

WHAT FLORIDIANS THINK ABOUT WATER QUANTITY & QUALITY

Living in a state surrounded by water, Floridians prioritize water issues with the economy and healthcare. Residents and policymakers must balance water supply and quality standards with increased demands from population growth and environmental need. More than 500 Floridians took the fourth-annual public opinion survey on water issues by the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources and showed that while residents are thirsty for knowledge, they sometimes leave conservationists high and dry.

FLORIDIANS TAP WATER AS MAJOR CONCERN

Florida residents acknowledge the importance of water but are not always willing to make sacrifices in order to protect this vital natural resource.

PIE Center research revealed that the majority of Floridians rated water a top issue, of the 10 topics residents were asked to analyze.

Water concern was only preceded by healthcare and closely followed by the economy and public education. More than half of Floridians identified water as an issue of extreme importance.

While many residents prioritized water as important, fewer were willing to make sacrifices in their home and lifestyle to conserve water.

HIGHLY OR EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. HEALTHCARE	81.5%
2. WATER	81.4%
3. ECONOMY	81.3%
4. PUBLIC EDUCATION	75%
5. FOOD PRODUCTION	71%

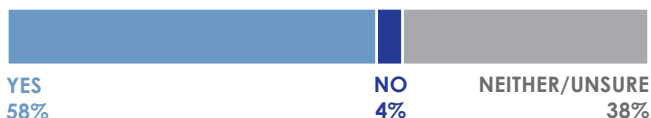
Seventy percent of residents identified that they would vote for water conservation programs, yet only 34 percent said they would volunteer for water cleanup events and even fewer would join a water conservation organization.

While more than half of Floridians believed that saltwater intrusion was an important issue, 38 percent were unsure. Four percent did not think it was important.

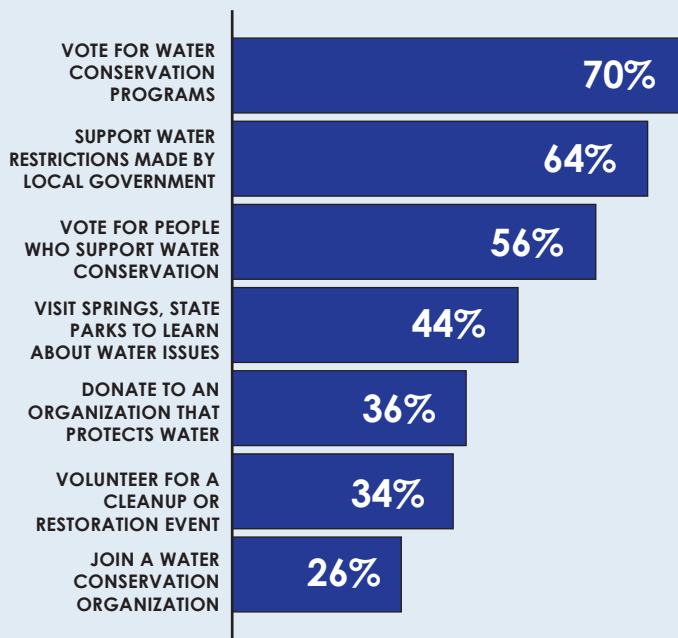
IS RED TIDE AN IMPORTANT ISSUE IN FLORIDA?



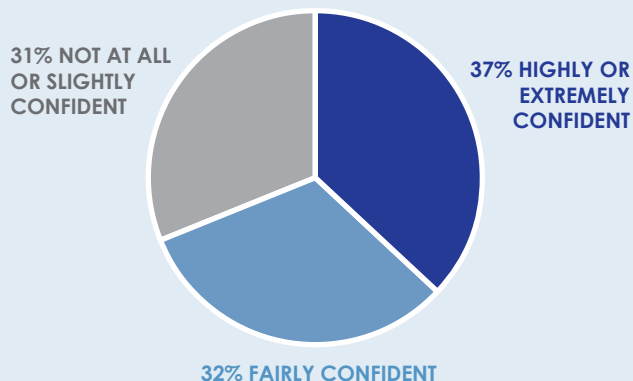
IS SALTWATER INTRUSION AN IMPORTANT ISSUE?



"I AM LIKELY TO..."

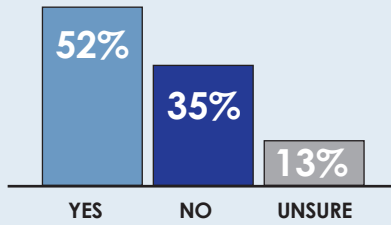


CONFIDENCE IN SAFETY OF TAP WATER

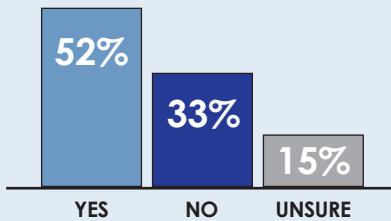


"I CONSERVE WATER BY USING..."

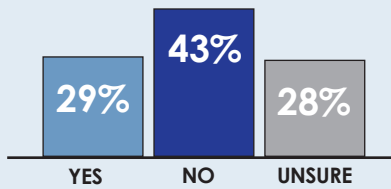
WATER-EFFICIENT TOILETS



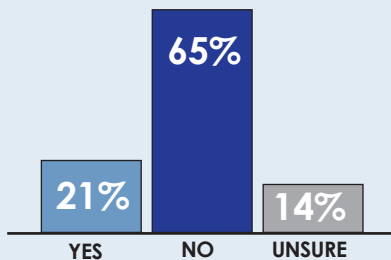
LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS



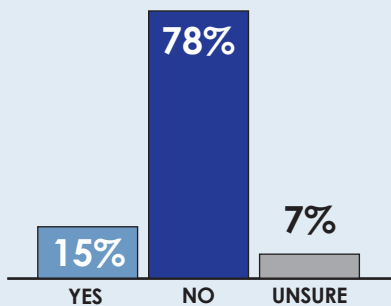
LOW-WATER CONSUMING PLANTS



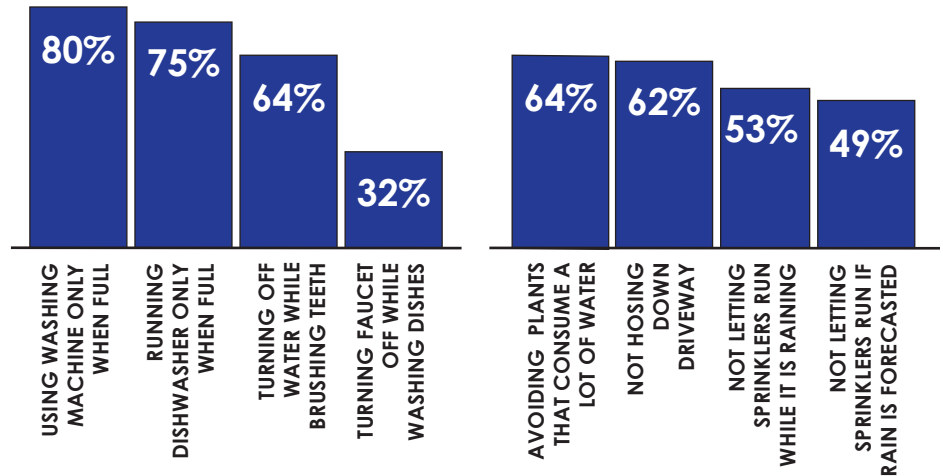
RECYCLED OR RECLAIMED WATER



RAIN BARRELS



"I CONSERVE WATER BY..."



WATER CONSERVATION FLOWS IN FLORIDIANS' HOMES, LAWNS

Aside from leaving the faucet on while washing dishes, Floridians reported strong water conservation habits.

The majority of residents usually keep the water on when doing the dishes, but more than 60 percent turn off the tap when it comes time to brush their teeth.

About half of Floridians have water-efficient toilets and showerheads, but only 15 percent use rain barrels to collect water for irrigation. Twenty-one percent say they use recycled or reclaimed water.

Residents can make the most improvements in their home landscapes, according to PIE Center survey results. Forty-three percent of Floridians do not use low-water consuming plants,

compared to 31 percent who do and 23 percent who are unsure.

More than 60 percent of Floridians conserve water by not hosing down their driveways. Most will turn off their sprinklers when the weather is rainy or showers are forecasted. Eighty percent only run their washing machine when its full, and 75 percent will only run a full dishwasher.

Floridians said they were willing to conserve water, with 62 percent advocating they would do so even if they had to reduce the amount that they watered their lawn. However, if portions of their grass might die and need to be replaced, that number shrunk to 40 percent.

ABOUT OUR SURVEYS

The PIE Center conducts at least four public opinion surveys every year that focus on issues of key significance to Floridians. The surveys explore what Floridians think about the rights, responsibilities, attitudes and behaviors associated with critical issues such as food production, water quantity and quality, community resilience and preparedness, as well as endangered and invasive species.