



Forsyth County Vehicle Idling Policy – 2008

All vehicles and equipment owned by Forsyth County or personal vehicles being used for official county business, regardless of size, shall idle only as **necessary** to perform the required duties of a given employee's position or the essential function of the equipment.

Guidance: A driver of a vehicle must turn off the engine immediately upon stopping at a designation and must not cause or allow an engine to idle at any location for more than 1 minute. An operator of an off-road piece of equipment (including lawn mowers) must not cause or allow that equipment to idle at any location for more than 1 minute.

The following circumstances are considered “necessary.”

- Idling while stopped for an official traffic control device or for traffic conditions over which the driver has no control
- Idling to ascertain that the vehicle or equipment is in safe operating condition as part of the daily vehicle inspection or as otherwise needed
- Idling for testing, servicing, repairing or diagnostic purposes
- Idling for a period not to exceed three to five minutes or as recommended by the manufacturer to cool down a turbo-charged heavy-duty vehicle before turning the engine off
- Idling to accomplish work for which the vehicle/equipment was designed other than transporting goods
- Idling to operate a lift or other power take off driven pieces of equipment designated for use with the vehicle
- Idling to operate defrosters, heaters, air conditioners or other equipment to prevent a safety or health emergency, *but not solely for the comfort of the driver or passenger.*
- Idling to recharge a battery or other energy storage unit of a hybrid electric vehicle/equipment
- Idling to maintain temperatures for K-9 units and for the safety of animals contained by Animal Control.

Exemptions: County vehicles may idle beyond above stated limitations for the following reasons:

- County police/sheriff/EMS and fire department vehicles being used in emergency situations, or otherwise conducting business. These personnel shall turn off the vehicle's engine if running the engine is not necessary in the above situations.
- When idling in traffic
- To operate PTO driven equipment (Power Take-Off)
- To operate electrical equipment on emergency and traffic control/safety vehicles
- To build air pressure for vehicles with air brakes
- To complete portions of Pre-Ops Checklist that require engine operation
- To cool down turbo-charged diesel engines (3 to 5 minutes)

- To cool interior for K-9 units and Animal Control vehicles
- During emergency situations or to run radar and video equipment in law enforcement vehicles
- Extreme cold weather operations
 - To defrost windshields
 - To warm-up turbo-charged diesel engines (3 -5 minutes)
 - Crew, passenger comfort if below 30 degrees F.

Violations: The General Services Director or his Designee may conduct periodic roadside and jobsite inspections to ensure compliance. Violation notices will be forwarded to the respective Department Director for appropriate actions. Departmental Supervisors are also expected to perform periodic checks to help educate co-workers and to enforce this policy.