

Fielding Dates: March 18-27, 2009
659 Registered Virginia Voters

[READ] Hello. My name is _____. I am calling for the Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University. We are conducting a public opinion survey about environmental issues among residents of Virginia and I would like to ask you some questions. We are not trying to sell you anything and I will not ask you for a contribution or donation. We are only interested in your opinion.

I. Current and Prospective Assessment of the natural environment

1. [READ] Using a letter grade of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F," how would you grade the overall quality of the natural environment in VIRGINIA today – A grade of "A" means excellent and a grade of "F" means very poor. What grade would you give Virginia's environment?

Comparison March 1997 Peter Hart

A	8.0%	7.0%
B	37.0%	37.0%
C	40.6%	43.0%
D	7.8%	8.0%
F, Very Poor	3.5%	4.0%
Unsure (vol.)	1.7%	1.0%
Dk/no answer	1.4%	

2. [READ] Thinking ahead 10 or so years from now, do you think the natural environment in VIRGINIA will be much better, about the same, or much worse?

Much better	26.4%
About the same	37.3%
Much worse	30.3%
Unsure (vol.)	4.4%
DK/no answer	1.5%

II. Climate Change – Personal Views and Behavior

3. [READ] As you know, the issue of climate change - also referred to as global warming - has received a lot of attention recently. Leaving aside your personal views for a moment, do you think most climate scientists agree that the earth's temperature is slowly rising, or do you think there is a lot of disagreement among climate scientists about this?

Most agree	53.7%
A lot of disagreement	41.2%
Unsure (vol.)	3.4%
DK/no answer	1.7%

4. [READ] Again, leaving aside your personal views, do you think most climate scientists agree that human activities, such as burning coal or oil, are a major cause of global warming, or do you think there is a lot of disagreement among climate scientists about this?

Most agree	53.5%
A lot of disagreement	42.7%
Unsure (vol.)	2.5%
DK/no answer	1.3%

5. [READ] Ok, now for your personal views -- how well do you personally feel you understand the issue of global warming, would you say you understand it very well, fairly well, not very well, or not at all?

Very well	26.2%
Fairly well,	63.3%
Not very well	9.2%
Not at all	1.4%
Unsure (vol.)	0%
DK/no answer	0%

6. [READ] Regardless of what the climate scientists think, which best describes your personal view about global warming? Do you think global warming is probably happening, or do you think it probably is not happening?

Probably happening	76.1%
Probably NOT happening	18.7%
Unsure (vol.)	4.4%
DK/no answer	.8%

7. [READ] Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Virginia government has handled the issue of global warming so far?

Approve	24.0%
Disapprove	26.8%
Unsure (vol.)	29.0%
DK/no answer	20.2%

8. [READ] Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama has handled the issue of global warming so far?

Approve	31.9%
Disapprove	18.1%
Unsure (vol.)	31.5%
DK/no answer	18.5%

9. [READ] Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Congress has handled the issue of global warming so far?

Approve	13.9%
Disapprove	55.9%
Unsure (vol.)	18.9%
DK/no answer	11.3%

10. [READ] Now, I want to turn to your own personal activities – thinking about your own shopping and living habits, would you say you have generally made major changes, minor changes, or no changes to help protect the environment?

Major changes	29.6%
Minor changes	59.8%
No changes	10.1%
Unsure (vol.)	.2%
DK/no answer	.2%

11. [READ] I'm going to read a list of general changes some people have made to their shopping and living habits to help protect the environment. As I read each one tell me "yes" if it is a general change that you have made to your own shopping and living habits or "no" if it is not a general change you have made to your shopping and living habits. Ok, here is the first one... [rotate list]

11a. Recycling more

Yes	85.7%
No	13.7%
Unsure	.5%
DK/no answer	.1%

11b. Driving less

Yes	61.8%
No	37.0%
Unsure	.8%
DK/no answer	.4%

11c. Using more "green" products

Yes	67.6%
No	28.1%
Unsure	4.0%
DK/no answer	.4%

11d. Trying to use less electricity at home

Yes	89.6%
No	10.1%
Unsure	.2%

11c. Using energy saving light bulbs

Yes	82.0%
No	17.8%
Unsure	.2%

11e. Growing some of your own food

Yes	37.3%
No	62.7%

11f. Trying to conserve water

Yes	84.2%
No	15.2%
Unsure	.6%

III. Climate Change - Policy Options

[READ] Ok, shifting focus a bit...

18. [READ] I'm going to read a list of environmental issues facing Virginia. As I read each one, tell me on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing not a problem at all and 5 representing a very serious problem, how you would rate the issue. Here is the first one... [rotate list]

18a. Pollution of drinking water

1	10.7%
2	18.3%
3	35.0%
4	14.3%
5	16.8%
Unsure (vol.)	2.5%
DK/no answer	2.2%

18b. Pollution of rivers, lakes, and reservoirs

1	5.3%
2	10.0%
3	27.0%
4	25.6%
5	25.9%
Unsure (vol.)	2.7%
DK/no answer	3.5%

18c. Contamination of soil and water by toxic waste

1	7.6%
2	17.9%
3	28.8%
4	17.2%
5	19.1%
Unsure (vol.)	5.1%
DK/no answer	4.3%

18d. Health of the Chesapeake Bay

1	2.5%
2	8.2%
3	21.0%
4	26.8%
5	26.1%
Unsure (vol.)	8.5%
DK/no answer	6.1%

18e. Loss of natural habitat for wildlife

1	5.3%
2	11.1%
3	24.6%
4	30.1%
5	25.5%
Unsure (vol.)	2.1%
DK/no answer	1.3%

18f. Air pollution

1	10.8%
2	17.0%
3	34.7%
4	21.3%
5	15.4%
Unsure (vol.)	.3%
DK/no answer	.5%

18g. Urban sprawl and loss of open space

1	6.9%
2	9.0%
3	23.6%
4	27.7%
5	31.2%
Unsure (vol.)	.7%
DK/no answer	.9%

18h. The burning of coal to generate electricity

1	9.7%
2	15.7%
3	27.6%
4	17.3%
5	13.6%
Unsure (vol.)	8.0%
DK/no answer	8.1%

18i. Mountaintop removal of coal mining

1	8.3%
2	14.1%
3	18.3%
4	11.5%
5	19.0%
Unsure (vol.)	15.9%
DK/no answer	12.9%

[READ] The state could adopt policies in order to better protect Virginia's environment and natural resources. For some policies, however, there would be tradeoffs and prices to be paid. I'm going to read a few policy statements and then the possible tradeoffs that are involved. I would like you to tell me whether you personally feel that enacting the policy is worth the tradeoff, or not.

27. [READ] Ok, here is the first one...

The policy is: Increasing the fuel efficiency standards so that new cars sold in Virginia use less gas

The tradeoff is: The price of a new car goes up by an average of \$500

Worth the tradeoff	79.3%
Not worth the tradeoff	16.8%
Depends (vol.)	2.5%
DK/no answer	1.3%

28. [READ] Here is the second one...

The policy is: Requiring new homes and other buildings to be more energy efficient so that it costs significantly less to heat and cool

The tradeoff is: The price of a new home or building goes up by an average of \$5,000

Worth the tradeoff	78.8%
Not worth the tradeoff	17.4%
Depends (vol.)	2.3%
DK/no answer	1.5%

29. [READ] Here is the third one...

The policy is: Providing increased funding for rail, transit, and other alternatives to driving cars

The tradeoff is: Reducing funding for new highway construction

Worth the tradeoff	54.4%
Not worth the tradeoff	38.9%
Depends (vol.)	3.2%
DK/no answer	3.9%

[READ] Ok, thanks for that. Now, let's think about this in a different way. The state could adopt policies in order to better protect Virginia's environment and natural resources that encourage individual's to take certain actions. These policies would have incentives built into them. I'm going to read a couple of policy statements and then the possible incentives that are involved. I would like you to tell me whether you personally feel that the incentive would encourage people to take the desired action, or not.

30. [READ] Ok, here is the first one...

The policy is: Making existing homes and other buildings more energy efficient

The Incentive is: A tax credit of up to \$500

Incentive would encourage the action	69.8%
Incentive would not encourage the action	24.2%
Depends (vol.)	4.0%
DK/no answer	2.0%

31. [READ] Ok, here is the second one...

The policy is: Encouraging the purchase of hybrid vehicles that burn fewer fossil fuels

The Incentive is: A tax credit of up to \$500 for purchasing a hybrid vehicle

Incentive would encourage the action	51.9%
Incentive would not encourage the action	43.0%
Depends (vol.)	2.5%
DK/no answer	2.6%

[READ] Ok, let me ask you about one more specific policy issue.

32. [READ] There is a proposed system called ‘cap and trade.’ The government would issue permits limiting the amount of greenhouse gases companies could put out. Companies that did not use all their permits could sell them to other companies that needed more permits. The idea is that many companies would find ways to put out less greenhouse gases, because that would be cheaper than buying permits. Would you support or oppose this system?

Support	45.6%
Oppose	33.3%
Depends (vol.)	11.3%
DK/no answer	9.8%

33. Would you be more likely to support this system if the revenue from the permitting was used to provide tax cuts to average Americans to invest in more environmentally friendly products and services?

Yes	59.7%
No	23.5%
Depends (vol.)	10.1%
DK/no answer	6.7%

IV. Demographics

[READ] And now just a few more questions to be sure we’ve included a good mix of people in the study:

34. Please indicate the group that includes your age:

18 – 24	12.9%
25 – 34	17.1%
35 – 44	20.6%
45 – 54	19.8%
55 or older	29.6%

35. What is the last grade of school or college you had the opportunity to complete?

High school or less	17.4%
Some college	23.6%
Vocational or technical training	2.5%
College graduate	30.8%
Graduate study or more	25.0%
Refused	.7%

36. Would you consider yourself to be:

White	80.1%
Black	12.5%
Other	5.2%
Refused	2.1%

37. Do you consider yourself to be a:

Democrat	33.0%
Republican	24.3%
Independent	37.1%
Other	2.7%
Refused	3.0%

Sex: [interviewer code]

Male	48.3%
Female	51.7%

Region: [interviewer code]

Northern Virginia	37.0%
Richmond/Central	18.1%
Hampton Roads	22.0%
Western/Southwestern	22.9%

Survey Methodology:

The Virginia Environmental Attitudes Survey is provided as a public service to the citizens of Virginia by the Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University under a grant from the Virginia Environmental Endowment. It is a public opinion survey of 659 randomly selected registered Virginia voters conducted by telephone between March 18-27, 2009. The data reported here are weighted on sex, age, and region of residence to reflect as closely as possible the demographic composition of Virginia adults 18 and older. Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. Results for the full sample have a margin of error of plus or minus 3.8% at the 95% confidence level. This means for the full sample we can be 95% confident that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3.8%. In addition to sampling error, the other potential sources of error include non-response, question wording, and interviewer error. Where percentages for subgroups are reported, the margin of error would be higher. The poll was designed by the Center for Public Policy at CNU and conducted for CNU by the Institute of Public Opinion at Muhlenberg College. For information or requests, contact Dr. Quentin Kidd, at (757) 594-8499 or qkidd@cnu.edu.