



Template text for stakeholder communications

SWITCH OFF TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR AIR

New campaign to address Colchester residents' concerns about air quality

Mini version I – 50 words

CAREless Pollution is a new campaign urging drivers in Colchester to switch off their engines when stationary to improve air quality. Air pollution inside a car with the engine running is up to seven times higher than the air pollution outside the car, increasing your risk of respiratory diseases.

Mini version II – 50 words

87% of local people are concerned about air quality in Colchester and 41% think the town is highly polluted. CAREless Pollution is a new campaign urging drivers to switch off their engines while waiting to reduce the risk of breathing bad air inside their cars and improve local air quality.

Short version – 100 words

CAREless Pollution is a new Colchester-wide campaign encouraging drivers to switch off their engines while they wait at traffic lights, level crossings or outside schools to reduce air pollution.

Scientific research shows that air pollution inside a car with the engine running is up to seven times higher than the air pollution outside the car. There is strong evidence that links air pollution to heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease and lung cancer.

Switching off your car engine is a simple action that brings health benefits to everyone inside the car. For more information and to get involved: www.colchester.gov.uk/cleanair.

Long version – 330 words

A new Colchester-wide campaign has launched to encourage drivers to switch off their car engines while they wait at traffic lights, level crossings or outside schools, to improve their own health and help reduce air pollution in the town.

The campaign, CAREless Pollution, comes as research (1) shows 87% of local people are concerned about air quality in Colchester and 41% think the town is highly polluted.

CAREless POLLUTION, is urging drivers to adopt better driving habits and switch off their engines while waiting, in order to reduce the risks associated with breathing in polluted air. Research carried out by the University of Surrey has found that pollution inside a stationary car with the engine running is **seven times higher** than the air pollution outside the car (2).

Currently only 15% of drivers regularly switch off their engine when their car is not moving and 20% override their car's automatic switch off technology (1). Switching off your car engine reduces emissions which brings an important health benefit to everyone inside the car and could save you money on fuel.

Leaving the engine running while sitting at the traffic lights or queuing in traffic is often an unconscious, careless action taken without any thought or attention to the potential harm it may cause to your own health or to the health of loved ones. The campaign aims to explain the link between exhaust fumes and poor health, to demonstrate that small actions like switching off your engine can make a difference to your own health and those around you. Air pollution causes the development of heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease and lung cancer, all of which lead to reduced life expectancy.

Funded by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, CAREless Pollution will run until May 2021 and includes events in and around Colchester working closely with local schools and businesses to change people's car driving behaviour.

For more information or to get involved in the campaign please visit:

www.colchester.gov.uk/cleanair.

References:

- (1) Clean Air Survey, Colchester Borough Council, October 2019 – January 2020
- (2) Concentration dynamics of coarse and fine particulate matter at and around signalised traffic intersections, Kumar P. & Goel A., University of Surrey, 2016