Clean School Buses
New Hampshire’s Anti-Idling Campaign

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N.H. Regulations: A Barrier and An Incentive

- DES regulations limit idling time:
  - Above 32° F, no more than 5 minutes
  - Minus 10° to 32° F, no more than 15 minutes
  - Below minus 10° F, no limit

- Certain exemptions apply
Obstacles to Enforcement

- Limited resources
- Documentation of violations may not be practical
- Compliance results not commensurate with enforcement process effort
- Long haul trucks and truck driver comfort (truck stops)
- DES is the only authorized enforcement entity
  - No other state agency has authority
  - Local jurisdictions reluctant to control
Why focus on School Buses?

- Increasing evidence of the harmful health effects of diesel exhaust
- Today’s buses:
  - Pollute up to 6 times as much as a “green” diesel
  - Idle approximately ½ to 1½ hours per day
  - Remain in the fleet an extended amount of time
- Today’s first grader will have graduated from college before fleet turnover achieves the full benefit of 2007 HD federal rules
Why focus on School Buses?

- Some states had already started anti-idling campaigns for school buses (Connecticut)
- A “no brainer” in terms of ease of implementation, voluntary participation, and public support.
- A win-win opportunity for everyone!
In the Beginning

- **Our Overall Goal:** Reduce exposure to harmful diesel exhaust emissions from school buses
- **Our Objectives:**
  - First campaign: Reduce idling time
  - Build partnerships to develop and implement programs to reduce emissions
  - Provide assistance for promoting pollution control technologies and cleaner buses
Over 80% of New Hampshire schools contract with private school bus providers

Numerous entities oversee school bus operations: Dept. of Safety, Dept. of Education, School Districts

Connecting the dots: The N.H. School Transportation Association
Identifying the Barriers - Who?

- NHSTA is a trade organization for school bus contractors and school districts who transport pupils.
- NHSTA is the only statewide organization representing fleets, bus drivers, and school districts.
- They were enthusiastic about partnering with DES.
Identifying the Barriers - What?

- Temperature concerns
  - Heating the buses and funding limitations for auxiliary heating units
  - Concerns with buses starting and running dependably
- Safety equipment/lighting and battery concerns
- Credibility of studies – NRDC study results questioned (don’t use anything from California!)
Identifying the Barriers - What?

- Driver acceptance and willingness to participate
  - “Disbelievers”
  - Diverse personalities
- Identifying the right people and tools
  - For private fleets
  - For school fleets
  - For school personnel
Benefits and Incentives

- Protects health of school children and drivers
- Saves fuel
- Saves money
- Reduces wear and tear on engine
- Improves air quality in and around the school.
- Good neighbor policy - good for PR!
Benefits and Incentives

- Studies related to school buses support our efforts
  - EHII study was released just after our campaign was launched (Yale researchers) (Feb 2002)
  - Number one recommendation in study was to reduce school bus idling
- “Voluntary” compliance with regulations, going above and beyond the regulations
Implementation Strategies

- Letters to NHSTA members and non-members
- Letters to school superintendents
- Driver magnets given to all drivers who “take the pledge” to reduce idling
  - Sign ups at annual Driver Awards night (3 years so far)
  - Documentation of participation from fleet managers
  - Survey returns
Implementation Strategies

- Presentations at bus driver training workshops
- Contact with PTAs
- Exhibit opportunities – NH Asthma Summit, School Administrator events
- Outreach materials
  - newsletter articles
  - bookmarks
  - tip cards
  - school yard signs
Implementation Strategies

- Publicity and recognition
  - Press releases
  - Press events
  - Certificates to participating fleets (signed by Governor)
  - Participants listed on website, at special events
Why is the program a success?

- Strong partnership with NHSTA.
- Program emphasizes safety first.
- Willingness of drivers – many were doubtful at first!
- Program relies on fleet managers, bus driver instructors, school superintendents and bus drivers to deliver the messages, help identify barriers, and be creative problem solvers.
Why is the program a success?

- Ongoing, frequent and consistent outreach to transportation providers and school superintendents.
- Ongoing publicity.
- Strong support from EPA.
What’s Next?

- More efforts at the local level for schools – parents, teachers, school nurses, administrators.
- Work with NHSTA to continue efforts to evaluate program through surveys and contact with bus drivers.
- Increased emphasis on retrofits, alternative fuels (bio-diesel) and cleaner engines – obtaining financial assistance.
- Increased outreach to truck stops and truck refueling sites.
- Overall anti-idling campaign for everyone.
  - Radio announcement
The End

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New Hampshire - Doing Our Share for Clean Air!