



OMP

From: **CARL E. VAN HORN**  
*Director of Policy*

To: Governor Florio

Joseph Salema

(Institution or Department)

Greg Lawler

Date: July 12, 1991

CHIEF OF STAFF

Jon Shure

Re: Survey Results Supporting Clean Water Bond Act

A new Eagleton Institute poll on attitudes toward nonpoint source pollution indicates that there is widespread concern over water pollution generally. This information is useful in the effort to promote the Clean Water Bond Act.

The poll, which was conducted for the New Jersey Pollution RESPONSE (Research and Education to Stop Pollution Originating from Nonpoint Sources in the Environment), revealed that 86% of New Jersey residents perceive water pollution as a serious problem. Almost 80% are concerned about the quality of the water they drink, with 57% of those identifying themselves as "very concerned".

A majority of respondents said they would be willing to pay a modest amount (\$50 per year) to reduce nonpoint source pollution, a fact which rebuts the assertion that New Jerseyans are so concerned over the economy that financing environmental protection is unpopular.

Although the poll is directed primarily at nonpoint sources, which do not include wastewater treatment, the general attitude questions reveal basic, widespread concern for clean water issues addressed by the bond issue. A copy of the results and related newspaper articles are attached for your reference.

Attachment

# Poll finds Jerseyans see water pollution as peril

The majority of New Jerseyans think water pollution is a serious problem in the state, but they do not realize how much their actions can contribute to the problem, according to a poll released yesterday.

The study conducted by the Eagleton Poll was commissioned by New Jersey Pollution RESPONSE, a nonprofit coalition of environmental, business, farming, planning and other interest groups. The organization is committed to increasing public awareness and preventing pollution caused by "nonpoint sources" or individuals.

The survey found 86 percent of state residents consider water pollution a "serious problem," and that 79 percent of New Jerseyans are concerned about the quality of the water they drink.

It also found that a large majority of state residents think more pollution is caused by "point sources" such as businesses and public facilities than by individuals.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) estimates that nonpoint source pollution accounts for 65 percent of all water pollution and 90 percent of all beach closings.

DEP Commissioner Scott Weiner yesterday said nonpoint source pollution

happens in relatively small doses, such as through littering, improper use and disposal of garden pesticides, illegally discharging waste from boats and the common practice of discarding flashlight batteries, cleaners and other household products.

"New Jersey Pollution RESPONSE should be congratulated for its careful assessment of a significant challenge that confronts state environmental protection efforts," Weiner said.

The poll also found that more than a third of New Jerseyans are not aware that washing a car with soap or detergent and leaving pet waste on the ground are both damaging to the environment. Most residents knew that pouring paint down the drain and discarding used motor oil down the sewer can cause environmental degradation.

A RESPONSE spokeswoman said correcting misconceptions about the harmful effects of nonpoint source pollution was one of the goals of the survey which was commissioned with a

grant from the Schumann Fund for New Jersey.

"We want to inform the public how we all contribute to the degradation of our environment and how we can all help to prevent nonpoint source pollution," said the organization's chairwoman, Peggy Haskin of the New Jersey League of Women Voters.

The good news, according to Haskin, is that most state residents feel they can personally have some impact in helping solve water pollution problems.

In terms of individual activities that help prevent nonpoint source pollution, the survey found the vast majority of residents try to follow directions for the proper usage and disposal of materials that may contribute to environmental degradation.

However, only about half of the state's residents were aware of "drop off" facilities, where potentially hazardous household products can be discarded.

Every county in New Jersey hosts

household hazardous waste collection days at which residents can dispose of potentially hazardous materials that should not be thrown in the trash.

People can contact their county solid waste coordinator for details, RESPONSE said.

The poll also found that most New Jerseyans want government to be more active in protecting the state's oceans, rivers, lakes and drinking water from contamination. Seventy-eight percent said government is not doing enough to watch over industrial sources of pollution and 72 percent said it is not doing enough to monitor individual polluters.

The survey showed that 85 percent of New Jerseyans are willing to pay a modest amount of money—at least \$10 or more per year—to support a program designed to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

The poll was conducted by the Center for Public Interest Polling at the Eagleton Institute between April 17 and 24. It consisted of telephone interviews with 800 randomly selected New Jersey adults.

RESPONSE said the poll will be used to help tailor the group's public information campaign and to gauge its progress in increasing awareness of nonpoint source pollution.

# **NEW JERSEY POLLUTION RESPONSE**

*Research and Education to Stop Pollution  
Originating from Nonpoint Sources in the Environment*

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release: immediately  
contact: Carrie Wainwright  
(609) 396-9812

## Poll shows high public concern about water pollution in New Jersey, low awareness of nonpoint sources

A large majority of New Jersey residents -- fully 86 percent -- perceive water pollution as a serious problem in this state, according to a poll conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics. The study was commissioned by New Jersey Pollution R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E.

The survey finds that 79 percent of New Jersey citizens are concerned about the quality of the water they drink, with 57 percent "very concerned" and 22 percent "somewhat concerned." The poll was conducted between April 17 and 24, 1991 by telephone with 800 randomly selected New Jersey adults.

The poll shows that the large majority of residents (79 percent) think that more pollution is caused by point sources such as "businesses and public facilities" than by nonpoint sources such as "individuals." Yet, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection estimates that as much as 65 percent of all water pollution in New Jersey is caused by nonpoint sources. Correcting this misconception is one of the goals of R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E., the organization which commissioned the poll with a grant from the Schumann Fund for New Jersey.

"We want to inform the public about how we all contribute to the degradation of our environment and how we can all help to prevent nonpoint source pollution," says the organization's chairperson, Peggy Haskin of the New Jersey League of Women Voters.

The good news, according to Haskin, is that most state residents feel they personally can have some impact in helping to solve water pollution problems. The poll

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**P.O. Box 2485 • Trenton • New Jersey 08608 • (609) 396-9812**

found that 32 percent feel they can have a "large" impact on water quality, 30 percent say it can be "moderate" and 23 percent say they can have a "small" impact. Only 12 percent say they can have no impact at all.

"Individuals have a tremendous impact on their environment," Haskin says, "and many people are just not aware of the many ways in which they may inadvertently be contributing to pollution."

In the poll, conducted by the Center for Public Interest Polling at the Eagleton Institute, New Jerseyans were asked about their perceptions of eight activities which are sources of water pollution. Following are those activities along with the percentages of residents who are not aware that they may cause environmental damage:

- |                                           |            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| • washing a car with soap or detergent    | 35 percent |
| • leaving pet waste on the ground         | 34 percent |
| • overusing fertilizers                   | 24 percent |
| • overusing pesticides                    | 19 percent |
| • pouring cleaning agents down the drain  | 17 percent |
| • pouring used motor oil on the ground    | 11 percent |
| • pouring paint/turpentine down the drain | 4 percent  |
| • pouring used motor oil down the sewer   | 4 percent  |

In terms of individuals' activities that help *prevent* nonpoint source pollution, the survey found that the vast majority of residents (86 percent) report following directions "always" or "most of the time" for the proper usage and disposal of materials that may contribute to environmental degradation.

However, only about half (52 percent) of the state's residents are aware of "drop off" facilities where potentially hazardous household products can be discarded. Every county in New Jersey hosts household hazardous waste collection days during which residents can dispose of potentially hazardous materials that should not be thrown away in the trash. People can contact their county solid waste coordinator for details. The poll also found that most New Jerseyans want government to be more active in protecting the state's oceans, rivers, lakes and drinking water from contamination which

emanates from either point sources or nonpoint sources. Seventy-eight percent say government is not doing enough to watch over industrial sources and 72 percent say it is not doing enough to watch over individuals.

The survey showed that many are willing to pay at least a modest amount of money to support programs designed to reduce nonpoint source pollution. For example, 82 percent say they would pay \$10 per year to fund street and storm sewer cleaning programs to reduce runoff pollution. A majority (53 percent) would pay \$50 per year, and 31 percent would pay \$100 annually. To fund programs which make disposal of potentially hazardous household products more convenient, 85 percent of New Jersey residents say they would be willing to pay at least \$10 per year; 56 percent would pay \$50 per year; and 35 percent would pay \$100 annually for the collection programs.

New Jersey Pollution R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. commissioned the Eagleton Institute to conduct the poll with a grant from the Schumann Fund for New Jersey. R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E., a coalition of environmental, business, farming, planning and other interest groups, is committed to increasing public awareness and prevention of nonpoint source pollution. This poll will be used to help tailor R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E.'s public information campaign and provide a benchmark against which R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. can gauge its progress in increasing awareness of nonpoint source pollution.

R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. is a nonprofit, 501 (c) (3) organization whose Board of Trustees includes representatives from the: American Littoral Society, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, Chemical Industry Council, City of Camden -Department of Utilities, County of Monmouth - Public Works and Engineering, League of Women Voters of New Jersey, National Association of Industrial Office Parks - New Jersey Chapter, New Jersey Alliance for Action, New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts, New Jersey Association of Realtors, New Jersey Builders Association, New Jersey Business and Industry Association, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, New Jersey Farm Bureau, New Jersey Federation of Planning Officials, New Jersey Institute of Technology, New Jersey Maritime Advisory Council, New Jersey Society of Professional Engineers, Passaic River Coalition, Passaic Valley Water Commission, Port Authority of NY/NJ and Sierra Club - New Jersey Chapter. Call Executive Director Carrie Wainwright at (609) 396-9812 for more information.

## BACKGROUND MEMO AND TABLES

The Eagleton Institute survey was conducted between April 17 and 24, 1991, when a random sample of 800 New Jerseyans, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone. Figures based on this sample size are subject to a sampling error of about ±3.5 percent. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from that population. Sampling error does not take into account other possible sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The questions and figures referred to in this release are presented below. The location of each question on the actual questionnaire is in brackets.

"Now I'd like to get your opinions on some environmental issues. First, how serious is the problem of water pollution in New Jersey -- very serious, somewhat serious, not too serious, or not serious at all?" [Q.C1]

	<u>Very Serious</u>	<u>Somewhat Serious</u>	<u>Not Too Serious</u>	<u>Not Serious</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	56%	30%	8%	2%	4%	100%	(800)
<u>Age</u>							
18 - 29	66	29	1	1	3	100	(169)
30 - 49	58	29	8	1	3	99	(325)
50 or older	49	30	13	3	5	100	(280)

"And how concerned are you about the quality of the drinking water where you live -- very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not concerned at all?" [Q.C2]

	<u>Very Concerned</u>	<u>Somewhat Concerned</u>	<u>Not Too Concerned</u>	<u>Not At All Concerned</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	57%	22%	13%	9%	101%	(800)
<u>Age</u>						
18 - 29	62	22	12	4	100	(169)
30 - 49	60	22	12	7	101	(325)
50 or older	50	22	14	14	100	(280)

"Do you think individuals like yourself can have a large, a moderate, a small, or no impact in helping to solve water pollution problems?" [Q.C3]

	<u>Large Impact</u>	<u>Moderate Impact</u>	<u>Small Impact</u>	<u>No Impact</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	32%	30%	23%	12%	2%	99%	(800)

"Do you think that government is doing enough to make sure that businesses do not pollute oceans, rivers, lakes, and drinking water?" [Q.C4]

	<u>Government Doing Enough</u>	<u>Government Not Doing Enough</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	18%	78%	4%	100%	(800)
<u>Age</u>					
18 - 29	10	87	3	100	(169)
30 - 49	19	78	4	101	(325)
50 or older	22	72	6	100	(280)

"And do you think that government is doing enough to make sure that individuals like yourself do not pollute oceans, rivers, lakes, and drinking water?" [Q.C5]

	<u>Government Doing Enough</u>	<u>Government Not Doing Enough</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	21%	72%	6%	99%	(800)
<u>Age</u>					
18 - 29	9	89	2	100	(169)
30 - 49	25	70	5	100	(325)
50 or older	27	64	9	100	(280)

"There are two major types of water pollution, point-source pollution and non-point source pollution. Have you ever heard of these types of pollution before?" [Q.C6]

	<u>Heard Of Terms</u>	<u>Not Heard Of Terms</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	14%	83%	2%	99%	(800)
<u>Education</u>					
Less than high school	5	91	4	100	(80)
High school graduate	10	88	2	100	(246)
More than high school	27	72	2	101	(474)

"Point-source pollution is pollution that comes mainly from businesses and public facilities. Non-point source pollution is caused mostly by individuals." [Q.C7]

	<u>Major Source Is Non-Point</u>	<u>Major Source Is Point</u>	<u>About Same</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	16%	79%	2%	2%	99%	(800)

"When using products like fertilizers, pesticides, paint, motor oil, and cleaning agents, how often do you follow directions about using and disposing these materials--always, most of the time, sometimes, not that often, or never?" [Q.C10]

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Most Of The Time</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Not Often</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	58%	28%	6%	2%	4%	3%	101%	(800)
<u>Age</u>								
18 - 29	47	31	8	5	6	4	101	(169)
30 - 49	58	29	8	1	2	2	100	(325)
50 or older	66	24	3	2	3	3	101	(280)
<u>Sex</u>								
Male	51	32	7	4	3	3	100	(401)
Female	64	24	4	1	4	3	100	(399)



"Now I'm going to read a list of activities that people do around the house. For each activity I read, please tell me whether you think that activity is or is not a source of water pollution. First, how about (READ ITEM). Is this a source of water pollution or not? (PROBE IF "YES:" Would that be a major or minor source of water pollution?)" [Q.C11]

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>Not</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Pouring used motor oil down a sewer drain	79%	17%	1%	3%	100%	(799)
Pouring paint or turpentine down the drain	76	20	1	3	100	(797)
Pouring used motor oil on the ground	63	26	9	2	100	(799)
Over-using bug sprays or pesticides	51	30	14	5	100	(800)
Pouring household cleaning agents down the drain	49	34	11	6	100	(799)
Over-using fertilizers on lawns or shrubs	42	34	16	8	100	(795)
Leaving pet waste on the ground	26	41	29	5	101	(800)
Washing a car with soap or other detergents	12	53	30	5	99	(799)

"Improper disposal of materials like dead batteries, paint, motor oil, and household detergents adds to the problem of water pollution. One possible solution to reducing water pollution is to fund government programs for making the proper disposal of these materials more convenient to people like you.

Would you support such a government program if it cost you \$10 a year? (IF YES: Would you support such a government program if it cost you \$50 per year?) (IF YES: Would you support such a government program if it cost you \$100 per year?)" [Q.C14, C15, C16]

	<u>Would Pay \$100/Year</u>	<u>Would Pay \$50/Year</u>	<u>Would Pay \$10/Year</u>	<u>Would Not Pay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	35%	21%	29%	15%	100%	(800)
<u>Income</u>						
Under \$20,000	27	16	40	17	100	(97)
\$20,001-\$30,000	39	20	26	15	100	(99)
\$30,001-\$50,000	37	21	32	10	100	(205)
Over \$50,000	42	23	20	14	99	(278)

"Water pollution is also caused by outdoor littering and road debris. Litter and debris make their way into water sources through storm sewers. Street sweeping and storm sewer cleaning are services government may provide to reduce water pollution.

Would you support government providing these services to reduce water pollution if it cost you \$10 per year? (IF YES: Would you support it if it cost \$50 per year? How about \$100 per year?)" [Q.C17, C18, C19]

	<u>Would Pay \$100/Year</u>	<u>Would Pay \$50/Year</u>	<u>Would Pay \$10/Year</u>	<u>Would Not Pay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	31%	22%	29%	18%	100%	(800)
<u>Income</u>						
Under \$20,000	21	24	31	24	100	(97)
\$20,001-\$30,000	34	18	32	17	101	(99)
\$30,001-\$50,000	36	21	21	12	100	(205)
Over \$50,000	37	26	23	14	100	(278)

"Some communities have designated places where materials such as dead batteries, paint, used motor oil, cleaning agents and other materials may be dropped off for proper disposal. Does your community have any locations where you may throw out these materials, or not? (IF YES: Have you thrown out any materials by dropping them off at one of these locations, or haven't you ever used one?)" [Q.C12, C13]

	<u>Used Facility</u>	<u>Aware, But Not Used</u>	<u>Not Aware</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	31%	21%	48%	100%	(798)
<u>Region of State</u>					
North	24	19	56	99	(389)
Central	41	21	38	100	(207)
South	35	25	40	100	(202)