

ONTARIANS & WASTE MANAGEMENT

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Six in Ten (61%) Disapprove Of Shipping Garbage to Michigan—
And 81% Don't Believe Province Has A Plan If Border Shuts
Two-Thirds (64%) Indicate Province Needs To Seek New And
Expanded Facilities, Increase Recycling And Diversion Efforts*



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Two-Thirds (64%) Indicate Province Needs To Seek New And Expanded Facilities, Increase Recycling And Diversion Efforts

Toronto, ON- According to an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted for the Ontario Waste Management Association (“OWMA”) and released today, three-quarters (73%) of Ontarians believe the province is facing a garbage crisis and that the provincial government should take action now because there are not enough garbage disposal options currently in place or available for the future.

Further, over eight-in-ten Ontarians (85%) feel that managing and disposing of our non-recyclable garbage should be a priority for the provincial government, including 47% who feel it should be a major priority.

Although Ontario currently does not have the capacity to dispose of all of the garbage it produces, six in ten (61%) Ontarians disapprove of shipping the province's garbage to Michigan with 41% strongly disapproving of this method of managing the province's garbage. The current method of managing and disposing of approximately 33% of current garbage generated is to ship it to Michigan. Conversely, of the 37% who approve of shipping Ontario's garbage to the U.S. only 9% strongly approve. Awareness of the Michigan shipments is high (79%) and when fully informed, 81% of Ontarians don't believe that the provincial government has a plan in place if the border is shut to the garbage shipments.

Overall, two-thirds (65%) of Ontarians believe that all of garbage produced in Ontario should be disposed of within the province as opposed to the three in ten (28%) who feel Ontario



should continue to send some of its garbage outside of the province for disposal and dispose of the rest in the province. Just 5% feel Ontario should send all of its garbage outside of the province for disposal.

In order to properly manage and solve this problem, two-thirds (64%) indicate Ontario needs an integrated approach -- that is the province needs to build and seek out new and expanded disposal facilities as well as increase its level of recycling and diversion efforts. One quarter (23%) feel the province only needs to increase its level of recycling and diversion efforts such as composting, while 10% believe Ontario only needs to build and seek out new and expanding disposal facilities.

These are just some of the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/Ontario Waste Management Association survey conducted between April 5th and April 10th, 2005. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,007 adult Ontarians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Ontario been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontario population according to 2001 census data.



Three-Quarters (73%) Believe Ontario is Facing a Garbage Crisis

After all recycling efforts, Ontario produces about 9.4 Million tonnes of garbage per year, of which 3.0 million tonnes is shipped to Michigan for disposal. Three-quarters (73%) characterize this situation as a garbage crisis -- that the provincial government should take action now because there are not enough garbage disposal options currently in place or available for the future. One-quarter (23%) feel there is no urgent garbage problem -- that there are enough garbage disposal options currently in place and available for the future.

Eight in ten Ontarians (85%) feel that managing and disposing of our non-recyclable garbage should be a priority for the provincial government. Of those, 47% feel it should be a major priority, and 14% feel it should be a minor priority or not a priority at all.

Almost all (84%) Ontarians feel that we should be recycling more than we currently are. Presently, Ontario recycles 30% of the garbage it produces, however, on average, Ontarians feel 55% of our garbage can realistically be recycled or re-used.

- Those 55 years of age and older (81%) are significantly more likely to feel that Ontario is facing a garbage crisis than those aged 18-34 (68%) and those 35-54 (71%). And females are slightly more likely to feel we are in a crisis than men (75% versus 71%).
- Residents of Central Ontario are more likely than those in Eastern Ontario to feel that Ontario is facing a garbage crisis (78% versus 69%). This compares to 74% of GTA residents who feel the province is in a garbage crisis. More rural Ontarians feel this way than urban Ontarians (78% versus 72%).
- Middle-income households (\$30K-\$60K) are significantly more likely to feel there is a garbage crisis (83%) in Ontario than either low income (less than \$30K) or higher income (over \$60K) households (74% and 68% respectively).



Six in Ten (61%) Disapprove Of Shipping Garbage to Michigan

Awareness of the Michigan garbage shipments is high—79% of Ontarians know of the situation and 61% of all Ontarians disapprove of it compared to 37% who approve. The most common reasons for the opposition is the belief on an unprompted basis is that “we should deal with the garbage ourselves ” (42%) and “because shipping to Michigan is not the right way to reduce our garbage or address the problem” (19%). Others lament that “it is too expensive or a waste of money to ship our garbage /costs millions of dollars to ship it” (11%) and that “it cannot be a permanent solution ”(9%). Another 9% suggest “Toronto should deal with the garbage itself”.

Of the 37% who approve of shipping garbage to Michigan, most do so because they believe that “it is better than keeping it here” (23%) or because “it is a good alternative and solves our problem ”(21%). Others feel that “it is just basic business and Michigan is getting paid well for taking our garbage” (17%), 9% suggest “it is the best option, or the only option available”, and 7% suggest this arrangement “is fine as long as Michigan is willing to take the garbage”.

If the border were suddenly closed and Michigan stops taking the garbage, a fully informed 81% of Ontarians do not believe that the Government of Ontario has a plan ready to properly dispose of the three million tonnes of garbage that is being shipped there, 14% believe there is a back up plan in place.

When given options, two-thirds (65%) of Ontarians believe that the province should dispose of all of its garbage within the province. Another three in ten (28%) indicate Ontario should continue to send some of its garbage outside of the province for disposal and dispose of the rest in the province, and just 5% feel Ontario should send all of its garbage outside of the province for disposal.

- Support for disposing all of the Ontario's garbage within the province is highest in Eastern (72%) and Central Ontario (71%) and lowest, but still with a full majority, in the GTA (60%). Males and females are equally as likely to believe that garbage should be kept within the province (66% versus 64%). Support is highest among those aged 55 and older (80%).
- Although GTA residents are most approving of shipping a portion of the province's garbage to Michigan, still a majority disapprove (42% approve, 57% disapprove). Central Ontarians (outside of the GTA) are most likely to disapprove of shipping to Michigan (30% approve, 69% disapprove).

Two-Thirds of Ontarians Believe In The Need For An Integrated Approach to Managing the Province's Waste

In order to properly manage and solve the province's garbage problem, two-thirds (64%) feel Ontario needs an integrated approach – that is, the province needs to build and seek out new and expanded disposal facilities as well as increase its level of recycling and diversion efforts. One quarter (23%) believe the province only needs to increase its level of recycling and diversion efforts such as composting, while 10% indicate Ontario only needs to build and seek out new and expanding disposal facilities.

- While there are no significant differences among those who support the integrated approach, those in urban Ontario (24%) are most likely to believe Ontario only needs to increase its recycling and diversion efforts compared to those in rural Ontario (17%).
- The younger age groups (18-34 at 28% and 35-54 at 24%) are also significantly more likely than older Ontarian counterparts 55+ (16%) to feel that we should only increase its recycling and diversion from landfill.



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