

**Information Note****Health Impacts of Vehicular Emissions**

Vehicular emissions are the major source of air pollutants at street level in Hong Kong. Vehicular emissions contain pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, acetaldehyde, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, formaldehyde, and respirable suspended particulates. Persons with heart or respiratory illnesses (such as coronary heart and cardiovascular diseases, asthma, chronic bronchitis and chronic obstructive airways diseases) are particularly vulnerable to the adverse health effects brought about by these pollutants.

2. Specifically, the American Lung Association of Massachusetts has highlighted the following deleterious effects of air pollution on health:

- aggravate asthma, leading to more frequent and severe asthma attacks;
- increase the number of respiratory infections;
- aggravate and induce allergies; and
- increase emergency room visits, hospital admissions and premature deaths .

3. Relevant web-link of the American Lung Association of Massachusetts is as follows -

<http://www.lungma.org/site/c.fhJLJTOxFmH/b.2726681/>

4. Emissions from idling engines, being a kind of vehicular emissions, could worsen our air pollution problem and have health impacts as mentioned in paragraph 1, though to a lesser extent than running vehicle emissions.

**Environmental Protection Department**  
**March 2008**