

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

London drivers face idling fine

26th March, 2015



Drivers in central London will soon face a \$30 fine if they sit in traffic without turning off their engine. Authorities want to reduce the amount of pollution in England's capital city. The fines could start on May 1. Throughout April, traffic wardens in the London district of Westminster will ask motorists to turn off their car engines if they are not driving.

If people do not follow their advice, the new law will start. The fines are because local residents and businesses complained about the air quality in London. Westminster has the second highest proportion of deaths from air pollution in Britain. A spokeswoman, Heather Acton, said: "The council is committed to improving air quality in Westminster."

Ms Acton told reporters about the importance of keeping people moving on the roads and reducing air pollution. She said: "Motor traffic plays an important role in keeping our city moving, which is vital for its economic prosperity. We want to raise motorist awareness of the impact engine idling can have on the environment, with air and noise pollution affecting overall health." Not everyone is happy with the new fine. The Institute of Advanced Motorists warned that people could see the fine as a "revenue-raising exercise". It said the traffic wardens should focus on "old buses, coaches, large trucks, utility company vans or taxis idling for long periods" and not on energy-efficient cars.

Sources: Telegraph.co.uk / BBC.com / BusinessCar.co.uk

Writing

Anyone caught cheating should be immediately expelled. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

drivers / fine / traffic / engine / pollution / motorists / advice / air quality / businesses / reporters / importance / vital / economic prosperity / overall health / happy / efficient

True / False

- a) There will soon be a \$30-dollar idling fine all across London. T / F
- b) The fines will start on May 1. T / F
- c) Local people complained about air quality in London. T / F
- d) The local council said it has no commitments to improve air quality. T / F
- e) A council spokeswoman said it was important to keep traffic moving. T / F
- f) The spokeswoman said traffic is important for economic prosperity. T / F
- g) The article says a motoring group was happy with the fines. T / F
- h) The motoring group said energy-efficient cars should not be fined. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. central | a. money |
| 2. amount | b. stick to |
| 3. motorists | c. part |
| 4. follow | d. drivers |
| 5. committed | e. lowering |
| 6. importance | f. inner |
| 7. reducing | g. concentrate |
| 8. role | h. dedicated |
| 9. revenue | i. seriousness |
| 10. focus | j. volume |

Discussion – Student A

- a) How bad is pollution from cars?
- b) What do you think of the idea of everyone using public transport?
- c) What do you think of the \$30 idling fine?
- d) What other problems does traffic cause?
- e) Why do people idle their engines?
- f) How much of a success do you think the fines will be?
- g) What's the air quality like in your country?
- h) How can we improve air quality?

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Phrase Match

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1. | Drivers in central London will soon | a. | raising exercise |
| 2. | reduce the amount | b. | advice |
| 3. | ask motorists to turn | c. | air quality |
| 4. | follow their | d. | awareness |
| 5. | committed to improving | e. | our city moving |
| 6. | the importance of keeping | f. | of pollution |
| 7. | an important role in keeping | g. | cars |
| 8. | raise motorist | h. | face a \$30 fine |
| 9. | a revenue- | i. | people moving |
| 10. | energy-efficient | j. | off their car engines |

Discussion – Student B

- a) How can we make roads better, safer, easier to use, etc?
- b) How much do you know about the impact of cars on the environment?
- c) What do you think about noise pollution?
- d) Why might people not like the fines?
- e) Is there a problem if the fines are just for raising money?
- f) Should old cars be banned from using the roads?
- g) What do you think of cars?
- h) What questions would you like to ask London's government?

Spelling

- 1. reduce the amount of tuopllnoi
- 2. the London istrctcid of Westminster
- 3. ask toisrtsmo to turn off their car engines
- 4. local iensdsrte
- 5. The council is committed to pngiimory
- 6. air tuayiql
- 7. the emtocrapin of keeping people moving
- 8. vital for its economic pieyposrrt
- 9. raise totsirmo awareness
- 10. affecting veloarl health
- 11. a "eunreve-raising exercise"
- 12. energy-nieftfcei cars

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. j	3. d	4. b	5. h
6. i	7. e	8. c	9. a	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Idling

You think idling is the worst thing to do in traffic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so bad. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): speeding, driving and texting or not wearing seat belts.

Role B – Speeding

You think speeding is the worst thing to do in traffic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so bad. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): idling, driving and texting or not wearing seat belts.

Role C – Driving and texting

You think driving and texting is the worst thing to do in traffic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so bad. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): speeding, idling or not wearing seat belts.

Role D – Not wearing a seatbelt

You think not wearing seat belts is the worst thing to do in traffic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so bad. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): speeding, driving and texting or idling.

Speaking – Fines

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to fine at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- idling
- speeding
- driving and texting
- double parking
- driving with no insurance
- not wearing seat belts
- loud music in car
- driving too slowly

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.