

To: All HQ Directors: Operations, Planning and Major Projects
All Regional Directors
All Regional Managers, Engineering
All Regional Traffic Engineers
All District Managers Transportation
Manager, Provincial Sign Program

Subject: Idle Reduction Signs

Purpose:

This technical circular introduces new idle reduction information signs (P-081-1 through P-081-4) and tabs (P-081-Ta, P-081-Tb and P-081-Tc).

Background:

The transportation sector (land, sea, air) is the largest single contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia and is a major contributor to smog in urban areas. Reducing vehicle idling helps preserve air quality and reduces the emission of greenhouse gases.

Policy:

In support of the Province's 2008 Climate Action and Air Action Plans, the Ministry will discourage vehicle idling through the use of idle reduction signs. Idle reduction signage will be installed at locations where idling is anticipated or known to occur due to the presence of temporarily stopped vehicles (i.e. rest areas, chain-up areas, one lane bridges, construction work zones, etc). These information signs are to raise awareness of and promote environmentally responsible transportation choices and actions.

A vehicle's engine should be turned off when it is expected to idle for more than 10 seconds. There are exceptions to this policy as it is recognized that turning off a vehicle engine should not compromise road user safety and is not always practical or possible for all road users. Vehicles and situations that are exempt from this idle reduction signage policy are listed at the end of this circular. Idle reduction signage intended for motorists operating on the traveled roadway (i.e. within a construction work zone) may be considered during daylight hours only.

Scope and Application:

Idle reduction signs are for general use in vehicle parking areas, resting areas, and staging areas. The following is a list of potential locations off the traveled portion of the roadway where permanent idle reduction signs may be installed:

- Chain-up areas and weigh scales,
- Rest areas, picnic areas, scenic view points, stops of interest, and park and ride facilities,

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- Inland ferry landings and BC Ferries routes where queuing regularly occurs on Ministry roads,
- BC Parks entrances, public boat launches and pullouts along provincial roads,
- One-lane bridge locations with signals and railway crossings that require traffic stoppages, and
- International border crossings.



P-081-1



P-081-2



P-081-3



P-081-4



P-081-Tb, c, e

For specific situations where permanent signs are installed on the travelled portion of the roadway (such as roadways leading up to inland ferry landings), tab P-081-Tb “Daylight Hours Only” shall be installed unless the queue area is lit. If permanent signs are installed on the travelled portion of the roadway in cold regions, consideration should be given to covering the signs during the coldest months of the year (i.e. mid November to mid March).

If specified in the Special Provisions of rehabilitation or expansion projects, P-081-1 or P-081-2 can be incorporated into work zone traffic control signage where queues form under the direction of a traffic control person or device during daylight hours. The sign shall be placed downstream of the “Flagperson Ahead” sign. Tab P-081-Tb “Daylight Hours Only” shall be installed if traffic stoppages occur before or extend beyond daylight hours. The signs will be installed based on the Ministry’s sign installation standards. In the event of prolonged stoppages that result in long queues, supplemental P-081-1 or P-081-2 signs shall be placed upstream, as required. Smaller projects (i.e. under \$500,000 in value) can incorporate these signs into work zone traffic control signage if the project’s construction duration is expected to exceed 3 weeks; the project is located in a high traffic area with anticipated traffic stoppages, and with the approval of the Regional Traffic Engineer.

The use of idle reduction signs for traffic control is not recommended if temperatures are consistently below freezing, or during night time projects involving traffic stoppages unless the queue area is lit.

Exceptions:

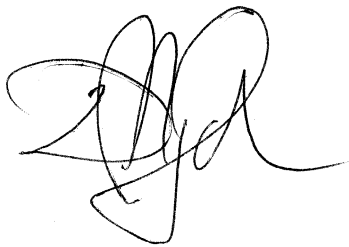
The focus of idle reduction signs is to bring awareness to climate change and to encourage road users to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from idling vehicles. The signs are not intended to decrease road safety, adversely affect people’s health, or impede the ability of anyone to do their job. Therefore, idling is considered acceptable for the following vehicles and situations:

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- Police, fire, ambulance, or other emergency vehicles in the course of performing emergency duties including training,
- Vehicles containing, or attached to, equipment requiring power from the engine to operate for commercial or public purpose (i.e. trucks with refrigeration units, operation of auxiliary equipment such as cranes or drills, etc.),
- Vehicles (such as passenger vehicles, school buses, private shuttles and tour buses) containing infants or elderly people, or persons with medical conditions who may be adversely affected by exposure to heat or cold,
- Buses and other public transportation vehicles while passengers are in the course of embarking or disembarking,
- Maintenance vehicles in the course of performing maintenance duties,
- When the outside temperature is at or below freezing (0°C) and above +30°C,
- When necessary to clear vehicle windows of fog or ice, and
- During night time conditions or in situations where visibility is limited (i.e. fog, vehicles stopped after a curve, etc.)

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