



# Safe and Clean

*Information for bus drivers*

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## **Diesel Exhaust and School Bus Idling**

Diesel exhaust from idling school buses poses a health risk to both drivers and students. As idling buses wait for students at schools, they emit exhaust fumes which concentrate at ground level and can enter both the passenger compartments of the buses and school classrooms through ventilation systems.

Diesel exhaust has been found to cause lung damage, respiratory problems, premature death, and lung cancer. Although everyone can be affected by diesel exhaust, children are more susceptible to these health problems because their respiratory systems are not fully developed.

## **Benefits of Reducing School Bus Idling**

- ✓ Helps protect the health of drivers and students from the harmful effects of diesel fumes.
- ✓ Reduces air pollutants that contribute to ozone smog, fine particulate formation, and global warming.
- ✓ Reduces fuel consumption and saves money. A typical diesel vehicle burns approximately one half gallon of fuel for each hour it idles.
- ✓ Reduces wear and tear on the engine, saving on maintenance and increasing the life of the engine.

## School Bus Drivers Can Make a Difference!

Excessive exposure to diesel exhaust from school buses can pose a health risk for drivers and children. School bus drivers can make a significant impact on protecting the health of their passengers and their own health by limiting engine idling whenever practical.

Our school district has joined *Clean Air Zone Idaho*, a program aimed at reducing exposure to school bus diesel exhaust. Please help us “get into the zone” by following these simple guidelines:

- ✓ Turn off the engine upon arrival at school or other destination, unless leaving within three minutes. This applies to transportation to and from home, school, activity, or charter.
- ✓ **Do not allow buses to idle while waiting for passengers.**
- ✓ During morning start-up, do not idle buses longer than necessary to bring them to proper operating temperature and defrost all windows. On cold days, stay warm inside the building.
- ✓ Avoid driving directly behind other large vehicles, especially those with visible exhaust being emitted.
- ✓ Encourage children to sit in the front of the bus. Studies find lower pollutant levels near the front.
- ✓ Keep bus windows open whenever possible. This helps disperse air pollutants.

Exceptions may be made if:

- ✓ It is necessary to run the engine to operate safety equipment or deal with an emergency.
- ✓ The outside temperature is below 32°F.
- ✓ It is necessary to maintain a safe temperature for students with special needs.
- ✓ A turbo-charged diesel engine requires warm up and cool down. Follow manufacturer guidelines for proper times.
- ✓ It is necessary for maintenance of operations.