

## Idle-Free Vermont Group

### Notes from Meeting of 06-18-09 Air Conference Room, State Office Complex, Waterbury

#### Attendees:

- Johanna Miller, Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC)
- Jake Brown, VNRC
- Tom Moye, Air Pollution Control Division, VT Department of Environmental Conservation
- Wayne Michaud, Idle-Free VT
- Don Ostler, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters
- Paul Markowitz, VT Sierra Club
- Rebecca Ryan, American Lung Association

**Introductions:** The participants that attended the first meeting welcomed Johanna and Jake and provided background of how we started and process to date.

**Fleet Vehicle Update (Don Ostler):** Don said GMCR saves 7,000 gallons/year with idling reduction policy. He believes it is important this group promote reduction of *unnecessary* idling as opposed to all idling. He participates in this group as the truck advocate. He spoke with Roland Bellavance (President, Vermont Bus and Truck Association or VBTA) and Ed Miller (Lobbyist for the organization). VBTA is concerned about enforcement of potential legislation to limit idling (H.97). It would like to see exemptions for accommodations, sleeper cars and extreme temperatures. Ed said we reached an agreement on the school bus bill, and can probably do the same on this one. He would like to see very specific legislation so the Agency of Natural Resources does not have leeway on it as it proceeds through rulemaking. Tom Moye believes the enforcement discussion is somewhat of a red herring. The law would set a norm and only those who egregiously violate (he cited First Student in MA. The company blatantly ignored the law and is paying the consequences.).

**Name of group/mission:** Participants spoke about how we saw this group forming, moving forward and what we hope to accomplish. We all agreed that we have a common mission to reduce idling. We discussed level of formality, size of group, and potential membership (and levels of engagement by partners). Johanna suggested using a model from a transportation committee formed by AARP to identify a set of guiding principles that would guide our collective work. See statement of purpose drafted by Paul Markowitz at the end of these minutes for more details.

**Working with Schools (Paul Markowitz):** Kathy Hilgendorf with the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) is contact person for implementation of school idling policy. Although SUs are required to implement school bus idling policy, the policy created by the DOE for idling of other vehicles on school property is optional. Paul would like to get a handle on what schools are implementing the model policy.

Rebecca will be working with second-year medical students through UVM Dept of Medicine during fall semester and they may possibly be able to help.

**Action steps:**

- Rebecca will start an email list of potential partners/collaborators and email list to all.
- We will, by email, determine who, if anyone additional, invite to next meeting (date TBD).
- Set date for next meeting.
- Discuss and plan late summer meeting for larger group.

Minutes taken by Rebecca Ryan

**Draft 6-26-09  
Statement of Purpose**

**Vermont Coalition to Reduce Vehicle Idling (VCRVI)**

***"Turn Off the Key and Breathe Free"***

**Who We Are**

A broad-based coalition of organizations working together with the common mission of reducing vehicle idling in Vermont.

**Goals**

We have joined together to encourage Vermonters to reduce vehicle idling by:

- Informing and educating Vermonters about the benefits associated with reduced vehicle idling; and,
- Supporting the adoption of policies and programs that strengthen efforts to reduce vehicle idling.

**Benefits of Reduced Vehicle Idling**

Reducing vehicle idling:

- **Saves money:** A warmed up, parked vehicle in almost any circumstance should not idle for more than 30 seconds. And when warming up a cold engine, even in subfreezing weather, 30 seconds usually suffices. Driving is the best way to warm up a vehicle. Every minute a vehicle is turned off means fuel is not being consumed – and thus dollars saved.
- **Improves air quality and public health:** Vehicle emissions result in the release of particulate matter (PM), nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic chemicals – among other pollutants. Elevated levels of particulate matter lead to increased hospital admission for respiratory diseases including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), pneumonia, heart disease and up to 60,000 premature deaths annually in the United States.

Nitrogen oxides and volatile organic chemicals are precursors to ground-level ozone which irritate the respiratory system, trigger problems for people with chronic lung disease, lower the immune system's ability to fight off bacterial infections in the respiratory system, and cause permanent lung damage.

- **Slows the advance of climate change:** There is general scientific agreement that human-made emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouses gases, primarily from the combustion of fossil fuels, are the major causes of global climate change. If every driver of a motor vehicle in Vermont avoided idling a motor vehicle for just five minutes a day, the state would save millions of gallons of fuel and would prevent thousands of tons of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere and contributing to climate change.
- **Improve our national security:** Our dependence on foreign oil poses a threat to our economic and strategic security. Idling reduction is part of the formula to help make Vermont and America energy independent.

### **Who Are Our Members**

- American Lung Association, Rebecca Ryan, Director, Health Promotion and Public Policy
- Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Don Ostler, Delivery Operations Manager
- Idle-Free VT, Wayne Michaud, Director
- Vermont Chapter of the Sierra Club, Paul Markowitz, Coordinator
- Vermont Clean Cities Coalition, Karen Glitman, Coordinator
- Vermont Natural Resources Council, Johanna Miller, Outreach Director
- Friends of Burlington Gardens, Jim Flint, Executive Director