



Planet Manhasset Reminds Parents to Turn Off Car Engines at School Pickup; New “No Idling” Signs to Posted at Schools

Did you know that idling your car’s engine for longer than 30 seconds actually burns more fuel than turning off and restarting your engine? No one wants their children breathing exhaust, yet a great deal of idling takes place at schools, where buses and cars line up to drop off and pick up children.

In the interest of protecting the health of students, school staff and the environment, the SCA’s Planet Manhasset is asking parents picking up students to turn off their engines. Consider the following “idle” facts:

- A single vehicle dropping off and picking up kids at one school puts 3 pounds of pollution into the air per month.*
- Children are especially vulnerable to air pollution because their lungs are still developing, a process that is not complete until they reach their late teens. Children also breathe at a higher rate, taking in 50% more air per pound of body weight than adults.*
- Asthma is the 3rd leading cause of hospitalization among children under the age of 15.
- Children’s asthma symptoms increase as a result of car exhaust.
- Vehicle exhaust contains air toxics and fine particles, among other pollutants, which are associated with increased incidence of respiratory ailments and heart disease, as well as greater cancer risk for everyone.

- Idling can actually damage an engine because it is not functioning at peak (or high) operating temperatures. It causes incomplete combustions and more harmful pollutants to be released into the air. Fuel residues also form and contaminate engine oil and damage engine parts. In addition, water can condense in vehicle's exhaust.*

New signs will be placed in pick-up areas of all schools to remind drivers to turn off their engines while waiting for students. The simple rule of thumb is to turn off car engines if you will be stationary for more than 30 seconds. This also applies to waiting at railroad crossings, drive-thru ATMs and fast food establishments, or even just “quick stops” in a parking lot, or waiting for someone to pick up a coffee.

Planet Manhasset asks everyone to stop unnecessary vehicle idling to improve air quality and respiratory health in and around our community.

For more information on the SCA, please visit www.manhassetSCA.org; click on the Planet Manhasset link for the committee's micro-site, or email PlanetManhasset@yahoo.com. *For further info on car/bus idling and cleaner air, see www.pscleanair.org.

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