This Week: How to Avoid High Idle in Cold Winters

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Q: How can I keep idle low in the winter months? I must warm up the vehicle, sometimes several times a day if I'm at a long stop.

A: With today's [newer technology] engines, the ECM (Engine Control Module) does a great job of recognizing the conditions of a cold vehicle. It will make adjustments to accelerate the warm-up process.

A good rule of thumb is on a 10-degree morning, the engine is warmed up and at an operating temperature within 3-5 minutes. A stop during the day (even up to an hour or two) would have minimal impact for additional warm-up procedures.

NOTE: Remember to make sure the drivers are plugging in their block heaters when temperatures are below 32 degrees.

The key to minimizing idle time is to recognize the vehicle is ready to go in 3–5 minutes, not 15 to 25 minutes.



Idealease Business Intelligence is committed to helping your team Elevate their performance. You will get a weekly Question of the Week email that will help explain different elements of the scorecard, offer tips to improve Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) or other motivational topics to keep your drivers striving for excellence behind the wheel. If you have a question or would like a topic covered, please email

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