

## **Reviewing the Idling Control Bylaw**

<b>Date:</b>	December 19, 2008
<b>To:</b>	Government Management Committee
<b>From:</b>	Medical Officer of Health
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

### **SUMMARY**

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Requests from the Executive Committee and the Board of Health in the recent months indicate broad interest in improving Toronto's Idling Control Bylaw. Staff from Toronto Public Health, Transportation Services, Fleet Services and City Legal are working collaboratively in a review of the bylaw. Toronto Public Health is leading a consultation process to gather input into possible revisions to the bylaw. The Medical Officer of Health will report to the Board of Health in the spring on possible improvements to Toronto's Idling Control Bylaw.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications arising from the receipt of this report.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

In October 2008, Executive Committee considered the Green Fleet Plan for TTC, Police, Fire and EMS, which described strategies to eliminate unnecessary idling of City vehicles through the in-house Idle-Free education program. In response, Executive Committee recommended that City staff from Public Health, Transportation Services and Fleet Services review the City's Idling Control Bylaw with a view to deleting unnecessary exclusions for City and TTC vehicles (see <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/ex/decisions/2008-10-06-ex24-dd.pdf>).

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Toronto's Idling Control bylaw was enacted in 1996, and limits idling to three minutes in any 60 minute period. The bylaw includes thirteen exemptions to the prohibition against idling. For example, exemptions address emergency vehicles, transit vehicles, extreme temperatures, and mobile workshops where the motor needs to be on in order for work-

related equipment to operate. The bylaw and an update can be viewed at <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/1998/law0673.htm> and <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/1999/law0238.htm>.

Requests made by the Board of Health and Executive Committee over the past 18 months indicate broad interest in improving Toronto's Idling Control Bylaw. The requests address multiple aspects of the Idling Control bylaw. For example, the Board of Health requested that the Medical Officer of Health report back on the feasibility of mandatory installation of idle-reduction technologies, the implications of reducing the permitted idling time in the bylaw from three minutes to ten seconds, and the possibility of towing idling vehicles where the idling is clearly continuing for long periods of time in order to keep air conditioning or heat on while entertainers or tour buses use the vehicles as mobile hotel rooms ([http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/air\\_pollution\\_burden.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/air_pollution_burden.htm) and <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-13978.pdf>). Executive Committee requested that the Idling Control Bylaw be reviewed with a view to eliminating any unnecessary exemptions (<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/ex/decisions/2008-10-06-ex24-dd.pdf>).

In response, Toronto Public Health, in collaboration with Transportation Services, Fleet Services and City Legal is conducting a comprehensive review of the bylaw to identify options for improving the bylaw. This report provides a brief update on that work.

This report was prepared in consultation with Transportation Services and Fleet Services.

## **COMMENTS**

The idling control bylaw is based on evidence for the impacts of vehicle emissions. Toronto Public Health (TPH) is conducting a technical review to update the evidence for environmental and health benefits from reduced idling. This technical review will consider air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions from both light and heavy-duty vehicles and address the implications of recent improvements in vehicle efficiency.

As well, TPH is reviewing regulations that limit idling in other jurisdictions to identify best practises and to ensure that the widest possible range of alternatives is considered in comparison to the approach that Toronto currently takes toward idling restrictions.

Any changes to the bylaw will consider operational benefits and challenges for implementation. Stakeholder consultation is ongoing with City Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Corporations, and Divisions (ABCCDs), other levels of government, representatives of the transportation community, environment and health groups, and other community organizations. On December 3, 2008 TPH held a consultation workshop on the Idling Control Bylaw. As part of the consultation, stakeholders were asked about the benefits and challenges associated with the current Idling Control Bylaw. In addition, stakeholders were asked to consider possible changes to the permitted idling time and the current exemptions. Requirements for successful implementation of an improved Idling Control Bylaw are also being considered.

The review will also specifically consider the experiences of the City's Fleet Services and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). Fleet Services adopted a 10-second Idle-Free policy in April 2007 (<http://www.toronto.ca/fleet/pdf/idling-policy.pdf>) and will provide information about the benefits of adopting the policy and challenges for implementation. In the fall of 2008, TTC conducted a two-month pilot project where bus operators originating from two divisions were asked to adopt the 10 second idle-free policy. The results of the pilot will be available early in 2009 and will evaluate the feasibility of adopting an idle-free policy throughout the bus fleet.

A report will be compiled summarizing the information gathered throughout the review and consultation. This report will make recommendations about how the Idling Control Bylaw could be improved, and is expected to be considered by the Board of Health in April 2009.

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## **SIGNATURE**

Original signed.

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