Hill International Trucks

Reducing Engine Idling

Engine Idling causes increased levels of pollution, excessive engine wear, and unnecessary fuel consumption. An engine is considered idling when the vehicle is not in motion. Common occurrences for an engine idling are sitting at a red light, truck stops, and waiting while parked outside of a business.

Pollution. Although truck emissions have reduced greatly in the last 20 years, pollution is still a major issue. Keeping an engine idling emits: carbon dioxide, which contributes to climate changes, nitrogen oxide and volatile organic compounds, which both contribute to ozone smog. Health effects of idling pollution are:

- Decreased lung function
- Chronic bronchitis
- Respiratory: cough or phlegm congestion
- Immunologic: asthma or allergy like response
- Reproductive

Engine Wear. Internal parts of an engine wear twice as fast when idling at low speeds. The American Trucking Association found that idling engine wear can increase maintenance costs by almost $2,000 per year, while shortening the life of the engine.

Fuel Consumption. The following table depicts the startling daily, monthly, and yearly idling fuel costs of a truck driving 25 days a month, 300 days a year.

Engine Idling Costs				
		Costs		
Avg. Diesel Price Per Gallon	Hours Idle	Per Day	Per Month	**Per Year**
$2.50	1	$2.50	$62.50	**$750.00**
$2.50	2	$5.00	$125.00	**$1,500.00**
$2.50	4	$10.00	$250.00	**$3,000.00**
$2.50	6	$15.00	$375.00	**$4,500.00**
$2.50	8	$20.00	$500.00	**$6,000.00**

Here are some tips on how to reduce engine idling:

- Turn off the engine, when possible. Engines idling for more than 10 seconds consume more fuel than restarting an engine.
- Idle shutdown timers, such as Idle Smart, utilize start stop engine technology for charging batteries, adjusting engine temperature, and cabin comfort. This allows the engine to run only when needed, reducing engine idling.
- Use electric standby for reefers. With the cost of electricity lower than diesel fuel, using an electric standby saves money, while eliminating engine idling for refrigeration.
- GPS fleet management/ telematics technology can automatically inform managers when drivers are idling trucks for longer than a specified length of time.
- Wait to turn on the heater or air conditioning. Waiting to turn on the heat or air conditioning until you get in the truck can help to save money on fuel, while eliminating engine idling.
- Use blankets or fans. Instead of excessively running the heat and air conditionin, try using fans or blankets to provide a comfortable atmosphere while maximizing fuel efficiency.

By reducing engine idling, fleets will find significant cost savings of yearly fuel consumption, while reducing truck pollution and engine wear.