

## Be Idle Free letter to the editor – Napa Valley Register 4.18.17



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# Be idle free

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Napa Valley residents were recently invited to participate in the county's vision development process at several regional workshops. Having attended, one recurring theme I heard shared by participants was the concern for the preservation of our environment, including our water and air quality.

There's something that all residents can do to help air quality, which is to turn off a vehicle's engine while parked. In the winter, our Spare the Air days are focused on burning, the cause of smoke and particulate matter in our air. In the summer, it is vehicle emissions that lessen air quality.

Countless times, I see people get in their cars and start them up, only to then get on their phone. Be it talking on their phone, texting, or being absorbed by looking something up on the internet, the vehicle sits there idling and sending exhaust into the air.

There are many great reasons to turn off vehicles while parked: Vehicle exhaust can aggravate asthma and decrease lung function, idling wastes fuel (and money), and idling contributes significantly to greenhouse gases and smog.

The Napa Valley Clean Air Coalition is getting this message out through an Idle Free campaign, "Turn the Key, Be Idle Free." We've shared information with schools and parents, as well as local transportation partners, to encourage pledges to be idle free. We'll be educating more residents and visitors on Earth Day and during BikeFest.

Better air quality means breathing easier and beautiful skies, benefiting us all.