



FACTUM

Around Two-Thirds of Ontarians Do Not Perform Annual Furnace Maintenance

Ontarians Split on Whether Labour Day or Fall Colours Portends the Inauguration of Fall

Toronto, Ontario, October 3, 2019 — With winter on the horizon, it's the time of the year when many Ontarians are firing up their furnaces for the first time in months. However, the results of a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Enercare reveal that many are not prepared for winter, as only about one in three (37%) report getting a furnace maintenance tune-up at least once a year, or more often. In fact, as many as one in four (25%) never (16%) or don't know (9%) how often they do this. To put these figures into perspective, industry experts recommend that every homeowner has a furnace tune-up done at least once a year, before the temperatures drop.

Those aged 55+ are twice as likely (at 53%) compared to their younger counterparts (27%, under 55) to report getting a tune-up at least once a year, or more often. Ontarians under the age of 55 are more likely to indicate that it's been at least 5 years (9% vs. 3% 55+) or are unsure how often they do this (13% vs. 4%). Men are also more likely to admit that it's at least 5 years (10% vs. 4% of women) or more, whereas women are more likely to say they don't know how often they do this (14% vs. 4% of men). Condo owners are more likely than homeowners to report never (31% vs. 14%) or not knowing (24% vs. 7%) how often they have tune-ups. Conversely, homeowners are twice as likely (at 39%) compared to condo owners (19%) to report having furnace maintenance performed at least annually.

There is Some Ambiguity Regarding Fall's Arrival

While the conclusion of the Labour Day weekend marks the beginning of a new school year a majority say this isn't the *most important* indication that fall has arrived. Indeed, a plurality (41%) of Ontarians think the *most important* sign that fall has unofficially commenced is the moment the leaves begin to turn colour, irrespective of when this happens – it could be August, September, or perhaps even as late as October. One in three (36%) say Labour Day's arrival is the *most important* sign fall is here, one in ten (11%) when they have to turn their furnace on for the first time, and four percent (4%) when hockey season kicks off. Remarkably, seven percent (7%) think the first snowfall represents the most irrefutable sign of summer's demise.

Even though back to school is often thought of as the end of summer, households without children are more likely (at 40%) than those with children (28%) to view Labour Day weekend as the *most important* indication that fall has arrived. Women (42% vs. 29% of men) and adults over 35 (41% vs. 23% under 35) are also more likely to think Labour Day weekend signifies the unofficial onset of fall. Somewhat interestingly, the under 35 cohort is a lot more likely to view events commonly associated with winter such as the start of hockey season (11% vs. 2% 35+) and the first snowfall (16% vs. 4% 35+) as the *most important* sign that fall has begun. Men are more likely (at 7%) than women (2%) to rate the start of hockey season specifically as the *most important* sign of fall's inauguration.



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Irrespective of when the unofficial start of fall occurs, not many are turning their furnaces on before the calendar strikes October. In fact, just one in four (26%) say they typically do this before October 1st. By contrast, three quarters (74%) usually wait until at least October before firing up their furnace including as many as thirteen percent (13%) who won't even think about doing this until at least November. On the opposite end of the spectrum, four percent (4%) can't even make it until September before turning their furnace on for the first time, with the under 35 demographic being far and away the most likely to do this (11% vs. 1% 35+). A clear majority (57%) of condo owners say they typically turn their furnace on for the first time between October 1st and 15th compared to just one in three (34%) homeowners.





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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 6th and 10th, 2019, on behalf of Enercare. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Ontarians were interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Ontario population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Ontarians been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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