



Center for Public Issues Education
IN AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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executive summary

Public Opinions of Water in Florida

Introduction

Water is one of Florida's most abundant natural resources. Water is a crucial resource that impacts not just the environment, but important industries of Florida's economy, such as tourism, agriculture, and business. To avoid water conflicts between users, it is important to understand what the general public thinks about water issues. Using an online survey design, the PIE Center collected data from Florida residents, age 18 and older, in December 2012 to gauge public opinions surrounding water in Florida.

Key Findings

Main highlights from the study include:

- Florida residents are more concerned with water quality and safety than water quantity.
- Florida residents place the most importance on **clean drinking water**. They are then concerned with:
 - Clean beaches, oceans, bays/estuaries, lakes and rivers;
 - Plentiful water for agriculture; and
 - Clean groundwater.
- When compared to other important water quality and quantity issues, Florida residents place the least amount of importance on having plentiful water for household landscapes.
- 40% of Florida residents have experienced some kind of negative impact due to water quality issues including:
 - Poor quality drinking water;
 - Closed beaches, closed springs, rivers, or lakes; and
 - Prohibitions on eating fish they have caught.
- There are more Florida residents that believe water quality is getting worse than those that believe it is getting better.
- Florida resident water conservation behavior engagement includes
 - 52.6% have low-flow showerheads installed
 - 51.8% have water-efficient toilets installed
 - 33% use low-water consuming plants in their landscape
 - 18.7% use rain barrels to collect water for use in the garden/lawn
 - 65.3% of Florida residents are willing to use recycled wastewater to irrigate their lawn or landscape although only 20.3% reported that recycled wastewater was available for them to use.