

Household Garbage Disposal and Burning

A Survey of Northwestern Ontarians



Conducted for EcoSuperior
Environmental Programs

By Environics Research Group

March, 2010

Methodology

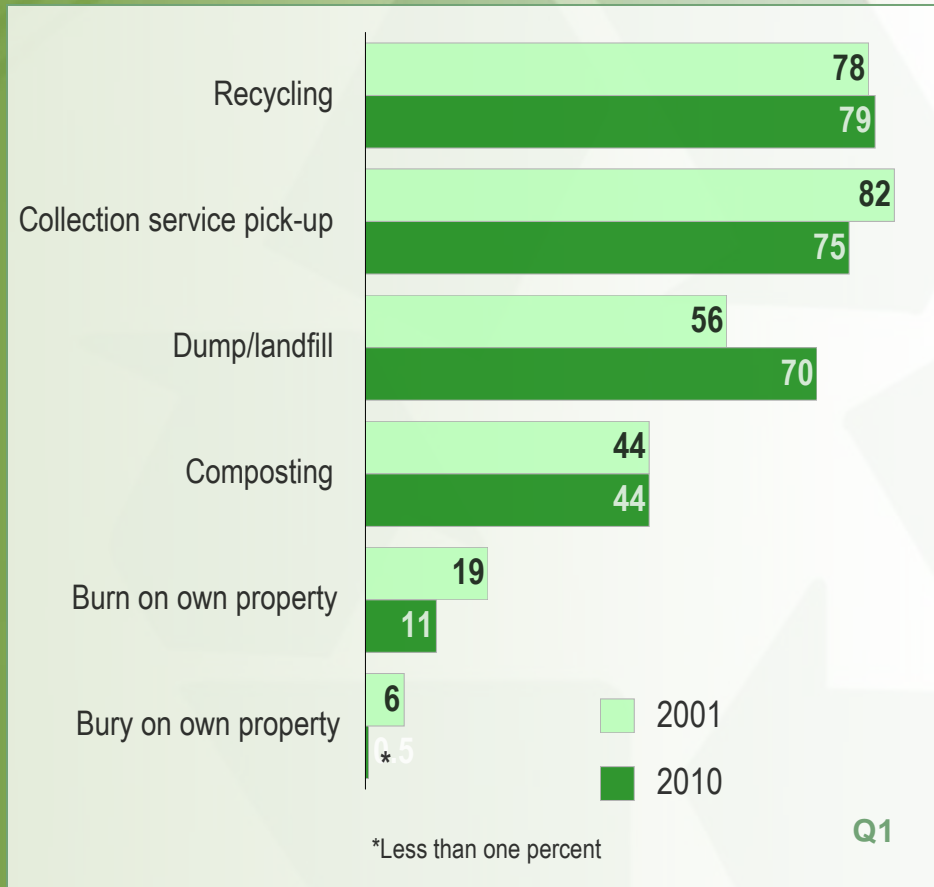


- Telephone survey of 300 residents of Northwestern Ontario conducted March 1 – 10, 2010.
- The interview was conducted with the adult (age 18 and over) in the household who is most familiar with household garbage disposal.
- Data were weighted to reflect the age and gender distribution of Northwestern Ontario residents.
- 2001 data are taken from an Environics survey including interviews with 311 Northwestern Ontarians.
- Margin of error (M.O.E.) at the 95% confidence level for the full sample of 300 is ± 5.7 percentage points; margins of error are greater for subsamples of the population. For example, M.O.E. for the sample of cottage/camp users ($n=77$) is ± 11.2 and for the sample of those who burn garbage at home or cottage/camp ($n=50$) is ± 13.9 .



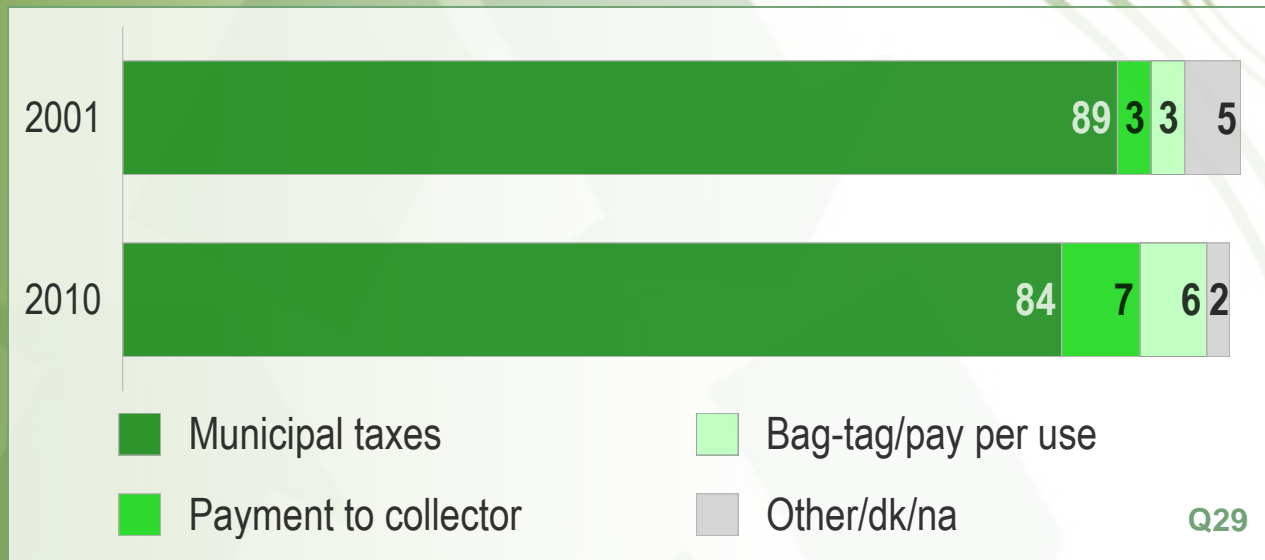
Household Garbage Disposal

Methods of garbage disposal at home



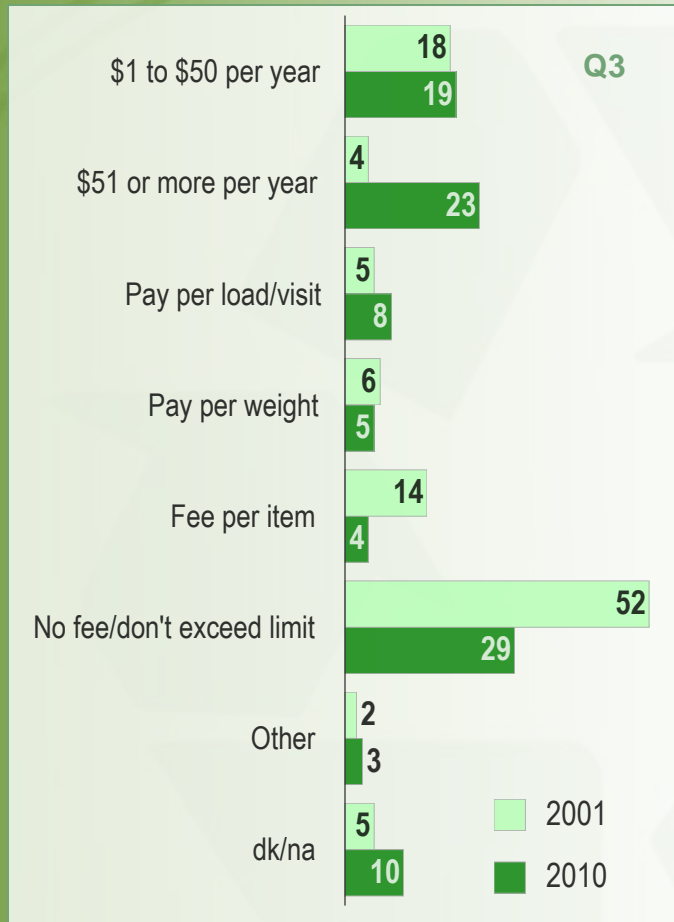
The proportion of residents of Northwest Ontario who use dumps or landfills has increased since 2001; incidence of burning garbage has decreased.

Methods of payment for home garbage collection



As in 2001, home garbage collection continues to be mainly paid through municipal taxes.

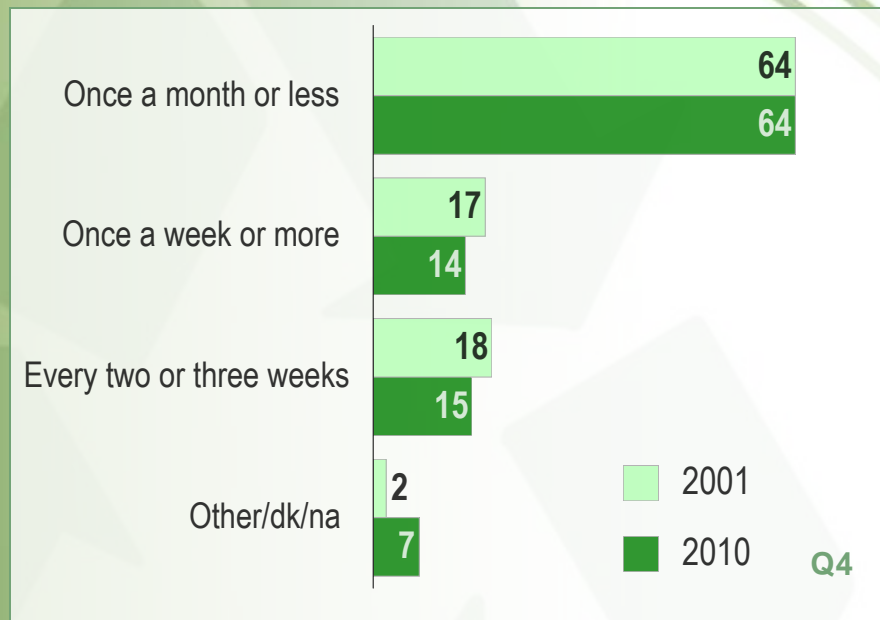
Home garbage dumping costs



Northwestern Ontarians who use dumps and landfills are more likely now than in 2001 to be paying in excess of \$50 per year. However, the average amount cited is \$45 per year.

Subsample: those who take any home garbage to the dump/landfill
(2010 n=208; 2001 n=175)

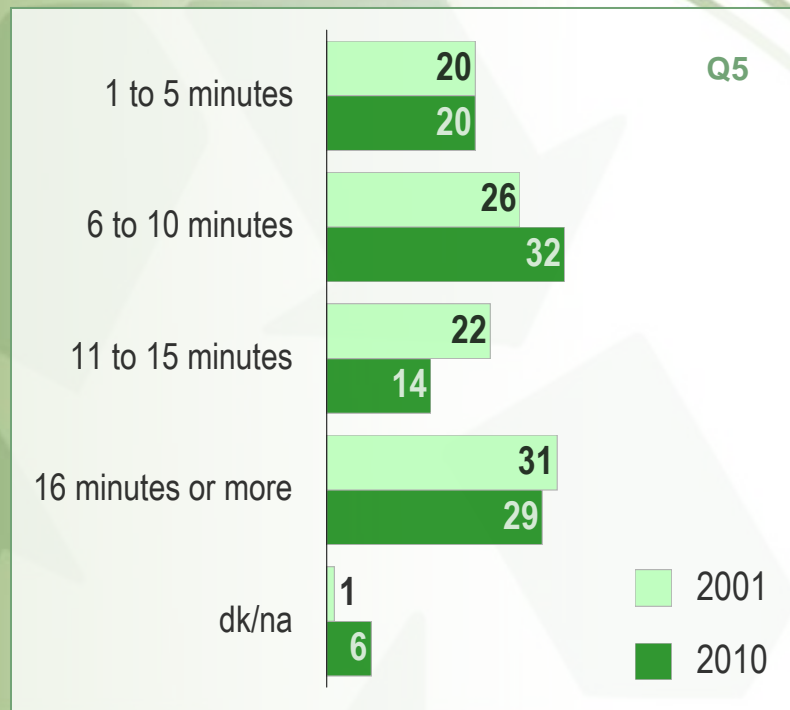
Home garbage dumping frequency



Subsample: those who take any home garbage to the dump/landfill
(2010 n=208; 2001 n=175)

Residents of this region have not altered their frequency of use of dumps/landfills since 2001. Six in ten (61%) report a recycling depot at the dump, compared to 46 percent in 2001.

Time to drive to home garbage dump



Subsample: those who take any home garbage to the dump/landfill
(2010 n=208; 2001 n=175)

Northwestern Ontarians travel basically the same distance to dumps/landfills as in 2001. The average time cited is 14 minutes.



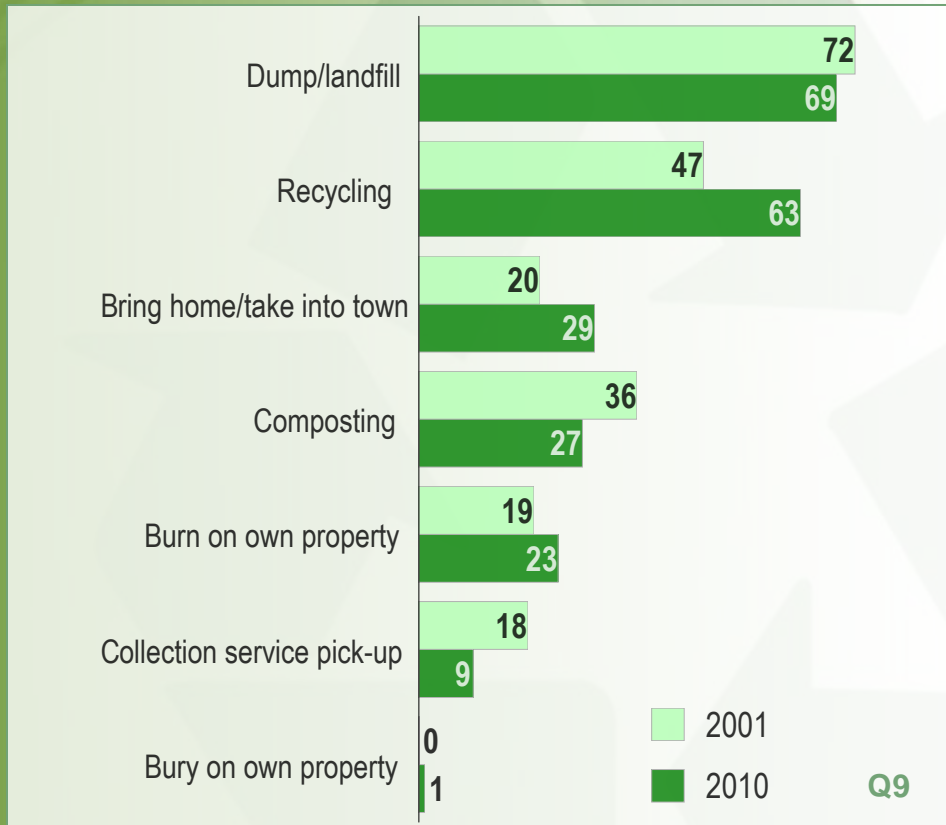
Cottage/Camp Garbage Disposal

Cottage/camp use



- One-quarter (26%) of Northwest Ontario adults report having regular use of a cottage or camp located in Ontario (comparable to 21% in 2001).
- As in 2001, the majority (61% in 2010) use their cottage or camp only in the summer months.
- 10 percent use their cottage once a week or more throughout the year (similar to 13% of cottagers in 2001).
- *In the following analyses, note that sample sizes are small and thus margins of error are larger for this population.*

Methods of garbage disposal at cottage/camp



Use of a dump or landfill for disposal of cottage garbage is now equalled by the use of recycling. Half (51%) of cottage/camp users who use a dump say there is a recycling depot there, compared to 11 percent of those who used a dump for their cottage garbage in 2001.

Subsample: Those with regular access to a cottage or camp
(2010 n=77; 2001 n=44) note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 11.2

Use of dump for cottage/camp garbage

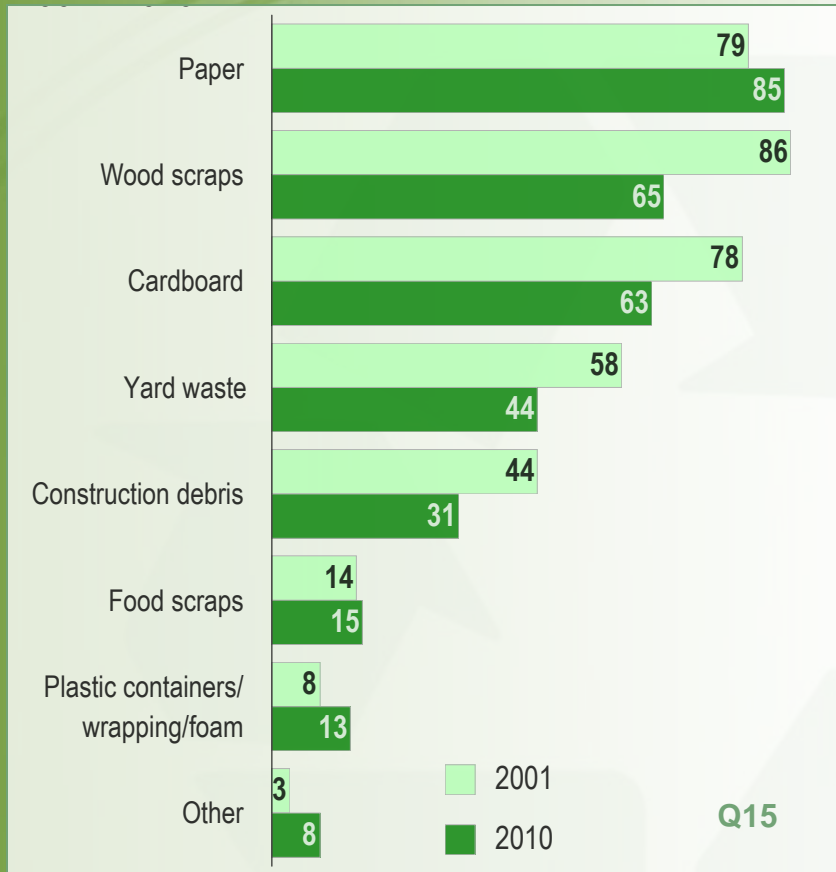


- Half (48%) of cottagers who use a dump or landfill (n=53) pay under \$100 per year; three in ten (29%) say they pay no fee. The average amount cited is \$36.
- Half (52%) use their cottage dump once a month or less; two in ten (19%) use it at least weekly.
- It takes an average of 21 minutes to drive to the dump used for cottage garbage disposal.

A small, realistic globe of the Earth is positioned in the center of a large, vibrant green leaf. The globe shows the continents of North and South America, with a dark blue ocean. The leaf is detailed with visible veins and a stem extending to the right. The background is a light green gradient with faint, stylized circular patterns and a large, semi-transparent recycling symbol (three chasing arrows) on the left side.

Garbage Burning Activities

Types of garbage burned



Regional residents who burn garbage at home or at their cottage or camp remain most likely to burn paper, wood scraps and cardboard. Fewer than in 2001 report burning yard waste or construction debris. Only small proportions burn other garbage types.

(note that sample sizes are small and margins of error are larger for this population)

Subsample: Those who burn garbage at home/cottage/camp
(2010 n=50; 2001 n=71) note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 13.9

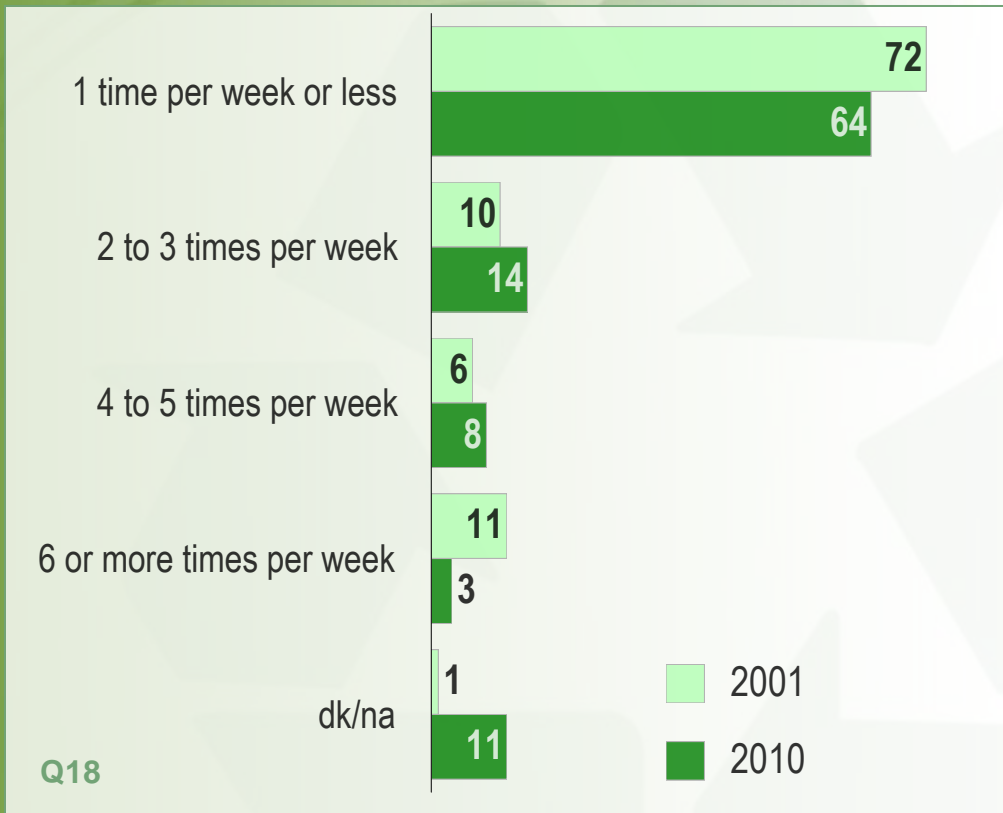
Method of burning garbage



Northwestern Ontarians are more likely than in 2001 to report burning garbage in an open pit; use of other methods is quite similar.

Subsample: Those who burn garbage at home/cottage/camp (2010 n=50; 2001 n=71) note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 13.9

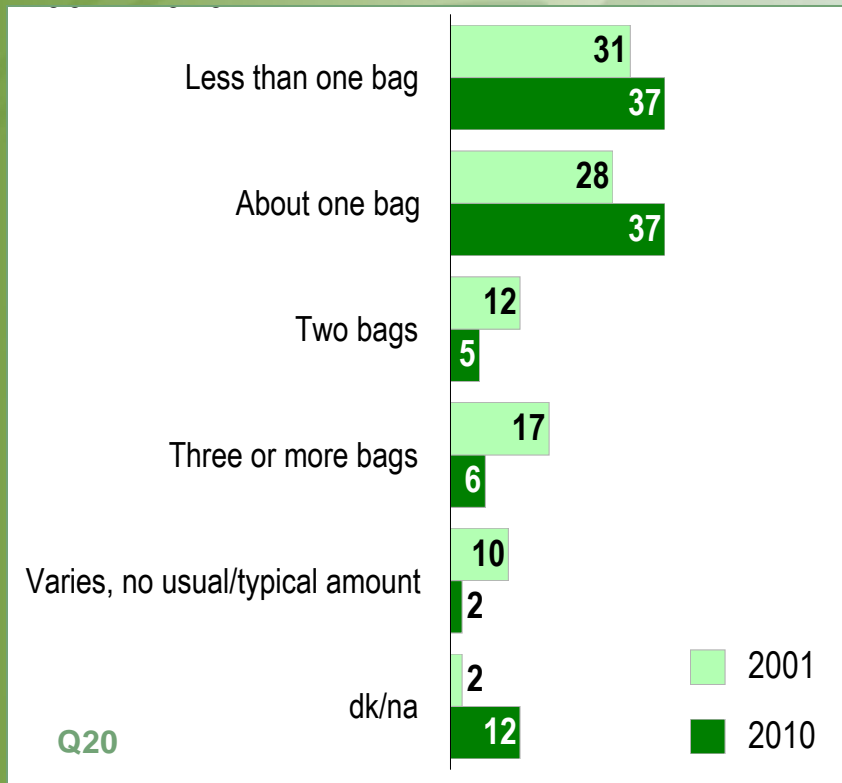
Frequency of burning garbage at home



Subsample: Those who burn garbage at home
(2010 n=34; 2001 n=60) note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 16.8

Garbage is generally burned at home once a week or less.

Amount of garbage burned at one time



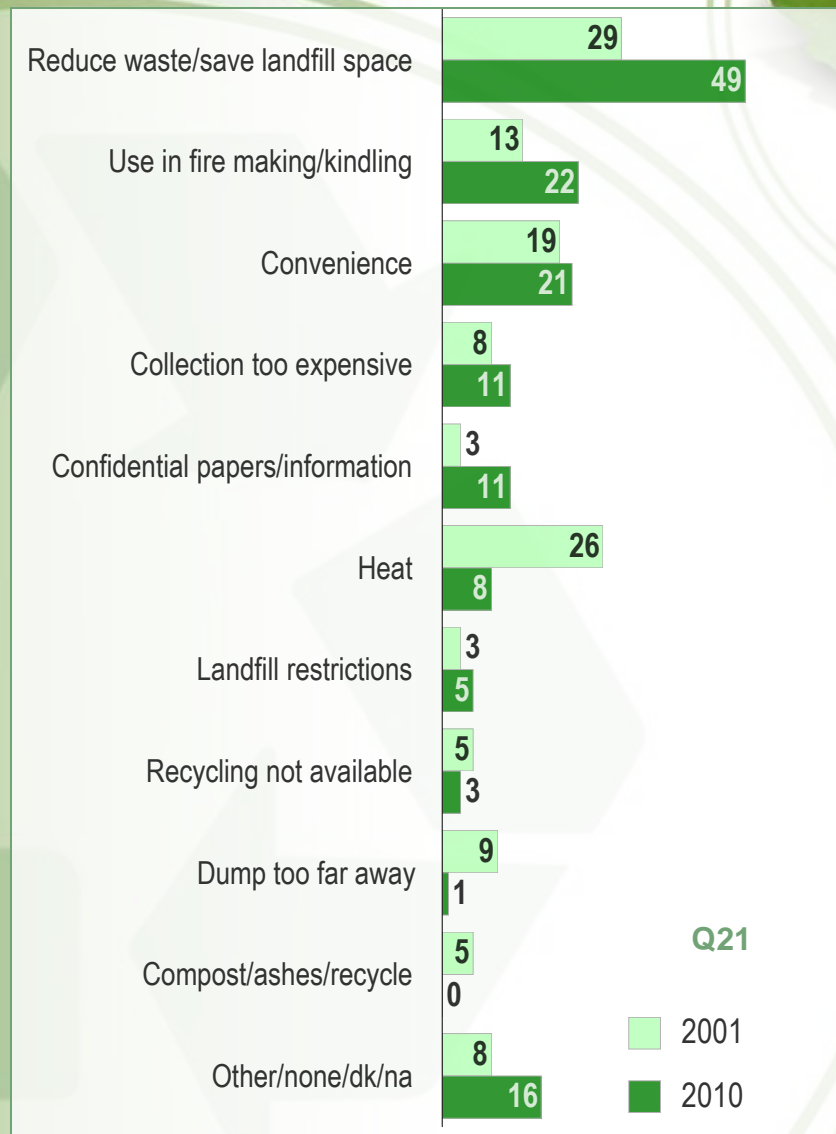
Northwestern Ontarians are burning less garbage than in 2001: three-quarters burn one bag or less each time.


Subsample: Those who burn garbage at home/cottage/camp
(2010 n=50; 2001 n=71) note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 13.9

Reasons for burning garbage

The main reason that regional residents burn garbage is to reduce waste and save landfill space (49%); they are less likely to mention heating than in 2001.

Subsample: Those who burn garbage at home/cottage/camp (2010 n=50; 2001 n=71)
note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 13.9



A small, realistic globe of the Earth is positioned in the center of a large, vibrant green leaf. The globe shows continents and oceans, with a slight shadow cast beneath it. The leaf is detailed with visible veins and a stem extending to the right. The background is a light green gradient with faint, stylized circular patterns and a recycling symbol in the lower-left corner.

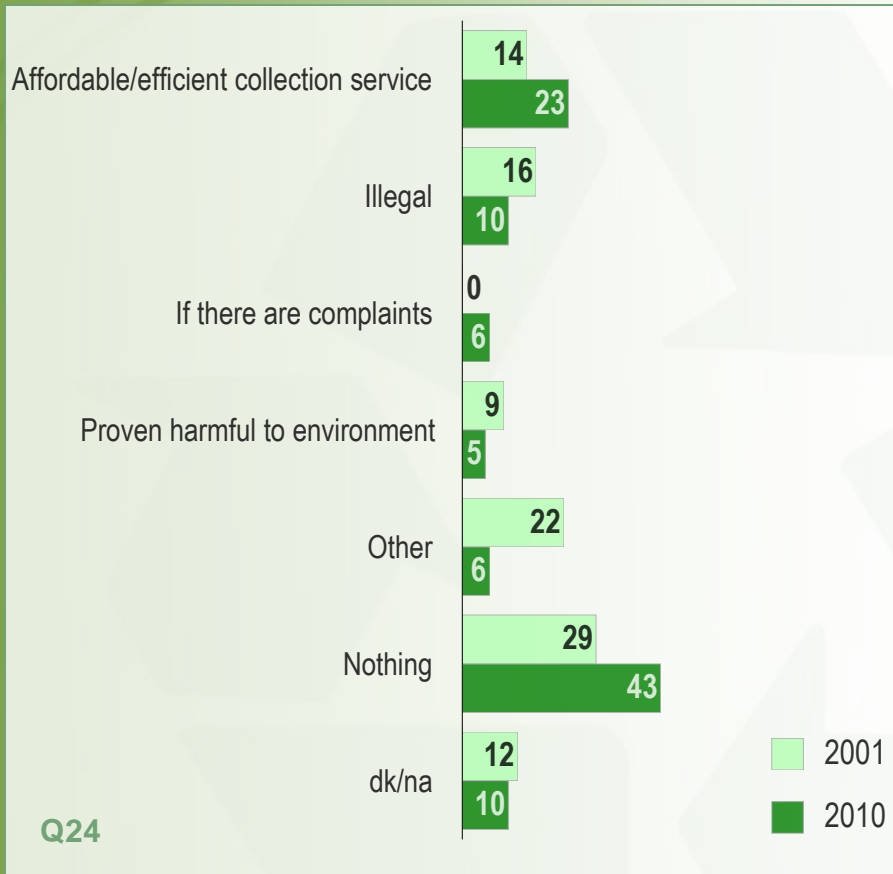
Attitudes about Garbage Burning

Burning garbage



- 83 percent of Northwestern Ontario residents say that burning garbage is not a common practice where they live.
- Although the base of those who burn garbage at home is small, these residents are significantly more likely to think that burning garbage is a common practice than those who use other garbage disposal methods.
- *In the following analyses, note that sample size of those who burn garbage is small and thus margins of error are larger for this population.*

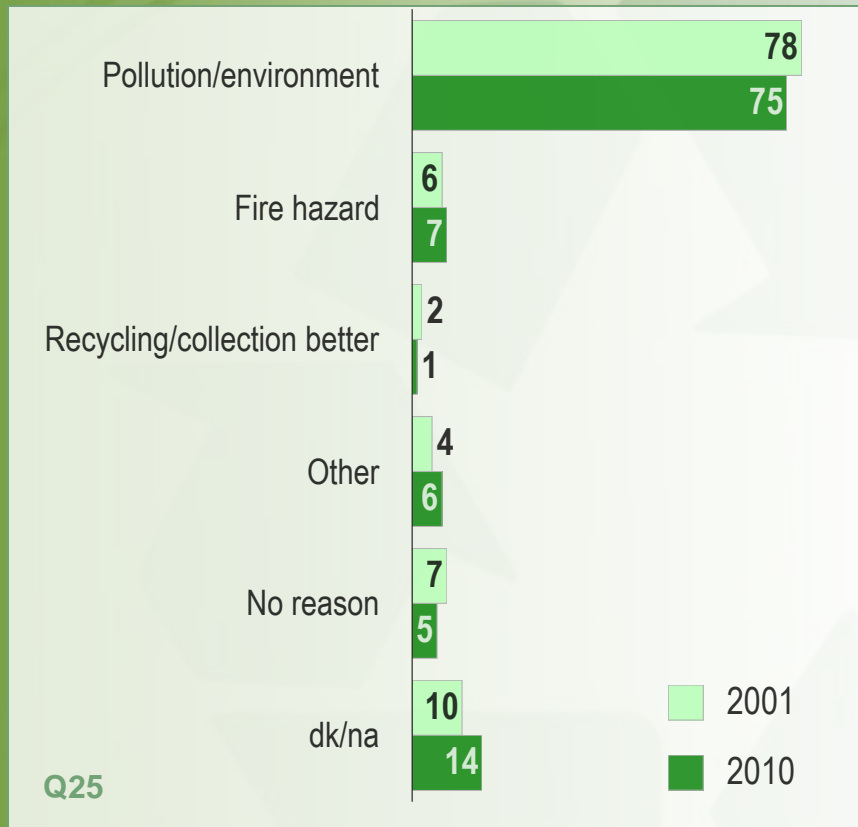
Personal reasons to stop burning garbage



The small proportion of regional residents who still burn garbage are less likely than in 2001 to think of a reason why they would stop.

Subsample: Those who burn garbage at home/cottage/camp
(2010 n=50; 2001 n=71) note: small base sizes – M.O.E. 13.9

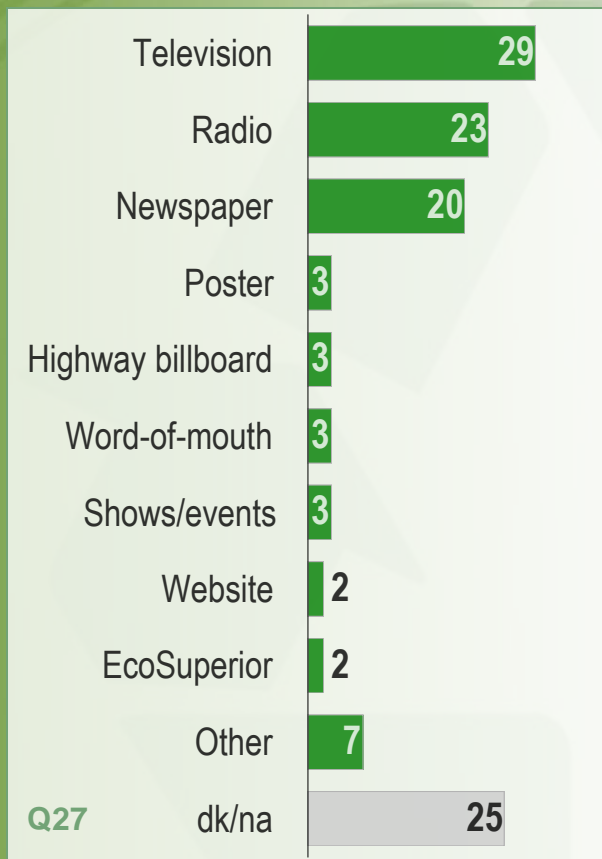
General reasons to stop burning garbage



Pollution and its impact on the environment or health remains the most cited top-of-mind reason why people should stop burning garbage.

Subsample: Those who could think of a reason to stop burning garbage (2010 n=279; 2001 n=311). Note that in 2010 this question was not asked of current garbage burners who could not think of a personal reason to stop.

Awareness of ads about burning garbage



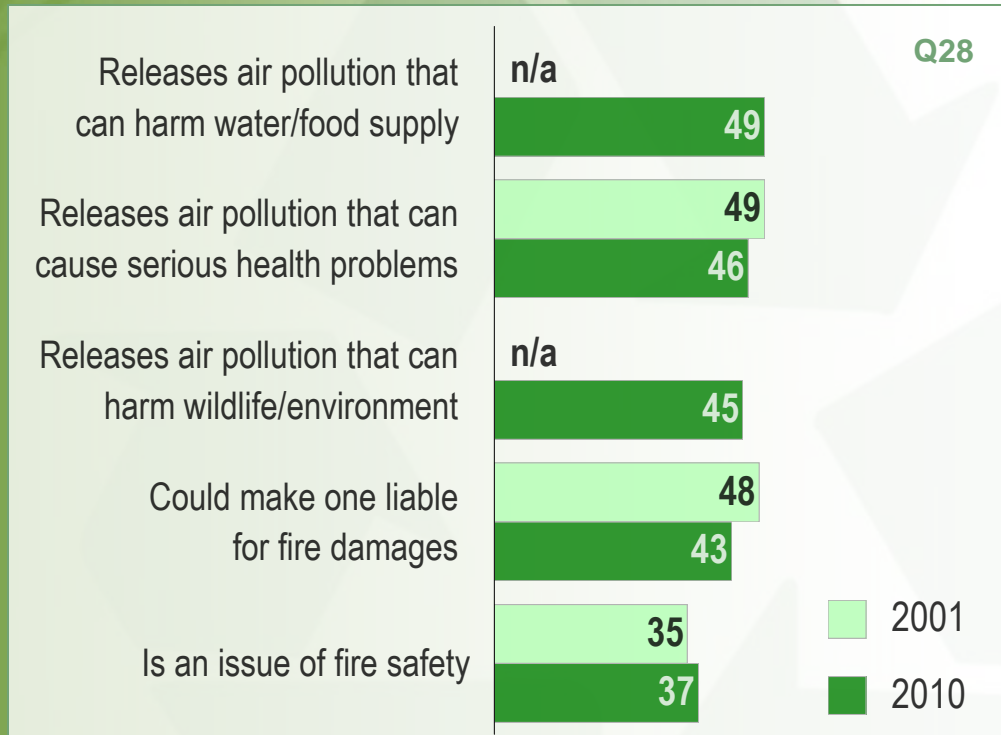
Subsample: Those aware of an ad about garbage burning being unsafe (n=132)

Four in ten (41%) Northwestern Ontarians have seen or heard advertising messages indicating that burning garbage is an unsafe practice. Those who burn garbage are as likely to recall seeing something as others.

Ads about burning garbage are most likely to have been seen on television, but two in ten also remember hearing something on the radio or seeing an ad in a newspaper.

Arguments against burning garbage

% saying “extremely convincing”



In 2001, food and water supply arguments were tested separately. (45% extremely convincing for water argument / 37% for food)

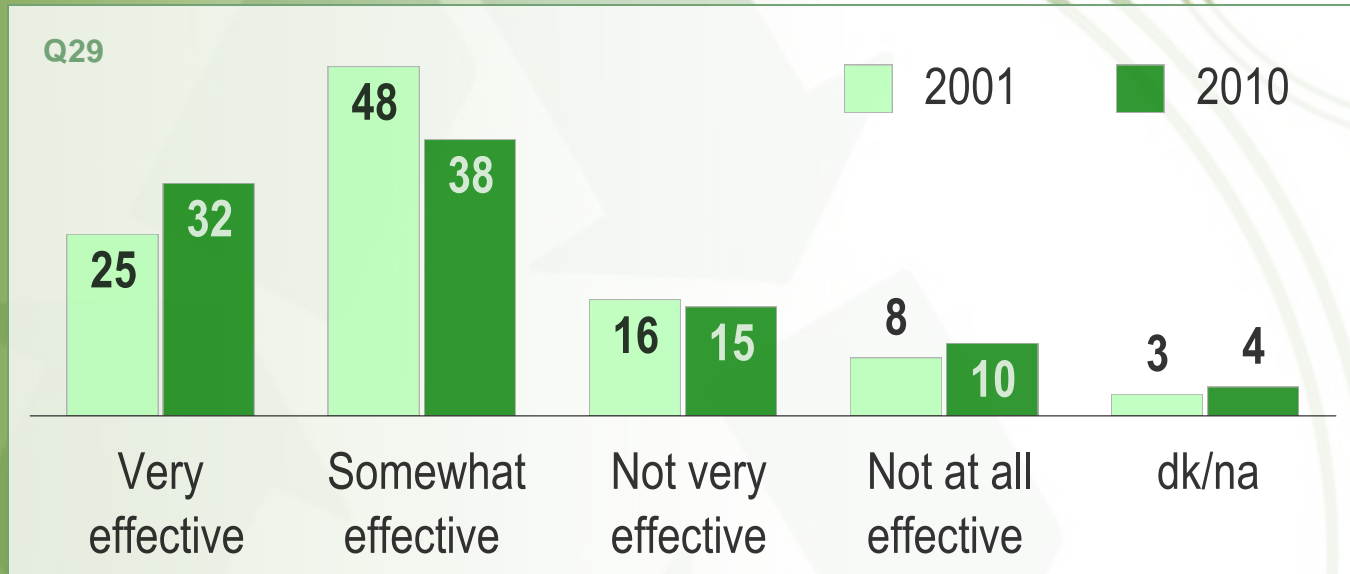
In 2001, wildlife and environment arguments were tested separately. (44% wildlife / 54% environment)

Thinking that specific arguments against burning garbage would be extremely convincing is basically unchanged from 2001.

Those who burn garbage are less likely than others to think that most of these arguments are extremely convincing, the exception being that burning is an issue of fire safety, which they are as likely as others to think will be extremely convincing.



Effectiveness of law against burning garbage



Northwestern Ontarians are slightly more likely now than in 2001 to believe that a law against burning garbage would be very effective – but belief in effectiveness overall is essentially unchanged. Current garbage burners are the least likely to think such a law would be effective, but four in ten of them still think it would be at least somewhat effective.



Questionnaire

Eco-Superior
Ontario Survey of Household Garbage Disposal/Burning
FINAL Questionnaire

Introduction

Hello. This is _____ from Environics Research Group Limited. We are conducting a survey across Ontario on the ways in which people dispose of their household garbage.

IF ASKED: The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

IF ASKED: I can tell you at the end who sponsored this survey

- S1 May I speak to the person, age 18 or older, who is the most familiar with how your household disposes of its garbage? (Note – If that person is not there, ask to speak with another adult who is familiar with garbage disposal routines)

01 – Yes, speaking
02 – Yes, wait for person to come to the phone and repeat intro
03 – Yes, make arrangements for callback, if necessary
04 – No THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW
99 – DK/NA

REINTRODUCE AS NECESSARY AND SAY

There are no right or wrong answers, nor are we selling or soliciting anything. Your answers are important to us and your responses will be kept strictly confidential and combined with those of other residents across the province. We very much appreciate your help.

- S2 Which best describes your home?

READ

01 – a detached single-family home
02 – an apartment building or other type of home - THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW

A. Household garbage disposal

1. What are all the ways in which you dispose of garbage at your home?

READ LIST - CODE ALL THAT APPLY PROBE: Any other ways?

01 – It is picked up by a garbage collection service
02 – It is brought to the dump/landfill
03 – It is burned on your own property, either in the house or in the yard
04 – Recycling
05 – Composting
VOLUNTEERED
06 – It is buried on your property
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

IF GARBAGE COLLECTED IN Q1 (OPTION 01) ASK Q2

2. How do you pay for your garbage collection at home?

READ LIST – CODE ONE ONLY

01 – Through municipal taxes, or
02 – Through direct payment to collector
VOLUNTEERED
03 – Bag-tag system/pay per use
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

IF INDICATED DUMP/LANDFILL IN Q1 (OPTION 02) ASK Q3 – Q6 – OTHERS TO SECTION B

3. Do you pay a fee when you use a dump or landfill to dump the garbage from your home?
ASK FOR APPROXIMATE AMOUNT PER YEAR – IF CANNOT GIVE AMOUNT, ASK IF MORE OR LESS THAN \$100 PER YEAR

01 – _____ DOLLARS/YEAR
02 – No fee
VOLUNTEERED
03 – Less than \$100 per year
04 – \$100 or more per year
05 – Pay fee per item
06 – Pay fee by weight
07 – Pay fee by load/visit
08 – No, do not exceed tipping/dumping limit
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

4. How often do you use the dump near your home?

READ LIST – CODE ONE ONLY

01 – Once a week or more
02 – Every two or three weeks
03 – Once a month or less
VOLUNTEERED
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

5. How many minutes does it take you to drive to this dump?

01 – _____ minutes
99 – DK/NA

6. Is there a recycling depot at the dump where you take your home garbage?

01 – Yes
02 – No
99 – DK/NA

B. Cottage/camp garbage disposal**ASK ALL**

7. Do you have regular use of a cottage or camp, such as a hunting or fishing camp, that is located in Ontario?

01 – Yes
 02 – No SKIP TO SECTION C
 99 – DK/NA SKIP TO SECTION C

IF YES IN Q7 (OPTION 01) ASK Q8-Q14 AS APPROPRIATE – OTHERS TO SECTION C

8. Which of these best describes how often you use the cottage or camp?
READ – CODE ONE ONLY

01 – Once a week or more throughout the entire year
 02 – Once a month or less throughout the entire year
 03 – Just during the summer months
 04 – Just during the winter months
 VOLUNTEERED
 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
 99 – DK/NA

9. What are all the ways in which you dispose of garbage at the cottage or camp?
READ – CODE ALL THAT APPLY PROBE: Any other ways?

01 – It is picked up by a garbage collection service
 02 – It is brought to the dump/landfill
 03 – It is burned on your own property, either in the house or in the yard
 04 – Recycling
 05 – Composting
 VOLUNTEERED
 06 – It is buried on your property
 07 – Bring it home/take it into town
 08 – Buried on cottage property
 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
 99 – DK/NA

IF GARBAGE COLLECTED IN Q9 (OPTION 1) ASK Q10

10. How do you pay for your garbage collection at the cottage or camp?
READ LIST – CODE ONE ONLY

01 – through municipal taxes, OR
 02 – through direct payment to collector
 VOLUNTEERED
 03 – Bag-tag system/pay per use
 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
 99 – DK/NA

IF INDICATED DUMP/LANDFILL IN Q9 (OPTION 2) ASK Q11-Q14

11. Do you pay a fee when you use a dump or landfill to dump the garbage from your cottage or camp?

ASK FOR APPROXIMATE AMOUNT PER YEAR – IF CANNOT GIVE AMOUNT, ASK IF MORE OR LESS THAN \$100 PER YEAR

01 – _____ DOLLARS/YEAR
 02 – No fee
 VOLUNTEERED
 03 – Less than \$100 per year
 04 – \$100 or more per year
 05 – Pay fee per item
 06 – Pay fee by weight
 07 – Pay fee by load/visit
 08 – No, do not exceed tipping/dumping limit
 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
 99 – DK/NA

12. How often do you use the dump near the cottage or camp?
READ – CODE ONE ONLY

01 – Once a week or more
 02 – Every two or three weeks
 03 – Once a month or less
 VOLUNTEERED
 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
 99 – DK/NA

13. How many minutes does it take you to drive to this dump?

01 – _____ minutes
 99 – DK/NA

14. Is there a recycling depot at the dump where you take the garbage from your cottage or camp?

01 – Yes
 02 – No
 99 – DK/NA

C. Garbage burning activities

IF BURN GARBAGE IN Q1 OR Q9 (OPTION 3 IN EITHER QUESTION) ASK Q15-Q21 AS APPLICABLE - OTHERS TO SECTION D

15. What type of garbage do you burn? (AFTER LIST PROMPT: Do you burn anything else?)
READ – CODE ALL THAT APPLY

01 – Cardboard
02 – Construction debris
03 – Food scraps
04 – Glass bottles
05 – Metal cans
06 – Paper
07 – Plastic containers, wrapping or foam
08 – Wood scraps
09 – Yard waste (for example, leaves, branches and grass clippings)
VOLUNTEERED
10 – Crop stubble
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

16. Do you separate recyclable materials before burning your garbage?

01 – Yes
02 – No, do not separate before burning
99 – DK/NA

17. What do you burn your garbage in?
READ ENTIRE LIST THEN CODE ALL THAT APPLY

01 – Open pit
02 – Burn barrel
03 – Wood stove
04 – Fireplace
05 – Outdoor wood furnace or boiler
VOLUNTEERED
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

IF BURN GARBAGE AT HOME (Q1 - OPTION 3) ASK Q18; OTHERS TO Q19

18. How often do you burn garbage from your home?
IF RESPONDENT SAYS ONCE A MONTH, CODE AS 02

SPECIFY _____ times per week
02 – Less than once a week
99 – DK/NA

IF BURN GARBAGE AT CAMP (Q9 - OPTION 3) ASK Q19; OTHERS TO Q20

19. How often do you burn garbage from the cottage or camp you use?

SPECIFY _____ times per week
VOLUNTEERED
02 – Less than once a week
99 – DK/NA

20. About how much trash do you burn at one time, that is, about how many "standard-size garbage bags" would it take to hold the trash you burn each time?
DO NOT READ – CODE ONE ONLY

01 – Less than one bag
02 – About one bag
03 – Two bags
04 – Three or more bags
VOLUNTEERED
05 – Varies, no usual/typical amount
99 – DK/NA

21. What are the main reasons that you burn your garbage? PROBE: Any other reasons?
DO NOT READ – CODE ALL APPLY

01 – To reduce waste, save landfill space
02 – Convenience
03 – For heat/heating
04 – Use in fire-making/kindling
05 – Garbage collection is too expensive
06 – Garbage collection is not available
07 – Recycling is not available
08 – Dump site is too far away to drop garbage off regularly
09 – Local landfill restricts types of garbage
98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

D. Attitudes about garbage burning**IF BURN GARBAGE AT CAMP (Q9 OPTION 3) ASK Q22**

22. Is burning garbage a common practice where your cottage or camp is located?

- 01 – Yes, common practice
- 02 – No, not a common practice
- 99 – DK/NA

ASK ALL

23. Is burning garbage a common practice in the area where your home is located?

- 01 – Yes, common practice
- 02 – No, not a common practice
- 99 – DK/NA

IF BURN GARBAGE (OPTION 3 AT Q1 OR Q9) ASK Q24 – OTHERS TO Q25

24. Some people think that household garbage should not be burned. Is there anything that would make you stop burning garbage altogether?

DO NOT READ – CODE ALL APPLY

- 01 – If affordable/efficient collection/recycling service was available
- 02 – If it was illegal
- 03 – If I owned an oil furnace
- 04 – If proven harmful to the environment
- 05 – If it became a fire hazard
- 06 – Nothing/no reason why I would stop burning garbage
- 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
- 99 – DK/NA

DO NOT ASK Q25 IF CODE 06 AT Q24

25. What do you think are the main reasons why people should stop burning their garbage?

DO NOT READ – CODE ALL APPLY

- 01 – Pollution/environmental hazard/affects air quality/health
- 02 – Fire hazard/unsafe/could cause forest fire
- 03 – Better alternatives now/recycling/collection
- 04 – Against the law/illegal
- 09 – Nothing/no reason why someone should stop burning garbage
- 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
- 99 – DK/NA

ASK ALL

26. Have you ever seen or heard any advertising messages indicating that burning garbage is an unsafe practice?

- 01 – Yes
- 02 – No
- 99 – DK/NA

IF YES AT Q26, ASK Q27

27. Do you recall where you have seen or heard this message?

DO NOT READ – CODE ALL APPLY

- 01 – Television
- 02 – Radio
- 03 – Municipal tax bill insert
- 04 – Highway billboard
- 05 – Newspaper
- 06 – Web site
- 98 – OTHER SPECIFY _____
- 99 – DK/NA

ASK ALL

28. I would like to read you some statements that might – or might not – convince individuals to stop burning household garbage. Please rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means the argument is not at all convincing, 5 means it is moderately convincing, and 10 means it is extremely convincing.

IF NECESSARY STATE: Regardless of your personal feelings, we would like to know if you think this argument might convince *others* to stop burning household garbage.

IF ASKED WHAT IS MEANT BY HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE: Things like cardboard, construction debris, food scraps, plastic containers, that many people would put in a garbage can or take to the dump.

READ – RANDOMIZE STATEMENTS

REPEAT SCALE IF NECESSARY

- a) Burning garbage releases air pollution that can harm wildlife and the environment
- b) Burning garbage releases air pollution that can cause serious health problems
- c) Burning garbage releases air pollution that can harm our water and food supply
- d) Burning garbage is an issue of fire safety
- e) Burning garbage could make one liable for fire damages.

- 01 – Not at all convincing
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05 – Moderately convincing
- 06
- 07
- 08
- 09
- 10 – Extremely convincing
- 99 – DK/NA

29. Whether or not you would personally agree with such a law, do you think that passing a law against burning garbage would be *very effective*, *somewhat effective*, *not very effective*, or *not at all effective* in convincing people to stop burning garbage?

(NOTE: IF RESPONDENT SAYS THAT LAW IS ALREADY IN PLACE, ASK THEM TO RATE HOW EFFECTIVE THEY THINK IT IS)

- 01 – Very effective
02 – Somewhat effective
03 – Not very effective
04 – Not at all effective
99 – DK/NA

E. Respondent Profile

To finish up, a few final questions about yourself and your household for statistical purposes. Please be assured that your answers will remain completely confidential.

30. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?

SPECIFY _____ Individuals
99 – DK/REFUSED

31. In what year were you born?

01 – SPECIFY _____
99 – NA/REFUSED

32. What is your postal code? (ACCEPT FIRST 3 DIGITS IF THAT'S ALL THAT'S OFFERED BUT PROBE FOR OTHERS)

01 – SPECIFY _____
99 – DK/NA

33. GENDER: RECORD (DO NOT ASK)

01 – MALE
02 – FEMALE

This completes the survey. In case my supervisor would like to verify that I conducted this interview, may I please have your first name?

First Name: _____

IF RESPONDENT ASKS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY, SAY:

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact:

Ellen Morfield, EcoSuperior Environmental Programs 807-624-2145 or visit www.ecosuperior.org

