

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**Dept. of Environmental Protection**  
Commonwealth News Bureau  
Room 308, Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
2/6/2009

**CONTACT:**  
Teresa Candori  
Phone: (717) 787-1323

**NEW DIESEL VEHICLE IDLING RESTRICTIONS WILL KEEP AIR  
CLEANER, REDUCE FUEL CONSUMPTION**

*Most Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles Can Only Idle Engines for 5 Minutes per Hour*

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvanians — particularly those vulnerable to air pollution such as children and the elderly — will breathe easier, thanks to a new measure taking effect today that limits engine idling by heavy-duty diesel vehicles.

Governor Edward G. Rendell signed the Diesel-Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Act (Act 124) on Oct. 9. The law restricts heavy-duty diesel vehicles from idling more than five minutes per hour. Truck and bus drivers often idle their engines during rest periods to heat or cool their sleeper compartment, to keep the engine warm during cold weather, and to provide electrical power for their appliances. Acting Environmental Protection Secretary John Hanger added that the new restrictions will save the owners of these vehicles billions of dollars a year while also reducing Pennsylvania's dependence on foreign oil.

“Idling of these heavy-duty engines produces large quantities of dangerous air pollutants that can be particularly harmful to young children, the elderly and people with respiratory problems, such as asthma, emphysema and bronchitis,” said Hanger. “Across the nation, these vehicles consume 1 billion gallons of fuel annually by idling their engines. This new law will protect the health of our citizens, reduce our reliance on imported oil, and drive the adoption of new technologies to meet our nation's transportation needs.”

Each year, heavy-duty trucks in Pennsylvania emit about 3,200 tons of nitrogen oxides, a pre-cursor of smog and ground-level ozone; 210,000 tons of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas linked to climate change; and 65 tons of fine particulate matter by

burning diesel fuel while idling. Act 124 applies to diesel-powered motor vehicles engaged in commerce with a gross weight of 10,001 pounds or more that are not specifically exempted. Most trucks and buses are subject to the act, though farm-related equipment and vehicles are exempt. Trucks with sleeper berths are exempted during times of low and high temperatures until May 1, 2010, providing a reasonable amount of time for truckers to make alternative arrangements for sleeping, such as using an electrified truck-stop parking space or buying equipment that provides power without idling.

“There are affordable alternatives to idling, and I encourage all vehicle operators to take advantage of them to help Pennsylvanians breathe easier and to save themselves money, too,” Hanger said. “At current prices, drivers are spending \$2.4 billion a year nationally on fuel just for idling. In May, when diesel prices hit record highs, that figure would have been almost \$5 billion.”

The simplest way to reduce idling is to turn off the vehicle. Modern diesel engines do not require long warm-up or cool-down periods or constant idling in order to operate efficiently. The most common alternatives to idling are auxiliary power systems and stationary idle reduction technologies. Auxiliary power systems are devices installed on vehicles to provide electric power. Stationary idle reduction technology provides some type of plug-in system at locations where vehicles park.

The DEP’s Small Business Advantage Grant program has invested more than \$1 million on top of the nearly \$2 million truck owners and operators have spent to purchase 238 auxiliary power systems. For more information on this program, visit [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), keyword: SBAdvantage. Other investments by the commonwealth, in conjunction with those by private enterprises, have made 11 truck-stop electrification systems available across the state. For an online map of system locations, visit [www.idleaire.com](http://www.idleaire.com) and click on “Locations.”

For more information on the Diesel-Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Act, visit [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), keyword: Diesel Idling.