



No-Idle Zone NEWS

Spring/Summer 2009

A newsletter about the No-Idle Zone program for Spokane area schools

Join the No-Idle Zone

The No-Idle Zone program simply put is centered on a turn of the wrist: shutting off your car when stopped for 30 seconds or longer (excluding stoplights).

A place where vehicles tend to idle is at school where parents drop off and pick up their children. The goal of the No-Idle Zone program is to improve the health of students by asking school visitors to turn off their engines instead of idling. The program includes outreach to bus drivers and delivery vehicle drivers as well.

In 2005, the No-Idle Zone program was developed by the Washington State Department of Ecology and piloted at select schools across Washington. These schools reduced their average idling time by seventy-six percent when compared with non-participating "control" schools.

Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency (Spokane Clean Air) is coordinating the program locally and has signed-up 33 schools to date.

There are two options for a school to participate in the program. One option provides handouts for each student, including a parent letter and a No-Idle Zone pledge form for those wishing to make a written commitment to reduce unnecessary idling. Similar packets are available for school staff, bus drivers and delivery vehicle drivers. Two "street-grade" No-Idle Zone signs are also provided to each school to install near their pick-up/drop-off zones.

The second option includes all of the above, plus student involvement in observing and recording idling data at their school before and after program implementation. This hands-on aspect compliments science and math learning objectives; and the active participation by the students encourages a sense of accomplishment and involvement.

By Marlesha Keys, No-Idle Zone coordinator. For more information, 477-4727, ext. 126.

Welcome Salnave, Otis Orchards

Salnave and Otis Orchards are the two newest schools to join the No-Idle Zone Program.

Debbie Maurus, Principal at Salnave, said that the The No-Idle Zone program is helping the students, staff and community extend their goal of keeping their school and grounds clean, well maintained and safe.

"As parents create a no-idle zone when they pick up and deliver students at school, they set a positive example for their children," said Maurus.

Suzanne Savall, Otis Orchards Principal, also believes that the No-Idle Zone program fits perfectly with her school's goal to create and maintain a school that is a safe and inviting place for students to learn.

"Having a program that improves the health and safety of our students is a natural fit," said Savall.

Welcome and congratulations to everyone at Salnave and Otis Orchards schools!

No-Idle Zone Participating Schools

Central Valley:

Greenacres, North Pines,
Bowdish, South Pines

Cheney:

Betz*, Reid, Salnave, Sunset
**statewide pilot school in 2005*

East Valley:

East Farms, Otis Orchards, Trent,
Mountain View

Mead:

Evergreen, Prairie View, Meadow
Ridge, Mountainside

Medical Lake:

Hallett, Michael Anderson,
Medical Lake

Spokane District #81:

Franklin, Hamblen, Madison,
The Libby Center, Moran Prairie,
Wilson, Sacajewea

West Valley:

Pasadena Park, WV City School,
Ness, Millwood, Seth Woodard,
Centennial, WV High School

Not on the List? Call us... we'll be glad to change that!

If you would like to sign-up your school for the No-Idle Zone program, please contact Marlesha Keys, Program Coordinator today! Call 477-4727, extension 126, or email: mkeys@spokanecleanair.org.

The No-Idle Zone program and materials are provided free-of-charge to schools located in Spokane County.

Spotlight: Pasadena Park

Pasadena Park Elementary was the first Spokane area school to sign-up for the No-Idle Zone program in 2005. The school is located next door to the West Valley Outdoor Learning Center (WVOLC), so the students had ongoing involvement in various environmental learning projects.

“The No-Idle Zone program was a natural fit for the school,” said Tom Brattebo, a volunteer at WVOLC and an advisory council member for Spokane Clean Air which is sponsoring the No-Idle Zone program. Tom’s enthusiasm for the program was matched by the school’s principal who didn’t hesitate to sign-up for the program.

Before the program materials were sent home and the No-Idle Zone signs posted, students documented their observations of vehicle idling at the school. Equipped with all the proper tools—safety vests, stopwatches and

data sheets—students observed and recorded idling times of vehicles at the school during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times. Some of the students were interviewed and photographed for an article on the program which appeared on the front page of *The Spokesman Review*.

Two weeks after the program was implemented (information sent home and signs posted) the budding scientists repeated their observations. After comparing the pre and post program data, the students could calculate for themselves and realize the impact of the program: the average vehicle idling time dropped in half during the after-school pick-up time.

Recently, Pasadena Park has undergone changes—welcoming a new principal, Robin Davis, and rede-



Students at Pasadena Park in 2005 observing and documenting idling data.

signing the school’s pick-up/drop-off zones—but their attention to their students’ health and education is a lasting value. Each year the school provides a refresher exercise: sharing friendly reminders with parents as to the meaning and importance of the No-Idle Zone, and congratulating each community member on a successful three plus years of being idle-free! Keep up the great work, Pasadena Park.

Idling Facts

- ◆ Excessive idling is hard on today’s engines.
- ◆ Fuel doesn’t undergo complete combustion in idle mode. This can result in dirty spark plugs and contaminated engine oil.
- ◆ Frequent restarting has negligible impact on engine components like the battery and starter.
- ◆ Vehicle exhaust is the leading source of toxic air pollution in Washington.
- ◆ Idling wastes gas and pollutes the air.

Local Businesses, Jurisdictions Embrace No-Idle Message

Although schools are the primary audience for the statewide No-Idle Zone program, local businesses and organizations are supporting the No-Idle message and encouraging their employees, residents and visitors to do the same.



Local jurisdictions are adopting resolutions and/or ordinances to encourage residents to avoid unnecessary vehicle idling, including Liberty Lake, Millwood, Spokane and Spokane Valley.

These organizations have posted No-Idle Zone signs at their facilities: People to People Ambassador Programs, Zak! Designs, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, North Division Bike Shop, and Itron.

Congratulations to these community partners working to improve air quality and the health of our community. If you’d like to implement the No-Idle Zone program at your workplace or in your community call 477-4727.