



Capital Area Council of Governments  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2005

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### For more information:

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### New Heavy-Duty Vehicle Idling Law Will Help Central Texans Breathe Easier

(AUSTIN) - The Central Texas Clean Air Coalition announces the implementation of new idling restrictions for heavy-duty vehicles operating in Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson Counties. Elected officials from 5 counties and 7 cities, representing the Central Texas Clean Air Coalition, will sign an agreement with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to locally enforce new state idling limits. A signing ceremony will be held **Monday, August 1, 2005, at 10:00 a.m., at Fleet Maintenance of Texas, 4800 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street.**

Reducing the idling time of heavy-duty vehicles reduces petroleum consumption, fuel costs, engine wear and maintenance costs, air pollution emissions, and noise. Beginning August 1, 2005, it will be a violation of state law for operators of vehicles weighing more than 14,000 pounds to idle for more than five minutes during Ozone Season (April 1 through October 31) with several exceptions. Examples of affected vehicles include delivery trucks, dump trucks, service trucks, busses, and 18-wheelers. Several of these vehicle types will be on display at the signing ceremony.

Citizens may report suspected idling violations to their local officials. A regional information phone line, hosted by the CLEAN AIR Force of Central Texas (512-343-SMOG), will provide information on the idling restrictions. Initial local implementation and enforcement efforts will concentrate on education and outreach.

The state idling rule was adopted as part of the region's Early Action Compact (EAC), and is a result of the region's efforts to improve air quality by reducing the emissions that produce harmful ozone. The EAC is a cooperative effort between the residents of Central Texas, local governments, the TCEQ and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The public input process for the development of the Central Texas EAC showed widespread, consistent support for restrictions on idling of heavy-duty vehicles.

The state rule includes several exemptions and will NOT affect:

- Vehicles idling in traffic congestion;
- Military, emergency or law enforcement vehicles;
- Vehicle owners that have rented or leased a vehicle to someone they do not employ;
- Truck drivers who are idling to run air conditioning or heaters during a federally-mandated rest period; and
- Vehicles that require the motor to run as a power source necessary for mechanical operations (the term "mechanical operations" does not include propulsion, heating or air conditioning).

According to state rules, commercial and school buses may idle for more than five minutes but no more than 30 minutes if they are providing heating or air conditioning for passengers waiting on the bus. Technology is available that allows vehicles to operate air conditioning and heating components with electricity instead of wasting fuel and creating significant pollution during such operations. Fleet Maintenance of Texas will display an example of this idling reduction technology at the event.

For more information, please contact EAC Task Force Co-Chairs Bill Gill, CAPCOG, (512) 916-6066 or Scheleen Walker, Travis County, (512) 854-7219.

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