

IDLING OF VEHICLES

Recommendation

The Environmental Task Force recommends:

1. That the anti-idling by-law be enacted.

Purpose

This report is the request of the Environmental Task Force for Council to enact a by-law to regulate the idling of motor vehicles throughout the City of Vaughan.

Background - Analysis and Options

At the meetings of the Environmental Task Force, a number of environmental initiatives that can be taken by the City of Vaughan have been considered. The Task Force determined at its last meeting on May 18, 2003 that a by-law to restrict idling of motor vehicles throughout the municipality should be brought before Council for enactment. The Task Force further instructed staff to report on what public education initiatives should be taken in conjunction with the enactment of an anti-idling by-law.

At present idling of motor vehicles is regulated in part under two separate by-laws and for different purposes. References are contained in the following By-laws:

1. Noise By-law (By-law Number 270-81):
Subsection 2(5) of the By-law precludes emitting sounds that are clearly audible from the operation of a motor vehicle or attached auxiliary equipment for more than 5 minutes while the vehicle is stationary in a Residential Area or Quiet Zone. Limited exceptions are set out related to essential functioning of vehicle/equipment, weather conditions and the safety/welfare of operator/passenger and automobile maintenance.
2. Nuisance By-law (By-law Number 195-2000):
Subsection 1.2(a) of the By-law includes idling of motor vehicles in the definition of nuisance and at subsection 2.1 prohibits nuisances on public land, public buildings and public highways.

These regulations have been found to be inadequate since they do not apply everywhere in the City of Vaughan, but only in residential areas, quiet zones and on public lands and highways.

At least three municipalities enacted idling by-laws in the late 1990's, including Toronto, Oakville and London. All three by-laws are virtually identical in wording and were enacted under the general health, safety and well-being provision at section 102 of the former *Municipal Act*. Under the present *Municipal Act, 2001*, municipalities have jurisdiction pursuant to section 130 of the Act to regulate matters not specifically authorized by this or other legislation related to the health, safety and well-being of the municipality's inhabitants.

As requested by the Task Force, a Draft By-law to regulate idling of motor vehicles has been prepared. The proposed by-law provides a blanket prohibition on vehicle idling for more than five (5) minutes. There are basic exemptions for certain types of users and activities, including police, fire, ambulance and emergency vehicles; municipal, utility, police or fire vehicles for observation or conducting maintenance and construction; idling required for vehicle repair; parade vehicles; and transit vehicles stopped for passenger drop-off or pick-up. The by-law also does not apply when the outside temperature is more than 27C or is less than 5C.

The enforcement of this by-law will largely be restricted to holding the registered owner of the vehicle accountable for any violations. The provision included in the by-law allowing the registered owners to be charged should address situations where the driver chooses not to identify himself or herself or drives away prior to the Enforcement Officer being able to give a ticket.

If the City of Vaughan enacts an idling by-law, the Task Force has determined that it will also be necessary to provide public education related to the anti-idling initiative and the requirements of the by-law. This will assist in obtaining voluntary compliance. Attached to this report as Attachment No. 1 is a summary of the proposals, entitled Approaches to Anti-idling Promotion in Vaughan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

The City's Environmental Task Force is of the view that the enactment of a by-law to regulate idling of motor vehicles will be an important initiative for the City in participating in the reduction of harmful emissions into the environment. Vehicle emissions have adverse health effects, particularly on respiratory health.

Attachments

1. Approaches to Anti-idling Promotion in Vaughan.

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Respectfully submitted,

Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio
Chair, Environmental Task Force

ATTACHMENT 1: APPROACHES TO ANTI-IDLING PROMOTION IN VAUGHAN

Canadians are increasingly recognizing that vehicle idling is a problem. Vehicle idling is a habit that wastes fuel and money, while creating unnecessary pollution at the same time. Vehicle emissions are a significant contributor to smog and climate change, which affects the health of all Canadians. In recognition of this important issue, the Greater Toronto Area-Clean Air Council (GTA-CAC) led the development and implementation of an anti-idling campaign across the GTA. The GTA-CAC did so by issuing the Toronto and Region 2003 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air, which called on members to:

Explore opportunities to sustain or expand GTA-wide anti-idling public education efforts, based on what has been learned from implementation of the Idle-Free Campaign as part of the 2003 Smog Summit.

In September 2003, the Final Report on the Greater Toronto Area Idle-Free Campaign was released. This report documented the efforts of 18 municipalities and regions participating in the implementation of the Campaign. Specific strategies and activities were detailed and results of those activities were reported. Given the breadth of work and lessons learned in other jurisdictions, it is recommended that Vaughan's Environmental Task Force use this document in formulating its anti-idling promotion plan.

Based on the evaluation of the success of the Idle-Free Campaign, the following broad categories of activities are suggested: conduct internal education; develop a municipal fleet anti-idling policy; conduct public education and post anti-idling permanent signage. These categories are presented in order of the frequency of implementation. The Environmental Task Force can undertake the first two categories of activities, internal education and municipal fleet anti-idling policy, in the near term. The permanent signage can be installed on municipal properties following an inventory of the locations. However, the public education activities will require a detailed plan that will be implemented annually during the summer period.

Examples of activities may include:

1. Conduct Internal Education
 - Post educational information on vehicle idling on the City's intranet website, with links to National Resources Canada's Idle-Free Zone website
 - Notification to all department staff about anti-idling initiatives being implemented within jurisdiction via e-mail and/or message from the City Manager requesting their participation in anti-idling efforts by avoiding unnecessary idling while driving person and municipal fleet vehicles.
 - Include educational information about vehicle idling via employee newsletters, internal events/displays and at staff lunch and learns.
 - Include information card and window decal in employee pay stubs and encourage staff to post window decals by setting up a contest or challenge as an incentive.
2. Develop a Municipal Fleet Anti-Idling Policy
 - Reinforce existing anti-idling policy with staff.
 - Place an anti-idling window decal in the windshield of all municipal fleet vehicles.
 - Conduct workshops with fleet managers about the impacts of vehicle idling and ways to encourage reduce idling.
 - Introduce anti-idling policy to employees driving municipal fleet vehicles and their own vehicles while conducting business.
 - Install engine idle limiter devices in fleet vehicles that automatically shut off the engine after a specified time of idling.
3. Conduct Public Education
 - Keep Idle-Free Campaign materials posted at civic centre, libraries, and other public places.
 - Posted educational information about vehicle idling on municipal website.

- Provide educational materials about vehicle idling to local schools, daycares and businesses.
- Declare municipal offices and other municipally owned facilities “Idle-free Zones” by posting signs to communicate this.
- Identify public transit advertising (bus shelters, benches, interior bus ads, bus backs) opportunities to promote reduced idling.
- Continue “idle-free interventions” at idling hot spots and other intervention sites.

4. Post Anti-Idling Permanent Signs

- Produce and install anti-idling signs at community locations under municipal control.

The activities mentioned in this report are but a few examples. What is more important to remember is that anti-idling requires a behavioural change at the individual and organization level. It requires sustained momentum that goes beyond any campaign period, continuing throughout the year and on an ongoing basis. Council and senior management support are crucial to getting the internal house in order. Partnerships and volunteers, in concert with intervention efforts and a broad communication plan employing a variety of communication tools are keys to a successful program. Through the experiences of other jurisdictions, Vaughan will be assisted in preparation of its anti-idling promotion program.