

**Capital Regional District Sewage Treatment Envirionics Survey
 Questions & Answers**
October 2008

The Envirionics Research Group conducted 500 telephone interviews with residents 18 years of age and over in seven municipalities in the Capital Regional District (Victoria, Saanich, Oak Bay, Langford, Colwood, Esquimalt and View Royal) from October 6 to 11, 2008. The survey primarily focused on issues related to new sewage treatment being planned for the region, in the context of the November municipal elections.

A survey of this magnitude yields results that are considered accurate to within plus or minus 4.4 per cent, 19 times out of 20. The survey was commissioned by the Canadian Union of Public Employees and follows up on a similar survey conducted in January 2007.

What do you consider to be the most important local issue facing the Capital Region today?

	Per cent
Homelessness	22
Sewage treatment	11
Traffic/congestion	10
Housing prices	8
Environment/pollution/smog	6
Health care	5
Economy/stock market	5
Transportation	3

As you may know, there will be **municipal** elections in B.C. on November 15.

What will be the most important issues to you in deciding how to vote in the upcoming **municipal** elections?

	Per cent
Homelessness	18
Environment/pollution/smog	14
Housing prices	8
Sewage treatment	8
Traffic/congestion	7
Candidate platform/previous governing experience	6
Taxes	5
Urban sprawl	5
Health care	5
Economy	5
Improvement of downtown core	5

How closely do you follow municipal politics in the Capital Region? Would it be very closely, somewhat closely, not very closely or not at all?

	Per cent
Very closely	16
Somewhat closely	48
Not very closely	28
Not at all	7

What's the most important thing elected officials should be thinking about when they decide how new sewage treatment will operate?

	Per cent
Environmental standards/safety	23
Saving money	14
Costs/Who's paying for it	7
Long-term implications/Sustainability	4
Where treatment plants will be located	4
Innovative/Cutting edge technology	4
Listen to scientists	4

The regional district is looking at how best to develop new sewage treatment. Who would you trust more to manage and operate new sewage treatment a private corporation or the regional district? Would you trust [a private corporation/the regional district] a lot more or just a little more?

	Per cent
Trust regional district a lot more	48
Trust regional district a little more	22
Trust a private corporation a lot more	7
Trust a private corporation a little more	9
Trust both equally	3
Don't know	10

What are the main reasons why you trust the CRD more to operate new sewage treatment?

	Per cent
Not for profit	35
Public interests better served	22
More accountability	18
Government does a good job/better expertise	10
More cost-effective	7
We elect them/it's their job	6
Dislike privatization	6
More guidelines/regulation	5

Thinking about the pros and cons having a private corporation or the regional government operate new sewage treatment, which do you think would do a better job in each of the following ways?

	Regional government %	Private corporation %
Protecting the environment	75	10
Being open and accountable about any environmental risk, costs or damage.	69	14
Being open and transparent about how tax dollars are being used	66	17
Providing the public with reliable information	66	18

As part of new sewage treatment people are also looking at new technologies to get value out of sewage - treating and reusing the wastewater for things like heating buildings, and for irrigation in parks and agriculture. This is sometimes called resource recovery. Should it be a high priority, a medium priority or a low priority for the regional district to bring in this kind of resource recovery in the CRD?

	Per cent
High priority	69
Medium priority	23
Low priority	4

This type of resource recovery could also allow the CRD to bring in programs to reuse wastewater and possibly reduce energy costs for public buildings like city halls, schools, universities and hospitals. Should these programs to reuse wastewater be run by the regional district or by a private corporation on a for-profit basis or does it make no difference to you?

	Per cent
Regional district	59
Private corporation	10
Makes no difference	27

In March 2007, the Capital Regional District estimated that new sewage treatment could cost as much as \$1.2 billion. Some people say that this is too much money for the region to absorb and that new sewage treatment needs to be postponed. Other people say that new sewage treatment is needed to protect the environment and that we cannot afford not to do it. Which of these two points of view is closest to your own?

	Per cent
New sewage treatment is needed and we cannot afford not to do it.	63
\$1.2 billion is too much money, new sewage treatment needs to be postponed.	27
Don't know	9

If a candidate running in the upcoming municipal elections said they opposed any new sewage treatment because it was too expensive would it make you a lot more likely to vote for that person, a little more likely, a little less likely or a lot less likely to vote for them or would it make no difference to you?

	Per cent
A lot more likely to vote for them	11
A little more likely to vote for them	9
A little less likely to vote for them	22
A lot less likely to vote for them	36
Would make no difference	18

If a candidate running in the upcoming municipal elections declared that they favoured private operation of sewage treatment would make you a lot more likely to vote for that person, a little more likely, a little less likely or a lot less likely to vote for them or would it make no difference to you?

	Per cent
A lot more likely to vote for them	6
A little more likely to vote for them	9
A little less likely to vote for them	21
A lot less likely to vote for them	32
Would make no difference	25

Pesticides are often used to by people to kill insects and weeds in their gardens. There is growing scientific evidence linking pesticide exposure to both adult and childhood cancers. Do you support or oppose local bylaws restricting the use of pesticides by homeowners?

	Per cent
Support	82
Oppose	15