



# STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 8g

MEETING DATE: April 15, 2019

**To: Honorable Mayor and City Council**

**Date: April 15, 2019**

**From: Andrea Pappajohn, Sustainability and Climate Management Fellow - (650) 558-7271  
Jennifer Lee, Environmental Regulatory Compliance Coordinator - (650) 558-7381**

**Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Encouraging the Residential and Business Communities to Take the Idle Free Pledge**

---

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution encouraging the residential and business communities to take the Idle Free Pledge.

## **BACKGROUND**

This initiative was developed in celebration of earth month, April 2019. On-road transportation is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Burlingame, constituting 37% percent of total GHG as identified and quantified in the Burlingame 2015 Community GHG Inventory. Additionally, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has identified ozone from on-road transportation as a significant contributor to poor air quality in the summertime, with negative impacts on health including aggravated asthma, coughing or difficulty breathing, decreased lung function, cardiovascular problems, and chronic bronchitis. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that idling in personal vehicles wastes about three billion gallons of fuel and generates about 15 million tons of carbon dioxide annually; the Department states that eliminating the unnecessary idling of personal vehicles would be the same as taking five million vehicles off the roads.

## **DISCUSSION**

Idling means leaving a vehicle's engine running when it is parked or not in use. Idling happens while drivers are waiting to pick someone up for ride-sharing, school, sports practice, or the library; sitting at a drive-through or car wash; and checking email and voicemail after turning on the engine. The following are myths about idling: "Cars need warming up." "More gas is wasted by starting a car than idling." "Turning on and off a vehicle will produce more pollution than idling." According to the Hinkle Charitable Foundation, the best way to warm up a car is to drive it. Experts say there is a maximum 10 second break-even rule, which means it is better to turn the engine off and restart it if idling longer than 10 seconds. According to the US Department of Energy, Argonne National

Laboratory, idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel and emits more CO2 than engine restarting.

Thus, City staff are working to build awareness among the residential and business communities of the importance of being idle free. The proposed resolution would help reduce vehicle exhaust from idling by encouraging the community to take the Idle Free Pledge and turn off a car's engine if the driver will be waiting for more than 10 seconds (except in traffic). Turn your key, be idle free.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None

Exhibit:

- Resolution