

# — IDLING REDUCTION — ACTIVIST GUIDE



Once you become aware of unnecessary idling you will undoubtedly start to see idlers everywhere. One way to take action and address this issue is to actually engage with idlers on the spot by knocking on their windows and asking, “Would you mind turning off your engine?”

George Pakenham, the main protagonist and producer of the documentary film ***Idle Threat: Man on Emission***, knocked on nearly 3,000 car windows in New York City during a five-year period. He was successful in convincing 80 percent of the drivers he approached to turn off their engines just by asking and sharing a few basic facts about vehicle idling.

You can make a difference, too! But before you do, make sure you read through this handy guide with tips and tricks from the original anti-idling street activist.



**SUSTAINABLE**  
— A M E R I C A —



— IT'S YOUR TURN —  
**TURN IT OFF**

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## BE SAFE!

Your safety is of paramount importance so be smart about who you approach and when. It is always best to approach drivers during the day, in well-lit, busy areas. Be polite and make sure not to interrupt someone in the middle of a phone conversation. Common courtesy will go a long way in ensuring you have a positive encounter.



## BE PREPARED

Before setting out, make sure to read up on your state, city or town's idling laws. Having a legal backing for your request is always helpful. If your area does not have an idling law in place, do not despair! Being armed with key idling facts like "10 seconds of idling wastes more fuel than restarting" is just as powerful.

Carrying and distributing cards with information on idling laws and facts is also very helpful. As George noted in his film, carrying a card made him an educator and not just a vigilante. You can download the I Turn It Off idling "courtesy ticket" or flyer at **[iturnitoff.com/resources](http://iturnitoff.com/resources)**.



## WHAT DO I SAY?

If your state, city or town has an idling law you could say, "Excuse me, but are you aware that our [state, city, or town] has an idling law?" Alternatively you could say, "Excuse me for bothering you, but would you mind turning off your engine?" and then explain why. Depending on your audience or where you live, you can highlight the negative health effects of vehicle idling, the financial waste, the environmental impacts or other facts and figures that resonate most with you. When someone agrees to shut off their engine, make sure to thank them. If the driver seems especially receptive to your message, you could also ask him to spread the word and share what he learned with others.



## TRACK YOUR ENCOUNTERS

If you are up to the task, consider tracking your encounters. George Pakenham's five-year study proved to be very impactful when talking with environmental organizations, government leaders, news media and others about his work. Most people do not realize how big of an issue idling actually is. You can see George's study here:

**[site.videoproject.com/PDF/IdleThreat5YearStudyStatistics.pdf](http://site.videoproject.com/PDF/IdleThreat5YearStudyStatistics.pdf)**