



DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE DIVISION
Environment

TO: Chair and Members of the Community Development Committee
SUBJECT: City of Burlington Anti-Idling Awareness Campaign

Report Number: DI-5/03 **Report Date:** March 21, 2003
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Telephone: 905-335-7600 **Ext.** 7931 & **Date to Council:** April 28, 2003
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APPROVALS: _____
Department Head General Manager City Manager

To be completed by the Clerks Department

Committee Disposition & Comments

01- Approved 02 - Not Approved 03 - As Amended 04 - Referred 05 - Deferred 06 - Received & Filed 07 - Withdrawn

Council Disposition & Comments

01- Approved 02 - Not Approved 03 - As Amended 04 - Referred 05 - Deferred 06 - Received & Filed 07 - Withdrawn

1.0 RECOMMENDATION:

For Information Only

2.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the City of Burlington anti-idling awareness campaign.

3.0 BACKGROUND:

The City of Burlington has made several commitments to address the issue of unnecessary idling due to growing concerns. Council, at its meeting of February 28, 2000 (CD-31-00-1) agreed with the recommendations for an anti-idling strategy, with minor amendments (report DI-3-00¹). Council's resolutions are:

THAT the City of Burlington develop and implement an education strategy to reduce idling of vehicles and vehicle usage within the City of Burlington. (Please refer to Appendix 1 for the full resolution).

In January 2001, the City of Burlington Anti-idling Steering Committee was formed to carry out Council's resolutions. Representation from the following groups and departments include: Environmental staff, Roads and Parks Maintenance, Traffic and Transit, Fire, the Sustainable Development Committee, the Environmental Management Team, the Halton Region Health Department, and Halton Partners for Clean Air. In September 2002, membership expanded to include Corporate Communications and Central Library.

Other corporate commitments have been made to reduce idling including:

- Direction from Future Focus V (under Environmental Leadership -Item 3.1c) "to finalize a community education program on the importance of reduced pesticide use, alternative ground cover, and vehicle idling."
- 2002 Smog Summit – The City of Burlington signed the Declaration for Clean Air and committed to "develop an anti-idling awareness program to reduce unnecessary emissions into the atmosphere."
- Halton Public Sector Smog Response Plan (CD-21-00; report DI-1-00²) – a long-term goal of the plan is to "develop municipal anti-idling strategies for all vehicles."
- In June 2002 Council endorsed that the City join Partners for Climate Protection, a program to assist municipalities in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the FCM resolution to support the federal government's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol (CD-85-02; report DI-3/02³).

The City of Burlington has taken several steps to reduce greenhouse gases and save energy including the installation of energy efficient traffic signals, the lease of two hybrid vehicles, the purchase of low sulphur fuel, and the approval of a six-month pilot project testing biodiesel (a fuel that produces fewer overall emissions). In addition, the City's Roads and Parks Maintenance Department currently owns eleven tandem dump trucks and two wheel loaders with automatic shut down. Equipment purchase specifications (for all departments except Fire and

¹ CoB Report on Anti-Idling Strategy. Feb. 2000. <http://www.city.burlington.on.ca/clerks/cal/2000feb/di300.htm>

² CoB report on Halton Public Sector Smog Response Plan. Jan. 2000. <http://www.burlington.ca/clerks/cal/2000jan/di100.htm>

³ CoB report on Partners for Climate Protection. May 2002. <http://www.city.burlington.on.ca/clerks/cal/2002may/D&I-3-02.pdf>

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Transit) include a request for these devices wherever possible as well as compliance with the latest emission standards for Europe, Canada, and the U.S.A, including California.

Three City departments are currently participating in the 2003 Repair Our Air - Fleet Challenge. A media release was issued on March 24th, 2003 informing the public of the City's participation in this event. The challenge is to have the lowest incidence of idling by our fleet in our class. The City is competing in the municipal class against Richmond Hill, Hamilton, Brampton, Newmarket, Oshawa, York Transit, London, and Barrie. Anti-idling measurement technology was installed in 10 vehicles prior to the media release in March. The winners of each category will be announced at the Toronto Smog Summit on June 20, 2003.

The City is also involved with Regional initiatives including the Halton Partners for Clean Air (HPCA) Smog Response Plan. HPCA⁴ administers the Plan that addresses the health and environmental impacts of smog. The Plan includes smog reduction strategies and smog alert procedures. One of the long-term priorities identified by HPCA is to reduce vehicular idling.

A Communications Subcommittee was formed under HPCA to increase awareness about smog related issues. Promotional material was produced and distributed during the 2001 smog season. This included a three-panel brochure to communicate smog issues and three inserts addressing anti-idling/vehicle, pesticides/healthy landscapes, and energy messages. In addition, stickers were developed with different messages including "turn your computer off," "turn the lights off," "refuel before 9 or after 3," and "turn your engine off when not in use."

HPCA is supportive of the City of Burlington's 2003 anti-idling awareness campaign and plans to use the same template produced by the City's Corporate Communications Department. This will ensure a consistent message throughout the Region. In addition, the GTA-Clean Air Council⁵ has also identified the development of anti-idling strategies as a priority for 2003. The Council plans to launch an anti-idling campaign in June 2003, to coincide with Smog Summit activities.

3.1 Impacts of Idling

Vehicles are a major source of carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxides, and volatile organic compounds. As a result, vehicle emissions are one of the leading causes of today's environmental problems including climate change, urban smog, and acid rain. Every year, the average car produces about three times its weight in carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas. Light-duty vehicles account for 11.7% of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada⁶.

⁴ HPCA has representation from: Regional Municipality of Halton; City of Burlington; Towns of Halton Hills, Oakville, and Milton; Hydro Electric Commissions of Burlington, Halton Hills, Oakville, and Milton; Halton District and Catholic District School Boards; and Conservation Halton.

⁵ The Greater Toronto Area Clean Air Council (GTA-CAC) is an intergovernmental group with a mission to help reduce smog across the GTA, of which the City of Burlington is a member. The group is also involved in organizing the Smog Summits that began in 2000.

⁶ NRCan Office of Energy Efficiency. Climate Change: Your Car and the Environment.
<http://www.oeenr.gc.ca/vehicles/climateChange/climateChange.cfm?PrintView=N&Text=N>

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In recent summers, members of the public have become increasingly aware of air quality issues through smog forecasts⁷. In the summer of 1999, there were 5 smog advisories issued by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment due to poor air quality lasting a total of 9 days. In 2000, there were 3 advisories lasting 4 days. In 2001, there were 7 advisories lasting 23 days. In 2002, there were 9 advisories lasting 18 days.

With growing incidences of bad air quality, asthma, and other respiratory ailments come increased concerns about the quality of the air we breathe. While unnecessary idling contributes a small percentage to the overall pollutants emitted into the atmosphere, the amount emitted as a municipality and a nation remains significant.

If every driver of a light-duty vehicle in Burlington idled for 5 minutes a day, drivers would emit 25 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere wasting 10,445 litres of fuel and \$7,311.50⁸ daily. Over a year, this would become 8,998 tonnes of carbon dioxide⁹, 3.81 million litres of fuel, and \$2.67 million for the City of Burlington alone! If every driver of a light-duty vehicle in Canada idled unnecessarily for 5 minutes a day, the country would waste 1.9 million litres of fuel and \$1.3 million. An additional 4,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide would also be emitted into our atmosphere daily. Over a year, the costs would be 693.5 million litres of fuel, \$474.5 million, and 1.64 million tonnes of carbon dioxide¹⁰!

Any action to reduce unnecessary idling is a significant step in reducing the health and environmental costs of air pollution. In 2000, the total illness cost of air pollution in Halton was estimated at \$290 million including \$18 million to the health care system (Report MO-22-02)¹¹. Reducing idling is a low cost and effective way to address this health and environmental problem.

4.0 DISCUSSION:

The Anti-idling Committee has worked closely with Corporate Communications to develop a template for posters and bookmarks for the awareness campaign. Staff will officially launch their public awareness program the first week of June 2003. This week was chosen as it coincides with Environment Week, the Commuter Challenge, and Clean Air Day. It should be noted that posters and bookmarks will be distributed to some sites prior to the official launch (for example, schools to ensure the message is out before the end of the school year).

⁷ Ministry of the Environment - Air Quality Ontario. <http://www.airqualityontario.com/alerts/alert.cfm>

⁸ Assumption \$0.70/litre

⁹ 8998 tonnes of CO₂ is enough to fill 1,530 gymnasiums.

¹⁰ NRCan Office of Energy Efficiency. The Idle-Free Zone. <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/idling/home.cfm>

¹¹ Regional Municipality of Halton Report on Illness from Air Pollution: A Halton Perspective. March 2002. <http://councilarchive.region.halton.on.ca/cdmpdf/rphs/rp2002/aghs0502/mo2202.pdf>

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The planned program for the public awareness campaign will include:

- ❑ A media release to announce the campaign's launch on June 2, 2003, during Environment Week.
- ❑ A display from June 2–6, 2003 in the City Hall foyer demonstrating the City's environmental initiatives, including the anti-idling campaign.
- ❑ Distributing bookmarks to bookstores, schools, and public libraries for circulation.
- ❑ Posting information on the City's Internet site, in the "Update" section of the Burlington Post, and in City Talk.
- ❑ Circulating posters to schools and municipal facilities including public libraries, arenas, community centres, etc.
- ❑ Posting "no idling" signs for municipal "hotspots" such as the drop-off zone at City Hall and exploring the potential to post signage at GO Transit stations in Burlington.

The planned program for the internal campaign includes:

- ❑ Information about the idling campaign in the May 2003 issue of Focus and on the Intranet.
- ❑ Circulating information and bookmarks to employees with their pay stubs prior to Environment Week (on May 23rd and May 29th).
- ❑ Circulating posters for bulletin boards to all City departments.

In addition, an Idling Control Policy has been developed for the corporation to eliminate unnecessary idling. The policy will apply to City staff driving City vehicles or their own vehicles while conducting municipal business. The policy will demonstrate to citizens that staff are serious about improving local air quality and are taking a proactive role in minimizing idling by City staff.

As the purpose of the policy is to curb *unnecessary* idling, exemptions are included to permit idling in specific situations. For example, idling may be necessary to run equipment such as in the case of garbage or snow removal activities. Idling may also be necessary to ensure that the preservation of cargo that requires heating or refrigeration.

The policy will be piloted for a period of six months. During the six month period, staff will be trained on the requirements of the policy. As well, feedback will be obtained from staff on the effectiveness of the policy. Based on this information, the policy will reviewed and amended if necessary, prior to being forwarded to Council for approval.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The budget for the 2003 internal and public idling awareness campaign is estimated at \$6,500 and includes posters, bookmarks, stickers, and street signs. This amount falls within the environment current operations budget, however, staff are also looking for outside sources of funding to supplement the program.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS:

Please refer to sections 3 and 4

7.0 COMMUNICATION MATTERS:

Please refer to section 4.

8.0 CONCLUSION:

Idling is a community issue and requires broad participation. A City of Burlington idling awareness campaign can be viewed as a small but achievable step to improving air quality. Staff will report back to Council in 2004 with a Corporate policy and a report on the effectiveness of the awareness campaign including a draft anti-idling bylaw as previously directed by Council (CD-31-00-1).

Respectfully submitted,

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Environmental Projects Support Technician

Appendices:

Appendix 1: City of Burlington Council Resolution

**Staff / Others
Consulted:**

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Special Instructions:

Consent Agenda

Appendix 1: City of Burlington Council Resolution

Council at its meeting of February 28, 2000 (CD-31-00-1) agreed with the recommendations for an anti-idling strategy, with minor amendments (report DI-3-00¹²). Council's resolutions are:

THAT the City of Burlington develop and implement an education strategy to reduce idling of vehicles and vehicle usage within the City of Burlington. This strategy is to include, but not be limited to:

- ❑ An extensive community education program on the benefits of reducing vehicle usage and not idling vehicles*
- ❑ A targeted education program aimed at fleet managers*
- ❑ Signage development and placement at sites such as schools, sports arenas, hotels, shopping centres, kiss and ride, and other areas where idling has traditionally taken place*
- ❑ In conjunction with the Province and where appropriate, education programs along the QEW to discourage unnecessary idling; and*

THAT the education program for reducing idling of vehicles link to the SMOG¹³ education campaign and be developed in consultation with the Sustainable Development Committee;

THAT the City work in partnership with other agencies, industry groups, community groups and other organisations to identify funding opportunities;

THAT these initiatives as they relate to the City's activities and operations be included as part of the Environment Management Plan currently being developed by the City;

THAT the outcomes of education initiatives be included within the State of the Environment Report being reviewed by the Sustainable Development Committee and Environment Management Team;

THAT staff be directed to report back to the Community Development Committee after one year from implementation on the effectiveness of the education strategy and with a draft anti-idling by-law;

THAT a review of the City's approach to idling of its vehicles be undertaken as part of the development of the Environmental Management Plan; and

THAT the City of Burlington endorses the anti-idling signs put forward by the Sustainable Development Committee and to be placed on the website www.climatechangesolutions.com¹⁴

¹² CoB Report on Anti-Idling Strategy. Feb. 2000. <http://www.city.burlington.on.ca/clerks/cal/2000feb/di300.htm>

¹³ This is a regional plan involving 12 partners, which includes staff representation from the City of Burlington.

¹⁴ This amendment was put and carried at Council and is in addition to the recommendations of the report.