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As part of today's challenge, I took a walk around my neighborhood to see where energy was being used or wasted. During my 20 minute walk, I noticed that there were **many delivery trucks and cars idling** on the street and on driveways. I thought that this was a **waste of fuel** and caused increased **air pollution**, but I wanted to further investigate the issue, as I was curious to see how much this affected the environment as well as **greenhouse gas emissions**.



Through my research, I learned that idling for just 10 minutes can waste around 0.05 to 0.12 gallons of fuel depending on the type of car you are using. I found that it was more fuel efficient to turn off and restart your car after more than 10 seconds of idling. Additionally, there are many impacts on air pollution and human health risks. Idling releases more pollutants like nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds, which contribute to **respiratory and cardiovascular issues** in humans. Carbon dioxide is also emitted, which **exacerbates climate change** and reduces local **air quality**.

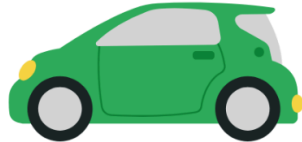
Identify one realistic improvement that could reduce waste or increase efficiency.

Education about the harmful effects of idling could help reduce time spent idling and mitigate impacts of pollution. This could involve posting signs in common idling spots like school pickup zones, driveways, and loading areas, reminding drivers to turn off their engines if they'll be stopped for more than 10 seconds. Schools or local governments could also share short informational posts or flyers explaining how idling harms air quality and wastes fuel. I can also start a social media awareness campaign that includes statistics and facts about idling and uses powerful visuals and infographics to persuade people to take action.

IDLING: SMALL HABIT, BIG IMPACTS

What is idling?

Idling is the act of keeping a vehicle's engine running while it is not moving. Idling is a common habit for many, but it has harmful impacts on the planet and our health.



Idling for 10 minutes wastes
0.05–0.12
gallons
of fuel, depending
on the vehicle.

Air Pollution & Health Impacts

- Idling releases **nitrogen oxides** and **volatile organic compounds** which are major contributors to **poor air quality**.
- These pollutants can cause asthma, heart disease, and other respiratory problems.
- Idling also emits **carbon dioxide (CO₂)**, a key greenhouse gas that drives **climate change**.

If every driver in the U.S. reduced unnecessary idling, we'd prevent **millions of tons of CO₂** from entering the atmosphere every year!

Simple Solutions

- Turn off your engine if stopped for more than 10 seconds.
- Support no idling zones at schools, drive-thrus, and parking lots.
- Spread awareness through social media or tell your friends and family about the importance of not idling.



For my step of action, I will post my infographic to my community facebook page where many families and parents can see my message and understand how to take action. Additionally, I will post these flyers around my community, especially at places where many cars stop.

Write about how your idea improves equity, access, or efficiency, and why it matters (about 150 words).

Education and awareness about idling promotes health equity by reducing air pollution in community spaces like school zones, parks, and neighborhoods. Vehicle emissions from idling often affect children, the elderly, and people with respiratory conditions the most, especially in highly populated or lower-income areas where air quality is already poor. By cutting unnecessary idling, we help ensure cleaner air for everyone, reducing environmental injustices.

Second, the campaign increases access to information. Many people don't realize how much fuel idling wastes or how much it contributes to climate change. Sharing clear, accessible messages helps all drivers like students, parents, and delivery workers alike make more environmentally friendly choices that benefit the entire community.

Finally, it enhances energy efficiency by reducing wasted fuel and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Less fuel burned means less money spent and fewer pollutants released. This matters because it connects individual action to global impact showing that small daily choices can improve both community health and environmental sustainability.