



## FACT VS FICTION

### **Fiction: If I turn the engine on and off it uses more fuel**

**Fact:** No. According to the RAC, sitting with the engine running for 10 seconds uses more fuel than switching off and on.

### **Fiction: I can't switch the engine off as the battery needs to warm up**

**Fact:** Modern car batteries need less engine running time to work and don't need the engine running constantly to keep them charged.

### **Fiction: If I switch my car on and off it is bad for the engine**

**Fact:** Leaving the engine idling dirties your engine with incomplete combustion increasing wear and tear. Modern cars have much better ignitions and can be switched on and off without unnecessary wear on the engine.

### **Fiction: I need to leave the engine running so I can keep the heater on**

**Fact:** It can take up to an hour for the engine to cool down. Turning off the engine but keeping the ignition on with the fan blowing will provide warm air for up to 30 minutes. (*Source: Staffordshire County Council, 2019*)

### **Fiction: If I sit inside my car I am protected from air pollution outside**

**Fact:** Air quality inside a car is up to seven times worse than the air quality outside. This is because you are sitting in a plume of exhaust emitted from the car in front of you, which is sucked through your car's ventilation system into your cabin. (*Source: Concentration dynamics of coarse and fine particulate matter at and around signalised traffic intersections, Kumar P. & Goel A., 2016*)

### **Fiction: An idling engine doesn't contribute much to local air pollution**

**Fact:** An idling engine is a significant contributor to local air pollution and can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion. Switching off your engine can cut pollution by up to 30% and the effects are immediate. (*Source: Bristol City Council, 2018*)

### **Fiction: I'm not breaking the law when I leave my engine running when stationary**

**Fact:** It is an offence under section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The Act enforces rule 123 of the Highway Code which states: "You must not leave a vehicle's engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road."

### **Fiction: Sitting in my car with the engine running doesn't directly damage my health**

**Fact:** Air pollution INSIDE a stationary car with the engine running is up to seven times higher than the air pollution outside the car, so drivers and their passengers are unnecessarily breathing in poor quality air. You can take responsibility for your own health by switching off your engine every time you wait. The main source of Colchester's air pollution is exhaust fumes. Air pollution is recognised as a contributing factor in the development of lung conditions, heart disease and cancer. It also reduces life expectancy and is linked to 1 in 20 deaths in Colchester.