



Lethbridge County Policy Handbook

EFFECTIVE: June 16, 2011

SECTION: 700 **NO.** 711 **Page** 1 of 4

APPROVED BY: County Council

SUBJECT: Idling Policy

REVISED DATE: May 7, 2015

Policy

Lethbridge County believes that excessive idling of vehicles wastes fuel, produces harmful vehicle exhaust emissions, causes unnecessary engine wear and contributes to noise pollution. Every opportunity must be taken by the operators to shut the vehicle off when idling is not necessary for productive work. Adherence to this policy will result in minimized fuel consumption and reduced pollution by limiting the times a vehicle is sitting with its engine idling and will reduce the risk and liability by preventing theft and unauthorized use of County assets.

The Vehicle Idling Policy places specific limitations on engine idling. The policy applies to the entire fleet of vehicles operated by and for Lethbridge County. This policy also applies to vehicles leased, rented, loaned or contracted to Lethbridge County including vehicles operated by private contractors on behalf of Lethbridge County.

Responsibilities

Lethbridge County is committed to protecting the environment and the community it serves. Wherever possible, Lethbridge County seeks to conserve valuable resources and to conduct business in a responsible and effective manner. Reducing the amount that County vehicles and equipment idle each day is an extremely effective initiative that can achieve conservation goals and make the community a safer and healthier place for its citizens.

The purpose of this policy is to reduce harm to the environment and the community and to benefit the citizens. This policy specifically seeks to:

- Reduce harmful vehicle and equipment exhaust emissions,
- Conserve non-renewable resources,
- Reduce noise,
- Improve the quality of local environments, and
- Reduce the operating costs of vehicle and equipment fleets. (Vendors may void warranty if a newer vehicle has been idled excessively.)

All employees operating Lethbridge County equipment, leased equipment and contracted equipment on behalf of Lethbridge County shall observe the following:



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- Vehicles shall never be left idling unattended. Vehicles are to be shut off, the keys removed from the ignition switch and the doors locked.
- An operator should be behind the wheel when the vehicle is idling.
- Vehicles shall be locked when unattended.
- Engine warm-up from a cold start shall not exceed one/two minutes (provided vehicle air pressure and/or other critical conditions have been reached). Cooling a heavy duty truck engine down (turbo charged) should not exceed four/five minutes. Once the operator scrapes the windows clear, the vehicle can be driven at low load until the operating temperature has reached normal operation levels. Warming up a vehicle or cooling down a vehicle (turbo charged diesel engine) is not considered “unnecessary”. We expect that good judgement be exercised in these instances
- Vehicles shall be shut off when idling is expected to exceed one minute (except as identified in exceptions below).
- Vehicles shall not be left idling within 15 meters of an intake for building ventilation systems, an open window of a place of employment or an entrance to a place of employment.

Idling Exceptions

Certain operating conditions exist that will not allow vehicles to be stopped. Employees operating County vehicles may idle the equipment longer than one minute in the following exceptional circumstances:

- Vehicles that use the unit’s motive or auxiliary power to operate auxiliary equipment on a *continuous* basis (e.g. hoists, cranes, hydraulic tools, electrical equipment, welding, etc.)
- During vehicle maintenance, repair or diagnosis of problems.
- Units that will fail to re-start due to mechanical problems.



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- During extreme conditions where it is deemed necessary to ensure the health or safety of County employees or citizens of Lethbridge County (cold weather conditions).
- If stopped for a traffic control device, roadway emergency or in slow stop-and-go driving conditions.
- Allowing the vehicle to complete an active regeneration cycle on a heavy diesel engine's particulate filter system.
- Allowing for heavy diesel engines components to stabilize in temperature and cool down the turbo charger.
- Emergency response vehicles at an emergency scene.
- County Peace Officer vehicles while working traffic enforcement.

NOTE: Not every vehicle at a worksite need to remain running. Those vehicles deemed non-necessity shall be turned off and the keys removed from the ignition as per Policy.

Clarifications

- Having the air conditioner run in an idling vehicle while parked so the cab remains cool or running the vehicle to charge a cell phone are not acceptable reasons to idle your vehicle.
- If the operator must be away from and out of view of the vehicle while it is left idling, the unit *MUST* remain locked for the duration of the idle time.

Procedures

All Lethbridge County operators are expected to operate County vehicles and equipment in adherence of the County Idling Policy. Employees will not idle their vehicles unnecessarily. They will not idle the vehicle while it is unattended except in cases where the primary engine is required to operate an auxiliary component, and only when the auxiliary component is being utilized. There must be a means to shut the



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vehicle down from the location of the work performed in the event of an emergency or failure.

Any report of a County operator or independent contract operator working for Lethbridge County who is idling their vehicle unnecessarily or while unattended will be investigated. Supervisors in each department will be responsible for the adherence and enforcement of the Idling Policy for their employees.

The Supervisor will inform each operator at time of hire as to the requirements of Lethbridge County pertaining to this policy. The department Supervisor will note the time and date that this policy is reviewed with each operator, and make note in the employee's file.

Any employee found violating this policy may be subject to corrective discipline at any time.