causing substance.

While dropping off or picking students up from school and waiting, idling buses and vehicles emit fine particulates and other pollutants, which can adversely impact air quality and public health. Bus idling and bus queuing can further increase concentrations of particulates inside both school buses and nearby buildings.

Although breathing diesel exhaust may not measurably impair lung function in adults, recent studies demonstrate that particulate pollution can impair the development of lungs in children. Fortunately, actions can be taken to reduce children's exposure to diesel exhaust.

Did You Know?

- ✓ Running vehicles emit many air pollutants including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, fine particulate matter, and other hazardous air pollutants.
- ✓ Asthma is the most common long-term childhood disease, affecting approximately 10% of children in Idaho. It is the number one cause of absenteeism.
- ✓ 30 seconds of idling uses more fuel than turning off the engine and restarting it.

What Can Parents, Guardians, and Community Members Do?

- ✓ Reduce motor vehicle use. Encourage kids to walk or bike to school. This not only reduces air emissions, but also promotes physical fitness in children.
- ✓ Carpool when you drive. This applies to parents and students who drive themselves to school.
- ✓ Consider using alternative fuels in your personal vehicles or driving more fuel-efficient vehicles.
- ✓ Get creative! Find a method that works for you to reduce air pollution in school zones. Possibilities include:
 - Drive kids part of the way, then let them walk or bike.
 - Consider a walking school bus for young children in which parents take turns walking a larger group of children to school.
- ✓ Encourage local schools to join *Clean Air Zone Idaho*.
- ✓ Support schools that have pledged to “get into the zone.” Comply with no-idle zones.
- ✓ Spread the word of *Clean Air Zone Idaho* to other community members. Help make Idaho’s air cleaner for all children.

For More Information

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Clean School Bus USA Program
www.epa.gov/otaq/schoolbus/index.htm