

Dane County Clean Air News

For Immediate Release:

September 4, 2008

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Dane County Introduces Resolution to Cut Diesel Idling—

Could save lives, fuel and reduce air pollution

Madison, WI— Dane County Supervisor Brett Hulsey and others will introduce a resolution Thursday to ban unnecessary idling of diesel vehicles that creates pollution that causes heart and asthma attacks, wastes fuel, and increases our reliance on foreign oil. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently said that local air quality monitors show that Dane County is above safe levels for fine particle pollution or soot and diesel engines are a large source of that pollution.

To date, 20 states and over 20 cities and counties have idle reduction laws in place to reduce vehicle emissions and save on rising fuel costs. The measure was applauded by public health experts.

"Reducing diesel idling is one key thing that we can do to protect public health and safety," said Dr. Tom Schlenker, head of the Health Department of Madison and Dane County.

Hundreds of studies show the risk of diesel pollution to health. Studies by the Clean Air Task Force show that diesel pollution in Dane County annually causes 15 premature deaths, 26 non-fatal heart attacks, 477 asthma attacks and over 3000 lost work days. This costs residents more than \$15 million in pain, suffering and health care costs. For more information, see www.catf.us/projects/diesel/dieselhealth/county.php?c=55025&site=0.

"I applaud Dane County for considering banning dirty diesel idling," said Dona Wininsky, Director of Public Policy and Communications American Lung Association of WI. "This is a cost-effective way to protect our health and lungs from dangerous soot pollution."

The Dane County Clean Air Coalition has worked with area school districts and school bus companies to successfully reduce diesel school bus idling and engine emissions and use cleaner fuels like biodiesel, but additional measures will be needed to meet the federal clean air standards. This ordinance is designed to target unnecessary idling trucks and other off-road diesel engines.

To help further reduce diesel pollution and save on fuel costs, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce has created the Diesel Truck Idling Grant Program, which pays Wisconsin trucking companies for up to 50% for the purchase and installation of idle reduction equipment.

"The EPA says Dane County has too much soot pollution, and this is one way to clean our air up to healthy levels," said Supervisor Brett Hulsey, of west Madison. "This is a cost-effective way to save lives, reduce pollution and increase our energy security."

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The measure will apply only to unincorporated areas where the county has jurisdiction but Hulseby urged the other communities to take up the cause. Madison and Dane County banned diesel idling on government property a few years ago. The proposed ordinance is based in part on EPA's Model State Idling Law for states and localities to adopt as their own. The ordinance proposes limiting idling to five minutes in a one hour period.

The ordinance has exemptions for ambulances, emergency and airport equipment and hot and cold conditions that require the engine to run. A copy of ordinance is included below and will be considered by county board committees in the coming weeks.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT NO. _____, 2008-2009

**AMENDING CHAPTER 34 OF THE DANE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES,
REGULATING DIESEL POWERED MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING**

The County Board of Supervisors of the County of Dane does ordain as follows:

ARTICLE 1. Unless otherwise expressly stated herein, all references to section and chapter numbers are to those of the Dane County Code of Ordinances.

ARTICLE 2. Section 34.26 is created to read as follows:

34.26 DIESEL POWERED MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING. (1) Purpose and authority. The purpose of this ordinance is to protect public health of the citizens of Dane County and the environment by reducing emissions from diesel powered motor vehicles. This section is enacted under the authority of s. 59.03(2)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

(2) Applicability. This ordinance shall apply in the unincorporated areas of Dane County to the operation of diesel powered commercial motor vehicles as defined by s. 340.01(8) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

(3) Excessive idling prohibited. No person responsible for the operation of a diesel powered commercial vehicle shall cause or allow the vehicle to idle with the motor running in Dane County for more than five (5) minutes in a sixty (60) minute period.

(4) Exceptions. The provisions of sub. (3) shall not apply to:

(a) Emergency service vehicles, such as fire apparatus, public safety vehicles, or ambulances;

(b) Traffic conditions over which the driver has no control;

(c) Airport support equipment;

(d) Vehicles being serviced or repaired;

(e) Idling when necessary to operate auxiliary equipment that is required to accomplish the intended use of the vehicle;

(f) When the outside air temperature is above 80 degrees F a vehicle subject to this ordinance that is equipped with air conditioning may idle for not more than fifteen (15) consecutive minutes.

(g) When the outside temperature is below 40 degrees F a vehicle subject to this ordinance may idle for not more than fifteen (15) consecutive minutes.

(h) When the outside temperature is below -10 degrees F the restrictions of this Ordinance shall not apply.

(5) Penalties. Any person who violates this ordinance shall be subject to a forfeiture of \$50.00 for each violation.

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