

Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont



Bob Kiss
Mayor
Room 34, City Hall
Burlington, VT 05401
Tel: (802) 865-7272
Fax: (802) 865-7270
TDD: (802) 865-7142

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Joe Reinert, Assistant to the Mayor
City Hall
Jreinert@ci.burlington.vt.us
802-865-7275

Jennifer Green, Co-Director
Burlington Legacy Project
jgreen@ci.burlington.vt.us
802-865-7532

BURLINGTON ADOPTS CHANGES TO ANTI-IDLING LAW:

In following with other municipalities, reduction in allowed idling time drops from five to three minutes

Burlington, VT – December 31, 2009. Since 2006, Burlington’s Legacy Project has worked in conjunction with a diverse committee of citizens, businesses, law enforcement officials and other stakeholders to advance the City’s anti-idling efforts. Most recent efforts include adoption of an updated ordinance by the Department of Public Works Commission. Changes to the existing ordinance were brought forth by a growing concern for public health – particularly the health of Burlington’s youngest citizens – and Burlington’s overall air quality.

Changes in the current anti-idling law include a reduction in allowed idling time from five to three minutes and elimination of the season exemption. The new ordinance also notes that a violation is the same civil penalty as that for metered parking violations. These changes coincide with idling regulations in many other cities around the country and reflect changes in car technology, namely that most vehicles need only 30 seconds of mechanical warm-up time before being functionally able to drive.

While several changes were made in the existing ordinance, the same exceptions apply, namely that: 1) motors used to run refrigeration units may be left idling to permit uninterrupted refrigeration; and 2) a vehicle may be left idling for the repair of that vehicle. Furthermore, the provision does not apply to motor vehicles that must be kept idling in order to install, maintain or

repair equipment or infrastructure or in situations where the health or safety of a driver or passenger might be jeopardized.

Mary Sullivan, a member of the No-Idling Committee involved in drafting the ordinance changes, was very enthusiastic upon hearing the Commissions approval to adopt the proposed changes. “Children breathe fifty percent more by weight than adults and therefore get proportionally more exhaust with every breath – including benzene and other toxic pollutants. By reducing idling in Burlington, we are helping to ensure that our youngest citizens are breathing the fresh air they need to grow and prosper. Furthermore”, notes Sullivan, “benzene is known to cause cancer. Burlington’s air exceeds the Vermont state standard of benzene by 20 times.”

Anyone with comments or questions on the new ordinance can contact Jennifer Green, co-Director of Burlington Legacy Project (jgreen@ci.burlington.vt.us or 865-7532). The Burlington Legacy Project is part of the City's Community and Economic Development Office and focuses on environmental sustainability and social equity issues. For more information on the Legacy Project, or to view a copy of the updated ordinance, visit: <http://burlingtonlegacyproject.org/projects/environment/>