



Idleright Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What is the Idleright Fuel Management System?

A: The Idleright is a purpose-built fuel management system designed to allow emergency vehicles to be parked with warning lights flashing continuously while minimizing engine idle time. The system is activated whenever an Idleright-equipped vehicle is parked, the engine is shut off, and the warning lights are turned on. The warning lights are powered by the vehicle's battery until the battery voltage falls below a preset threshold, at which time the Idleright module will start the vehicle and idle the engine sufficiently to recharge the battery. Once the battery is recharged, the Idleright will shut down the vehicle engine, and monitor voltage again, ready to restart the engine when needed.

Q: Why would I want to use an Idleright?

A: If you have a need to park vehicles for an extended period of time with warning lights flashing, then you need an Idleright Fuel Management System. The Idleright will save significant fuel dollars and extend the life of the vehicle's engine by cutting idle time by up to 80% or more. The Idleright also increases safety by not requiring a key to be in the ignition (thereby reducing theft risk) and by including automatic engine shutdown if the hood is opened or the brake pedal is pressed.

Q: How is the Idleright any different from a remote starting system with vacation mode?

A: The Idleright Fuel Management System is specially designed for use in emergency vehicles with warning lights. This system is activated by an emergency warning system being activated, and the trip voltage and the engine runtime are programmable. This is important, since the Idleright is intended to manage vehicle power while operating a lightbar, whereas commercial systems are only intended to prevent battery discharge when in storage under no load. Commercial remote starting systems do not offer similar configuration options to the Idleright, making it far more likely that a vehicle will fail to start and the battery will go dead. In fact, it may be difficult or impossible to install a commercial remote starting system in an emergency vehicle and configure it to work similar to an Idleright. The Idleright is specifically supported for use in police-package vehicles and other specific vehicles commonly used as emergency vehicles. Commercial systems are not normally designed for or supported for use in common emergency vehicles, thereby making them poorly suited for emergency vehicle use.

Q: Police and emergency vehicles are described as "supported applications." What does that mean, and why is it important?

A: Police vehicles may have additional or different wiring and different ECM programming from consumer vehicles, and for some police-package models, accurate wiring information may be difficult to obtain. While some wiring information for consumer vehicles is available from various sources on the Internet, it is important to understand that much of that information is not accurate, and information from non-trusted sources should never be relied upon for vehicle installation. Improper wiring can cause serious problems or even damage to the vehicle. Havis-Shields has selected the most popular vehicles (both police package and consumer versions) that are used in police and emergency applications, and will provide accurate wiring information, compatible interface modules, and full technical support for installation in those vehicles. Please visit our website for the latest applications guide with supported vehicle information.

Q: Since there are supported applications (vehicles), are there also unsupported applications? Can I install the Idleright into any vehicle I want?

A: The Idleright is compatible with virtually any vehicle with an automatic transmission and electronic fuel injection. Installation will require wiring diagrams and possibly use of a compatible interface kit. Due to the sheer number of vehicles available, we only support a limited number of models for installation by providing wiring diagrams and interface kits available for purchase from Havis-Shields. Those are our "supported vehicles," and you can find information regarding those on our website. For small-quantity installations in non-supported vehicles, you will need to supply your own interface kits and wiring

diagrams, but our technical support hotline will be available to assist on a best-effort basis. For large orders of non-supported vehicles, please contact Havis-Shields sales before ordering, as we may be able to provide interface kits, wiring diagrams, and support for your specific application, if the order quantity is large enough.

Q: I have a vehicle that is not on your supported vehicle list, and I don't want to supply my own interface kit. Do you have an interface kit that will work with it?

A: There is a reasonable chance that one of our interface kits will work with your vehicle. Please download the interface kit instruction sheets from our website, and review the list of compatible vehicles they support. However, please note that we do not guarantee compatibility, and you may need to update the firmware on the interface kit for it to work properly. While we do provide technical support for installation, we are generally not able to assist with firmware updates or other issues that are specific to vehicles that are not on our supported vehicle list. Although we do intend to increase the supported vehicle list over time, there is no way to advise if or when any particular vehicle will be added to the list in advance.

Q: What are interface kits? How do I know if I need one?

A: An interface kit acts as an "interpreter" to allow the Idleright unit to "talk" to the vehicle. Nearly every vehicle and model year speaks a different "language" for starting the vehicle and protecting it with anti-theft systems. Interface kits are vehicle model and year specific, allowing them to work with each vehicle's unique communications protocols and anti-theft systems. Not all vehicles require interface kits. You can review the vehicle applications guide on our website for information regarding supported vehicles and interface kits supplied by Havis-Shields.

Q: Can I buy my own interface kit, separate from Havis-Shields?

A: The Idleright is compatible with virtually any automatic-transmission electronically fuel injected vehicle and interface kit commercially available, so you are not obligated to purchase interface kits from Havis-Shields. However, please keep in mind that not all interface kits are of equal quality, and Havis-Shields may not be able to assist with installation if you are using an interface kit other than the models we supply.

Q: Is there any reason why interface kits should not be kept in stock?

A: Interface kits are programmed for each specific vehicle and model year, so they are backward-compatible, but not forward-compatible. For example, an interface kit for a 2009 Chevy Impala that was programmed on 5/12/2009 will work with all 2009 Chevy Impala vehicles manufactured up to 5/2009. It should still work with all 2009 Chevy Impala models, but compatibility with 2009 Chevy Impala vehicles manufactured after 5/2009 cannot be guaranteed. In any case, it will definitely not work with later models, such as the 2010 Chevy Impala. Therefore, Interface kits for older models can safely be stocked, but customers should use caution in stocking interface kits for the current model year.

Q: How is the Idleright different from a system that allows the key to be removed while the engine is idling?

A: Systems that allow the key to be removed with the engine idling offer zero fuel savings and zero reduction in engine wear, substantially reducing their value. The Idleright Fuel Management System is specifically designed to allow the engine to run without a key, but it also runs the engine only as little as is needed to maintain a charged battery. The Idleright therefore allows for substantial fuel savings and longer engine life compared to other systems.

Q: What knowledge/experience is needed to install an Idleright?

A: Different vehicles require different levels of knowledge and skills to install an Idleright Fuel Management System. We recommend that installers have familiarity with installing car alarms and/or remote starting systems, as the installation procedure for an Idleright is very similar. Installation instructions and wiring diagrams are provided both with the products and on our website, and technical support is available at 800-524-9900 x185.

Q: Are the wire connections plug and play, or do you have to cut into the OEM wiring? Will this affect the vehicle warranty?

A: Most installations will require some cutting into OEM wiring. For an experienced installer (particularly those with car alarm or remote starter experience), this is not a major project, and should not cause undue concern. In our experience, properly installed Idleright units should not affect vehicle warranty coverage, and are treated by most vehicle manufacturers in the same manner as an aftermarket remote starting system or car alarm being installed. However, damage caused to a vehicle by improper installation of an Idleright unit would not be covered by any warranty. Havis-Shields provides compatible interface kits, wiring diagrams, and full technical support on supported vehicles to help ensure you will have a successful installation every time and preserve your warranty coverage. If you have specific concerns regarding warranty coverage, we recommend that you contact your vehicle manufacturer.

Q: Can I just use an ON/OFF switch instead of connecting the Idleright to an emergency light switch?

A: The Idleright has a "lightbar" input that can be programmed as either positive trip or negative trip, and it can be connected to any suitable trigger device, including an ON/OFF switch. However, it is important to note that the Idleright must always be turned OFF whenever an equipped vehicle is parked indoors. By using warning lights as the trigger for the Idleright, there is always a clearly visible indicator that the Idleright is active. Havis-Shields strongly recommends against installing the Idleright in a manner where it can be activated without a clearly visible indicator that is equivalent to illuminating a lightbar.

Q: Can the Idleright be used with diesel engines?

A: The Idleright is compatible with nearly all vehicles with automatic transmissions and electronic fuel injection, including diesel vehicles. The Idleright installation manual provides recommended programming settings for use with diesel vehicles, and these programming options must be set in order to ensure proper operation.

Q: What is the price comparison of Idleright to a remote start system?

A: For the sake of price comparison, remote starting systems are available in an extremely wide range of prices and quality levels. Most of the units available inexpensively are low-end off-shore products that are of generally low quality and reliability. Higher end units from major manufacturers can be quite expensive, especially when factoring in the interface kit cost. The Idleright is a high-quality unit, and is priced competitively with better remote starting systems. However, it must be emphasized that remote starting systems are generally not interchangeable with an Idleright unit, as these products serve distinctly different purposes.

Q: Does the Idleright offer remote starting capability?

A: At this time, the Idleright does not offer a remote starting feature. Since the Idleright activates whenever the warning lights are activated, there is no need to manually override the Idleright's functions. In fact, doing so would substantially reduce its efficiency.

Q: I have a gun lock that I want disabled when the Idleright is idling my vehicle. How can I do that?

A: The Idleright provides programmable relays that can be used to directly control power to accessories or other items. No power will be provided to any accessory while the Idleright is idling the vehicle unless it is directly or indirectly connected to one of the Idleright's programmable outputs, or directly connected to the battery. If the accessory circuit feeding the gun lock can be moved to a circuit not powered when the Idleright is engaged, then that will provide an easy way to cut power to the gun lock while the vehicle is idling. Otherwise, a secondary relay can be easily added to the one of the programmable outputs to control power to the gun lock as needed by interrupting power to the gun lock switch. If you encounter any difficulties during installation, you can call Technical Support at 800-524-9900 x185.

Q: Can I have a device that keeps the engine idling without a key installed in the same vehicle as an Idleright?

A: Maybe, but we would not recommend it. If the Idleright is installed between the vehicle idling device and the ignition switch, both devices will probably work. However, we are not able to guarantee proper operation of both devices, nor could we support such an installation, since there is a chance that the two systems will conflict. Since there is no need to have a vehicle idling device installed in the same vehicle as an Idleright, we would recommend removing any existing vehicle idling device before installing an Idleright. After all, why would you want a device that forces the vehicle to idle more than necessary to be installed in the same vehicle that has a device that tries to make the vehicle idle as little as possible?

Q: I have a vehicle with an ignition-triggered switch box that requires 12V in order to work. This switch box controls the lightbar, but if I connect it directly to the battery, it will cause my battery to go dead overnight. How can I install an Idleright in this situation?

A: The best solution is to remove the lightbar from the control box, and power it separately (e.g. directly connected to the battery.) Lightbars do not generally cause a vehicle's battery to drain quickly, but radio and other equipment can. It is not desirable to have unneeded high-draw equipment, such as radios, powered-up when the Idleright is running, so the Idleright's efficiency and therefore your cost savings will be increased significantly by keeping the lightbar separate from the battery-draining equipment. If it is not practical to separate the lightbar from the switch box, then you can use a Chargeguard to power the switch box, and set the Idleright's starting voltage sufficiently high to allow the Idleright to always restart the vehicle before the Chargeguard shuts down power to the switch box due to low voltage.

Q: My vehicle has a throttle-up system, multiplex system, or some other specialty equipment installed. Will my equipment work with the Idleright?

A: It is not possible for Havis-Shields to pre-qualify and test every possible combination of equipment that can be installed in a vehicle. However, as long as the other equipment does not interfere with the vehicle's normal ignition and run circuits, it should not affect operation of the Idleright. The Idleright installs in a similar manner to a remote starting system or car alarm. Therefore, if you have any questions regarding compatibility with a particular piece of specialty equipment, we recommend contacting the manufacturer of that equipment, and confirming that their system is compatible with remote starting systems and car alarms.

Q: Is there any type of vehicle that the Idleright should not be installed in?

A: The Idleright should only be installed in vehicles that allow necessary equipment to run for extended periods of time on battery power only. Vehicles with inherently high power consumption, such as ambulances, are not recommended applications for the Idleright.

Q: What real cost savings can I reasonably expect when I install an Idleright?

A: Fuel savings can vary from 40% to over 90% depending upon vehicle and application. One hour of idling can consume an average of one gallon of fuel, so a 90% reduction in idling time directly corresponds to a 90% fuel savings while the Idleright is running. Maintenance savings can also be significant. Ford states that one hour of idling for a Crown Victoria is equivalent to 33 miles driven for maintenance purposes, so 91 hours of eliminated idling will reduce maintenance mileage by about 3,000 miles, and will also reduce fuel consumption by 91 gallons. The longer the vehicle battery can safely power the equipment, the greater the savings will be. So, it is critical to turn off all unneeded loads, and only power the minimum amount of equipment needed while using the Idleright. For example, if only rear-flashing lights are needed for safe visibility, then only the rear-flashing lights should be turned on.

Q: What happens if someone tries to steal a vehicle with an Idleright?

A: The Idleright does not require a key to be in the vehicle while it is operating, so the vehicle operator can safely remove the key from the ignition and lock the car while the Idleright is active. If a vehicle engine is running under control of the Idleright, then the engine will shut off immediately if the brake pedal is pressed or if the hood is opened. Since the brake pedal must be pressed in order to control the car or shift gears, it is not possible under any ordinary circumstance to drive an Idleright-equipped vehicle without inserting the key and starting the car as normal.

Q: What specific information does the technical support hotline provide?

A: The technical support hotline provides installation assistance for Idleright customers. Support technicians are well-trained in assisting with common installation-related issues for all supported applications/vehicles. They will also attempt to resolve installation-related issues for non-supported vehicles on a best-effort basis only. Please do not direct pre-sale questions to the technical support hotline.