

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – JUNE 30TH, 2009

CORPORATE POLICY ON OPERATION OF CITY VEHICLES - IDLING

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and City Solicitor, in consultation with the Directors of Human Resources, Corporate Communications and the Manager of Economic Development, recommends:

1. That the "Corporate Policy on City Vehicles – Idling" forming Attachment No. 1 to this report be approved to promote the operation of city vehicles in a responsible manner that reduces emissions and fuel consumption.

Contribution to Sustainability

Green Directions Vaughan directs the City to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and move towards carbon neutrality (Objective 1.1). There are several action items under this initiative including the development of a comprehensive green fleet strategy. This strategy is likely to address the types of vehicles the City of Vaughan purchases in the future. However, until such time, it will remain necessary for staff to operate internal combustion vehicles in the course of delivering services to its citizens. The implementation of a policy to reduce idling will mitigate the impact of these vehicles on air quality and reduce operating costs.

Economic Impact

Over the long-term, vehicle operating costs may be reduced marginally.

Communications Plan

Once approved, Human Resources, Corporate Communications, Fleet and Economic Development will undertake implementation, staff education and awareness initiatives as appropriate.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend a "Policy on Operation of City Vehicles – Idling" to reduce vehicle emissions.

Background - Analysis and Options

At the Environment Committee meeting of December 8, 2008, staff brought forward a report updating the status of the anti-idling by-law and actions that have been implemented to address public awareness and education of the idling issue. The report looked at three target audiences: schools, businesses and City operations.

With respect to enhancing City operations through education and training, it was suggested that Council may wish to explore more active measures including driver education and training for staff.

Beginning in January 2009 and continuing through May 2009, Economic Development staff met with a number of departmental supervisors and managers. A working group was also established to help develop an idling policy. The discussions included potential restrictions, the necessary exemptions, education and a review of policies from other jurisdictions. The working group included staff participation from each department responsible for a significant number of fleet vehicles. The appropriate staff members were identified by the Senior Management Team and included

representation from Public Works – Roads Division, Parks and Forestry, Buildings and Facilities, By-law Enforcement, Engineering and Building Standards. Comments were also received from Fleet, Emergency Management, Parks Development and Public Works – Waste Management. From these discussions, the following comments were received:

- The City's anti-idling bylaw is by necessity very liberal in accommodating idling in extreme conditions and permissive idling times.
- In the absence of a corporate-wide policy, education and training on reducing idling would be ad hoc and may lead to gaps and inconsistencies.
- Compliance of City Staff with the anti-idling by-law would be further enhanced with development of applicable corporate policy.
- A corporate policy which exceeds the requirements of the City's municipal anti-idling by-law would not only further reduce GHG emissions and fuel costs, but it would also clearly demonstrate the City's commitment to environmental leadership.

In reviewing idling by-laws and policies from other jurisdictions, it is clear that several including Cambridge, Toronto, Peel Region, York Region, Richmond Hill, Ottawa and Hamilton, have implemented idling policies that apply to City vehicles. In some cases, a policy exists in the absence of idling by-laws or exceeds the restrictions of the idling by-law. For example, the City of Toronto has a ten second idling policy for its staff and a three minute idling by-law; Peel and York Region each have staff policies but do not have by-laws.

The City's existing anti-idling by-law prohibits idling for more than 5 minutes with a variety of exemptions including ambient outside air temperature. It is necessary for a by-law that addresses the general public, in addition to delivery, emergency and transit vehicles, to be very liberal. The City of Vaughan, however can, and should, set a higher standard for its own vehicles, as an example for the entire community. The establishment of a corporate policy that exceeds the City's existing by-law very clearly demonstrates the City's commitment to reducing GHG emissions and supports the actions outlined in Green Directions Vaughan, the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan. This policy specifically supports Objective 1.1: To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move towards carbon neutrality for the City of Vaughan's facilities and infrastructure.

It is recommended that the Environment Committee approve the attached draft corporate policy on operating City vehicles in a manner that reduces emissions. This draft policy is the result of input from the working group, other staff discussions and research on policies from other jurisdictions. Furthermore, this policy will provide a framework for an internal idling education program. As a result of the efforts of the working group, the attached draft policy includes all necessary exemptions, as identified by staff, to ensure fleet vehicle operators can safely, comfortably and effectively perform their duties while reducing unnecessary idling. The policy recommends fleet vehicles be turned off when:

- it is expected the idling time will exceed one minute,
- it is safe to do so,
- the vehicle does not need to be on to perform its key functions.

There was some discussion around the most appropriate time restriction for a staff policy. Most of the working group agreed that 5 minutes was excessive. In reviewing both policies from other jurisdictions and information available from Natural Resources Canada on the impacts and costs of idling, a one minute restriction is recommended as the reductions in harmful emissions and fuel savings may outweigh the inconvenience of restarting the engine. According to Natural Resources Canada, idling longer than 10 seconds uses more fuel, costs more money and produces more CO₂ compared to restarting the engine.

Additional Voluntary Education Opportunities

Economic Development Staff have undertaken a number of staff engagement and education programs that range from energy efficient vehicle demonstrations, carpooling, transportation alternatives, etc.. These programs will continue and be enhanced by new idling awareness workshops.

In March 2009, Smart Commute – North Toronto, Vaughan and Windfall Ecology provided a workshop for City staff on idling and fuel efficient driving and vehicles. This workshop was held at the Civic Centre and City staff who were unable to attend had the option of receiving the materials or attending a similar workshop with PowerStream employees on a different day. These workshops addressed use of personal vehicles.

In June 2009, the City of Vaughan also participated in the Clean Air Commute as we have for the last 3 years. This event encourages employees to explore alternate modes of transportation and the reduction of their personal emissions through carpooling, regular car maintenance, active transportation and transit.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

This initiative supports the City's Vision 20/20 objective to "Lead and Promote Environmental Sustainability".

Regional Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

It is recommended that the City of Vaughan implement the attached "Corporate Policy on Operation of City Vehicles – Idling". This policy, which exceeds the restrictions set by the idling by-law, will clearly demonstrate the City of Vaughan's commitment to the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality and the responsible use of resources. The implementation of a corporate policy will provide clear guidelines for City Staff on the operation of its assets in a manner consistent with Green Directions Vaughan, the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan adopted by Council in April 2009. Upon approval of the policy, education and awareness initiatives will be undertaken as deemed appropriate by Human Resources, Fleet and Economic Development.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Draft Corporate Policy, Operation of City Vehicles

Report prepared by:

Rebekah McGurran, Economic Developer – Environmental Sector

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Atwood-Petkovski
Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services And City Solicitor

**CITY OF VAUGHAN
POLICY MANUAL**

SECTION:	(To be completed by Clerk's Dept. following Council approval) POLICY NO.: XXXX
-----------------	--

(To be completed by Clerk's Dept)XXXXX)

DEPARTMENT: Corporate	SUBJECT: Policy on the Operation of City Vehicles - Idling
---------------------------------	--

Council resolved:

To adopt a policy that governs the operation of city vehicles in a responsible manner that reduces emissions and fuel consumption.

Purpose:

In 2004, the City of Vaughan implemented an by-law prohibiting idling for more than 5 minutes. While this by-law addresses the public and applies to City fleet vehicles, Vaughan City Council resolves to demonstrate its commitment to environmental leadership by requiring City owned and operated vehicles to reduce unnecessary idling. As such, this document outlines a one minute idle time policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote energy efficiency and cost savings, as well as demonstrating the City's commitment to implementing the goals of Green Directions Vaughan, the City's first Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan.

Policy:

That City owned and operated vehicles will not idle unnecessarily for longer than one minute.

Exemptions:

- 1) When the engine is required to power auxiliary equipment necessary for the completion of work.
- 2) Under extreme weather, as defined by the City of Vaughan existing by-law (above 27°C or below 5°C)
- 3) In a situation where health and safety of employees may be jeopardized.
- 4) For vehicle maintenance and diagnostic purposes.
- 5) Emergency and/or essential on site operations

Responsibilities:

Supervisors will:

- Ensure staff are aware of the policy
- Post information related to idling policy in the workplace
- Educate and inform staff when idling occurs in a non-exempt situation

Staff will:

- Abide by the one minute idling policy except in situations that are exempt