

October 7, 2009

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CITY COUNCIL PASSES AIR QUALITY ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
***Streamlines and updates air pollution control permitting program and
strengthens other provisions that relate to air quality***

Today, Chicago City Council passed an ordinance to amend the existing air quality ordinance. These amendments are intended to help improve air quality throughout the city.

Clarifying and simplifying the permitting ordinance will ease enforcement and increase compliance among the more than 1,600 facilities that the City regulates. Other amendments strengthen the City's authority to control air pollutants. In addition, some features of this ordinance will save constituents money. For instance, by not idling 30 minutes a day for one year, a truck driver saves 125 gallons of diesel and therefore approximately \$374 in fuel costs (assuming \$2.99 per gallon)—while also preventing at least 101 pounds of air pollution and 2,775 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere.

In addition to updating and streamlining the sections of the Code relating to air pollution control permits for industrial process equipment, there are some expansions of existing ordinances, as well as one important new ordinance.

The new ordinance is an anti-idling law for diesel vehicles. The new law, which may be enforced by the Department of Environment, the police, and traffic management aides, will set a 3-minute idling limit for diesel vehicles with certain exceptions. The new idling limit will not only improve air quality, but will also result in fuel conservation.

There are also some updates in the demolition and asbestos sections of the Environmental Code expanding the requirement for proper asbestos removal. The amendments require asbestos to be removed prior to the demolition of any building that contains asbestos. The prior ordinance did not include residential buildings of less than 5 units.

Finally, the ordinance also includes increased fines for violations. The air ordinance fines had not been increased in a number of years.

The ordinance amendments are supported by The Center for Neighborhood Technology; the Chicago Area Clean Cities Coalition; the Environmental Law and Policy Center; I-Go Car Sharing; the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization; the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus; and the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago, among others.

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