

FLIPPING FLAPJACKS: Lion Bob Ward was one of the great cooks who served breakfast last Sunday at Rockmosa Community Centre. About 525 people showed up for the big breakfast, helping the Rockwood and District Lions Club raise funds for their community projects and programs. If you missed this one (or not), come for their free breakfast on May 6 and learn about diabetes. - Rebecca Ring Photo

Eramosa Business Breakfast on April 26

The Eramosa Business Breakfast group is having a special visitors' day on Thursday, April 26 at Bucky's Café, located at 178 Alma St., Rockwood, from 7 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

The invitation to businesses located in Rockwood, Acton and surrounding area is to learn more about the group and see how word of mouth marketing builds business.

Seating may be limited, so please RSVP to Mike Dawkins at 519-856-9470. There is no charge except the cost of breakfast.

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Earth Day connection Township adopts idling policy

By Rebecca Ring

Guelph/Eramosa has set a positive example for residents by adopting a vehicle idling policy at the regular council meeting on April 2. The purpose is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, fuel costs and waste.

The policy states that township vehicles must not be left idling. Exceptions include emergency response vehicles attending an emergency, a five-minute maximum idling time when temperatures are below 0°C, when traffic conditions require intermittent stops, or when below -20°C for diesel vehicles.

All drivers can follow the township's example by adopting their own idling policy. It is as simple as turning a key. According to Natural Resources Canada (NRC), if every driver of a light duty vehicle in Canada reduced idling by even five minutes a day, they would save 1.8 million litres of fuel, 4500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), and \$1.8 million in fuel costs everyday (assuming \$1/L).

Reduce GHGs.

According to NRC, the combustion of fossil fuels in the transportation sector is the largest source of GHGs in Canada. The average car emits 2.4 kgs of CO₂, the principal GHG. Scientists attribute the quickly rising global temperatures to these gases, of which human activities are a major source. Rapid climate change is already impacting Canada's forests (pine beetle infestations) and water supply (decreasing water levels) and is linked with extreme weather events that have devastating human and economic consequences. Honeybees are dying off. The reason is not known, but some suspect climate change. They are crucial as they pollinate crops that feed the world. If GHG production remains the same as it is today, scientists predict irreversible losses of species, land, clean fresh water and human health.

Save money: The gasoline that combustion engines use is produced from crude oil. There is not an endless supply. Oil companies are searching farther afield, drilling in pristine wilderness areas, and constructing long pipelines that frequently leak. Some would say wars are being fought over it. Huge ships transport it with common occurrences of destructive, costly spills. In addition to environmental and human costs, there are the economic costs. At well over \$1 per litre, fuel prices

continue to increase. For example, in 2003, regular gas was about 62 cents per litre in Ontario and today it is about \$1.01/L.

Save lives: In addition to GHGs, vehicles emit other toxic substances that contribute to air pollution and smog, which Health Canada estimates to cost 5000 Canadians their lives every year. Thousands more become ill, including children who breathe faster and inhale more air per kilogram of body weight than adults. Deaths increase with heat waves as smog becomes worse. Climate change results in more heat waves.

Save your engine: Contrary to popular belief, NRC says excessive idling can damage engines. An idling engine is not operating at peak temperature and fuel combustion is incomplete. Fuel residues condense on cylinder walls, contaminate oil and damage components, such as spark plugs. Increased residues on spark plugs can increase fuel consumption by about five per cent. Water condensing in the exhaust system can lead to corrosion.

Idling is not an effective way to warm up an engine. Even in the coldest weather, today's electronically controlled engines are designed to drive away after only 30 seconds, according to NRC.

Use a block heater: In cold weather, engine oil is thick and resists flow. Increased friction results in increased

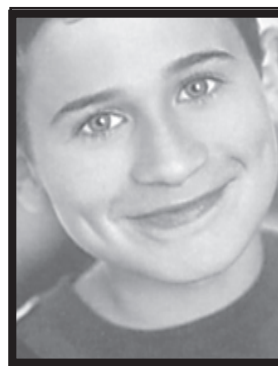
fuel use and pollution in the first few minutes after a cold start. Fuel combustion is less efficient as there is more fuel than is needed in the air/fuel mix. In addition, the catalytic converter does not work in a cold engine so all the emissions pass through the exhaust system untreated.

A block heater warms the coolant, which in turn warms the engine block and lubricants. The engine starts more easily, reaching its peak operating temperature faster and does not have to work as hard to pump oil through the block. At -20°C, block heaters can result in as much as ten percent in fuel savings. For a single short trip on a cold day, fuel savings could be about 20 percent. There are models available with timers that can be set for a couple of hours before driving.

As Earth Day approaches, try these simple steps. Next time you run into the store, turn your key. The savings will be priceless. Long line up at the drive-thru? Park, turn the key, and walk in. You may save time as well. In summer, kids complaining that it is too hot, even with the windows down, and want to run the engine while you run into the bank? Get them to come into the cool, air conditioned bank, store, etc. with you. They will thank you later.

Think of the Earth as your garage. We all know what happens if you leave your car running in the garage.

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