

Hi - and thank you for reading this!

The Lawrence Green Team works to make life around Lawrence School more sustainable. Part of that is reducing air pollution, which can be achieved easily by switching off the engine instead of idling.

When I asked people why they let their cars idle, I got friendly but puzzled looks. Mostly, it turns out, it is just a habit—but a harmful habit! Here is a sample, collected in May 2013 around Lawrence School:

- A lady sat in her car, checking her phone. When I asked her why she let the engine idle, she didn't really know. Even though there wasn't any need for heating or A/C, she had just followed her habit to turn on the engine upon getting in the car.
- Two gardeners sitting in their truck, waiting for the house owner to return so they could get to work. The engine idling because, they said, they needed the heating. That was mid-May and their window was wide open.
- A person from an engineering company walking up and down Francis street and taking photos. As the reason for idling, his colleague in the car said it was "just for convenience."

These examples show that idling is often just a habit, without any good reason behind it. Restarting the car burns very little fuel, only about as much as 10 sec of idling (unless your car is a dinosaur). And unless you do it really excessively, it is totally fine for your car's starter.

Thanks for your consideration!

For the Lawrence Green Team (<http://lawrenceschoolbrookline.org/pto/lawrence-green-team/>)
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Want to learn more? Please check out:

- http://www.makealeap.org/idling_myth
- <http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/myths/idling.html>
- <http://www.brighthub.com/environment/science-environmental/articles/64074.aspx>
- <http://www.gradesofgreen.org/initiatives/walk-the-walk/no-idle-zone>