

March XX, 2006

«Executive_First» «Executive_Last»
«Executive_Title»
«Agency_Name»
«Physical_Address»
«City», «State» «P_Zip»

Dear «Sal» «Executive_Last»:

As a partner in the Clean Air Commitment, the «Agency_Name» has already demonstrated its leadership in conserving energy and improving air quality throughout the state. Together, we have taken significant steps to reduce our impact on air quality in the Central Texas region.

Throughout our efforts over the last eighteen months, we have worked with our local partners to promote measures that correspond with their efforts to implement the Early Action Compact. Along those same lines, I wanted to make you aware of a new law that could affect your agency's operations. Beginning April 1, 2006, vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of more than 14,000 pounds will be required to limit idling to five minutes. This law will be enforced during Ozone Season (April 1-October 31) each year in Travis, Williamson, Hays, Caldwell, and Bastrop Counties. Penalties for noncompliance vary by jurisdiction, but an offense is either a Class C or Class B misdemeanor.

The 26,000 vehicles in the state fleet play an essential role in our respective efforts to serve the people of Texas. However, it is equally important that we minimize potentially negative impacts in carrying out this mission whenever possible. Over the last several years, a number of agencies, including the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), have implemented idling restrictions in their official agency policies and procedures to limit employee idling in all agency vehicles.

When vehicles idle, they not only generate emissions, they also needlessly waste fuel. By implementing similar policies and strategies, state agencies can contribute further to air quality targets as well as renewed goals to improve energy efficiency in state operations. Vehicle idling limits provide an important strategy that can be implemented by all agencies today to reduce emissions from vehicles new and old, while also saving taxpayer money.

A model idling policy and vehicle decal we will be using to increase employee awareness are enclosed here as examples of our efforts at TCEQ. Should you need any additional information, do not hesitate to contact James Voelker with the Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division at 512/239-3182.

Sincerely,

Larry R. Soward
Commissioner

Enclosures