

Memorandum

To: Mayor and Council

From: Tom Baker, Town Administrator

Date: August 6, 2013

Re: Response to Garfield County Reduced Idling Memo and Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this memorandum is to report staff's follow-up to the GarCo memo on reduced idling.

Discussion: At Council's last meeting, Councilor Russi requested that Town staff review Garfield County's request and if practical, suggest next steps for action, see attached. Staff has reviewed the "Garfield County Fleet Idling Policy" and finds it a workable policy for our operations, primarily police and public works. Staff has also contacted Morgan Hill, GarCo Environmental Health Specialist to understand what she means by "partnering with other fleets in the county" and what resources are available (see last sentence of Ms. Hill's memo).

Request: Adopt the Fleet Idling Policy and direct staff to explore partnership opportunities that benefit New Castle.

Garfield County Reduced Idling
Memo to Garfield Clean Energy Board
July 10th, 2013

On July 16, 2012, Environmental Health staff presented an update to the Board about a very successful reduced idling project called Clean Air at Schools—Engines Off! (CASEO). At that meeting it was suggested that environmental health work with other County departments to begin implementing a reduced idling policy as part of an overall fleet management plan. Utilizing such a program not only benefits air quality in the county by reducing vehicle emissions that are harmful to human health; but also allows us to serve as an example to other government, commercial, and industrial vehicle fleets in the valley.

Recently, The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) awarded Garfield County Public Health a grant for \$3,500 to assist us in implementing this program. Public Health staff has been collaborating with other county departments on this effort. Together with Road and Bridge, Motor Pool, and Public Works and Facilities staff, we installed signs in parking areas where fleet vehicles are kept, provided key chains and other vehicle-related items with a reduced-idling message, and have been giving presentations to staff regarding the health and economic benefits of reduced idling.

In addition, Environmental Health staff created a reduced idling policy (see back of page). We believe this policy is attainable by all county fleets. However, we recognize that in some situations it is difficult, if not impossible, to reduce idling completely. Exemptions include instances when safety from extreme hot or cold conditions becomes an issue; when operating equipment (such as computers in the Sheriff's vehicles or hydraulic lifts on heavy duty trucks); and when stopped in traffic. The Garfield County Board of County Commissioners passed the policy in April 2013.

We hope to carry our work with Garfield County fleets into the greater community by educating and assisting other public and private fleets as well as continuing to promote reduced idling to citizens. Would your fleet be interested in participating and experiencing the financial, environmental, and health benefits of reducing idling behaviors? We would love to partner with other fleets in the county in this effort and have ample resources to share.

Thank you,

Morgan Hill
Environmental Health Specialist
Garfield County Public Health
(970) 665-6383

Garfield County Fleet Vehicle Idling Policy

Statement of Purpose: This policy is designed to assist in protecting Colorado's air quality through the reduction of engine idling by vehicles operated as part of the vehicle fleet of Garfield County.

Definition: For the purpose of this policy, a "fleet" is defined as all vehicles owned, rented, or leased by Garfield County or operated for the purpose of conducting business on behalf of Garfield County. Idling refers to the practice of operating a vehicle engine when the vehicle is not moving.

Background: Exhaust from vehicles contains a variety of pollutants, such as nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, fine particulate matter and other chemicals that contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone (smog). In addition these pollutants exacerbate asthma, contribute to lung damage, and may lead to cancer. Air pollution imposes significant economic costs and negative impacts on our quality of life and is an immediate and ongoing concern in Colorado. Vehicle exhaust, including exhaust from idling vehicles, contributes significantly to air pollution in Colorado.

Statement of Policy: It is the policy of Garfield County that drivers of Garfield County fleet vehicles turn off vehicle engines (not idle) when a vehicle will be stopped for more than 30 seconds, except when in traffic. This policy applies, but is not limited, to the following situations:

- When loading or unloading goods or personnel
- When stopped for road construction
- When waiting at a drive-through window
- When stopped and waiting for any reason (except in traffic)

Exemptions: The policy of turning off vehicles when stopped does not apply for the period or periods during which idling is necessary under the following circumstances:

- 1) To provide for the safety of vehicle occupants, such as in cases of extreme hot or cold conditions (e.g., to run the air conditioner or heater under extreme heat or cold).
- 2) To use lift equipment or other equipment necessary to accommodate individuals with one or more disabilities.
- 3) When stopped in traffic, such as when waiting at a traffic light.
- 4) When specific traffic, safety, or emergency situations arise.
- 5) For diesel trucks that require a maximum 5 minute run time for warm-up and prior to shutting the engine off.

With the exception of Exemption Number 3, if in the above exemption cases equipment can be run from the battery alone, drivers should refrain from idling unless there is a significant concern of draining the battery.