EXCESSIVE IDLING OF TRUCKS AND BUSES IS AGAINST THE LAW

Because of these health and environmental risks, New York State and New York City laws limit the amount of time a truck or bus may idle. Vehicle owners and operators, and in some cases people who control buildings or land, are subject to fines and legal actions for violations. All truck and bus drivers should idle as little as possible, and certainly should stay within legal limits.

Under New York State law, heavy duty trucks and buses may not idle for more than 5 consecutive minutes.

There are exceptions to the law, including:

- when the engine is powering an auxiliary function such as loading or unloading cargo, or mixing concrete;
- when running the engine is required for maintenance; or
- when fire, police, utility or other vehicles are performing emergency services.

Penalties for violating the State idling law range from $375 to $22,500. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) enforces this law.

Under New York City law, trucks and buses may not idle for more than 3 consecutive minutes.

The law provides for two exceptions:

- when the engine is powering a loading, unloading or processing device; or
- when the vehicle is a legally authorized emergency vehicle.

Penalties for violating the City idling law range from $220 to $2,000. The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) enforces this law.
If you see a truck or bus violating the idling laws, tell the driver or vehicle owner, or contact the agency in charge of enforcement. When reporting violations, be sure to take down the license plate number, exact location and date and time of the violation, and how long the vehicle was idling.

To report a violation of the New York State idling law:

Contact the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at the local office listed in your phone book, or at (800) TIPP-DEC, or at http://www.dec.state.ny.us/.

You can also contact the Attorney General’s office at (800) 771-7755 or at www.ag.ny.gov.

To report violations of the New York City idling law:

Contact the New York City DEP by calling New York City’s information hotline, 311.

For more information:

New York State’s idling regulation is found at 6 NYCRR §217-3.2.

New York City’s idling regulation is found at NYC Administrative Code §24-163.

The American Lung Associations in New York have information on the health effects of air pollution and can be reached by calling (800) LUNG USA or at http://www.alanyls.org/.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Transportation and Air Quality has information on air pollution from trucks and buses and can be reached at 734-214-4333 or www.epa.gov/otaq.

Dear New Yorker:

How often have you been bothered by the black smoke that billows out of the tailpipes of trucks and buses? How often have you had to deal with the noise of trucks and buses left idling too long? These are real quality of life concerns.

Beyond these concerns, air pollution from trucks and buses poses a significant threat to the health of the people in New York State and to our natural environment. My office has prepared this pamphlet to help you understand the importance of limiting idling by trucks and buses. You will also learn about the New York State and New York City idling regulations.

Reducing idling can be as easy as turning off your engine. Let’s work together to control truck and bus idling. By doing so, we will improve our health and the environment and, at the same time, save fuel and reduce fuel costs.

Sincerely,

Eric T. Schneiderman
Attorney General

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