

DIESEL SCHOOL BUSES AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH: *WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW*

Why school-bus idling is harmful

- Diesel exhaust is a likely human carcinogen, containing fine particles, commonly called "soot."
- Children are especially affected by soot because their lungs are still developing and they breathe 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than adults.
- Fine particles pose a significant health threat because they easily reach deep into the lungs.
- Diesel exhaust worsens asthma, bronchitis and existing allergies and may contribute to decreased lung function, lung cancer and heart disease.
- Diesel exhaust ranks among the air pollutants that the EPA believes pose the greatest public health risks.
- Between 10 percent to 13 percent of all students in grades K-12 have asthma.

Safety first

School buses are the safest mode of student transportation, according to the School Bus Information Council, but we can make them much safer by eliminating unnecessary idling.

- Each child rides a school bus an average of 1.5 hours per day

It's the law!

New Jersey law prohibits idling by diesel vehicles for more than three minutes.

- Call your local police department or (877) WARN-DEP to report idling
- Eliminating unnecessary idling promotes good health *and* saves money

What you should do

New Jersey school districts and school bus drivers are encouraged to protect our children's health by implementing best practices to reduce harmful diesel emissions. These best practices include:

- Turning off engines when waiting to load and unload students
- Replacing oldest buses in the fleet first as they often release the most emissions
- Using newest buses for longest routes
- Maintaining buses to eliminate any visible exhaust
- Developing strategies to prevent buses from queuing
- Keeping bus windows open while in transit when comfort allows
- Encouraging children to sit in front seats if bus is not full
- Avoiding congested roads when possible
- Avoiding directly following other diesel vehicles

Learn more

Visit www.StopTheSoot.org



State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
Catherine R. McCabe, Commissioner

