

Eight in Ten (80%) Confident in Canada's Long-Term Water Supply

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Eight in Ten (80%) Confident in Canada's Long-Term Water Supply

Toronto, ON –Eight in ten Canadian's (80%) say that they are confident in the country's long-term water supply, while a similar proportion (77%) says they have not noticed any adverse changes to their water supply.

- Residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (88%) are most likely to be confident in Canada's long-term supply of fresh water, followed by British Columbia (86%), Alberta (86%), Ontario (83%), and Atlantic Canada (82%).
- Canadians over the age of 55 (84%) are more likely than those between the ages of 35 and 54 (79%), or 18 to 34 (77%), to be confident in the long-term water supply.
- Residents of Quebec (68%) are least likely to be confident.

Eight in ten Canadians however, (83%) say that they are concerned (40% 'somewhat concerned', 43% 'very concerned') about the long-term supply of fresh water in Canada.

When given a list of options to choose from, only one in ten (10%) Canadians identify global warming and climate change as the biggest threat to Canada's water supply. Instead, 28% point to the mass removal of water to the United States as the chief cause for concern. Run-off pollutants (19%) and the illegal dumping of toxins (15%) are also identified by some as the number-one threats to Canada's water supply.

While a relatively small proportion identify climate change as the single-biggest threat to the long-term supply of water, three in four (75%) Canadians think that climate change will

indeed have an effect on Canada's long-term supply of fresh water. As well, Canadians acknowledge water's significance to the national economy, with 97% saying that an abundant amount of water is important (71% 'very', 26% 'somewhat') to the economy.

Canadians are also split on whether the water supply is well-protected by laws and regulations. While nearly half (49%) say that the supply is in fact well-protected, a nearly equal contingent (45%) says that it's not. There doesn't appear to be a lot of doubt on where the responsibility lies, however, with a sizeable majority of Canadians saying that they believe the government (81% federal, 72% provincial, 60% municipal) should be held responsible and accountable for the management of clean, fresh water in Canada.

It appears that Canadians have mixed views on whether or not water is a commercial commodity. While seven in ten (72%) say that if no price is put on water, people will waste it, nearly everyone (95%) says that access to fresh water is a human right. As well, three in four (76%) say that the right to withdraw and use water should not be owned, bought or sold.

- Women (97%) are more likely than men (94%) to believe that water is a human right.
- Older Canadians (79%) are more likely than young Canadians (75%) or middle-aged Canadians (74%) to believe that the right to withdraw and use water should not be owned, bought or sold.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Unilever and RBC on 02/07, 2008. This online survey of 2,309 adult Canadians was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An

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unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 2.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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