

CHAPTER 3 ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

belts while riding in or operating a TCEQ vehicle. TCEQ is not responsible for payment of citations for traffic violations incurred by an employee while traveling on state business;

- When operating a personal or rental vehicle for agency business, employees are subject to the same rules and regulations that apply when operating an agency vehicle;
- Violation of any of these rules is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal; and
- Employees are strongly encouraged to use alternative fuels. Responsibility for the refueling of alternative fuel vehicles rests with the fleet manager in Central Office and with the regional fleet manager in the Regional Office.

ENGINE IDLING POLICY

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is committed to protecting the environment by regulating our agency fleet vehicle regarding motor vehicle engine idling. No vehicle performing agency business, whether owned or leased, should be allowed to idle for more than three minutes. Any fines assessed against the agency for violation of this policy are the responsibility of the offending department.

DEFINITION

Idle - The operation of an engine in the operating mode where the engine is not engaged in gear, where the engine operates at a speed at the revolutions per minute specified by the engine or vehicle manufacturer for when the accelerator is fully released, and there is no load on the engine.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

TCEQ employees operating agency vehicles, gasoline or diesel powered, will not allow a motor vehicle engine or other engine to idle for more than three consecutive minutes when the motor vehicle is not in motion or when the other engine is not being used for its primary function. In addition, do not switch the motor vehicle or other engine off and back on in a manner that would serve to satisfy the five-minute limitation, but defeat the intent of this policy, which is to reduce emissions, fuel consumption, and vehicle motor and other engine wear caused by engine idling. TCEQ employees should voluntarily not use drive thru windows, especially on ozone action days. It is environmentally preferable to park the vehicle and go inside the business establishment.

EXCEPTIONS TO IDLING

The following are exceptions to TCEQ 's policy on idling vehicle engines:

- The motor vehicle is prohibited from movement due to traffic conditions over which the operator has no control.

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- The motor vehicle or other engine is being used in an emergency or law enforcement capacity.
- The engine is being operated solely to defrost a windshield.
- The motor vehicle or other engine is being used as a primary power source for another device such as a power take off (PTO) unit.
- The motor vehicle or other engine is being operated for maintenance or diagnostic purposes.
- The motor vehicle is idling to operate the air conditioning or heating system for employee health or safety.

STATE FLEET FUELING POLICY

Mandatory use of state retail fuel contracts. Statewide contracts for retail fuel dispensing services were established in 1995 with multiple vendors. These contracts (established by the CCG) remain in place, and employees are required to use one or more of the contracted vendor cards. To the degree possible, fuel cards should be issued for specific vehicles, not for individual drivers. This will allow for fuel cost monitoring for specific vehicles. Exceptions to the use of retail state fuel contracts require a waiver from the OVFM.

Use of regular unleaded gasoline. Unless specifically prohibited by manufacturer warranty or recommendations, all state vehicles operating on gasoline shall use regular unleaded gasoline. Higher octane blends (marketed as premium, super-unleaded, plus, etc.) reportedly offer no proven benefit and are prohibited for use in state vehicles (except as noted).

Use of alternative fuels. Vehicles capable of using alternative fuels will use them exclusively except in certain cases specified in Title 1, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 125, Section 125.69. Exceptions are:

- A. Where and when the alternative fuel is not available;
- B. The range of the alternative fuel is insufficient to complete a round trip, in which case the alternative fuel shall be used until exhausted, with conventional gasoline or diesel fuel used only to complete the trip or until the alternative fuel is available;
- C. When the alternative fuel costs more than conventional gasoline or diesel;
- D. When conversion equipment is not working or is unsafe to operate, in which case timely repairs or inspections shall be made so that the vehicle may continue to operate on the alternative fuel; and when operating exclusively on an alternative fuel is contrary to the vehicle manufacturer or alternative fuel conversion equipment vendor recommendations.
- E. Refueling at self-service islands or central fueling facilities only. State and institution employees will use self-service islands when refueling at retail fueling stations.

Weekly Inspections

While completing weekly checks, the Agency Fleet Management staff and/or Regional/Program Fleet Liaisons make sure the interior and exterior of the vehicle are clean. Vehicles should be washed as necessary to maintain a professional appearance.