

Idling Myth Busters

“Idling doesn’t create a lot of air pollution.” **Wrong!** An idling car can produce twice as much emissions as an engine in motion (150 balloons of harmful emissions every minute). Switching off your engine **CAN** reduce air pollution.

“I’m not affected if I’m sitting inside a car.” Tests show that air pollution inside cars is higher than outside, as cars take in emissions from surrounding vehicles and recirculate them.

“I need to keep the engine running to keep warm when it’s cold.” The engine usually stays warm for at least 30min after switching off. This residual heat will keep the inside of the car warm.

“I need the engine running to use car functions such as phone charging and listening to the radio without draining the battery.” You can run these functions with the engine off and just have the ignition on. The car battery will not go flat by just running these.

“Leaving the car running is cheaper, as it uses less fuel than switching off and on again.” **Idling for more than 10sec actually uses more fuel than switching on and off again.**

“I can avoid a traffic warden giving me a ticket on a yellow line.” **Wrong.** It’s an offence to idle and it can get you a ticket (Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002). The traffic warden will ask you to leave if you are in the car, regardless of whether your engine is on.

What can YOU do?

- Switch off your engine if you stop for more than 10 seconds.
- Don’t make short trips by car: it’s healthier to walk, cycle or scoot.
- Make a pledge not to idle anywhere. And spread the word!