



**PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES**

Turning Questions Into Answers.

COLORADO: ENERGY RESOURCES AND PUBLIC OPINION

Public Opinion Strategies conducted this survey of 600 registered voters throughout Colorado on May 23-24, 2007. The margin of error associated with such a sample is $\pm 4.0\%$.

KEY FINDINGS ON ENERGY

Colorado voters overwhelmingly prefer that the state address its energy needs with clean energy rather than relying on conventional coal-fired power plants.

- By a stunning 11-to-1 margin, voters in Colorado prefer addressing the state's energy situation by "increasing energy efficiency and using more clean energy sources like wind and solar power" over using more coal; 88% favor clean energy over "importing more electricity from coal power in other states," and 85% prefer clean energy over "building new coal-fired power plants in Colorado."
- The overwhelming support for a clean-energy approach crosses geographic and partisan lines, including 76% of Republicans, 95% of Independents and 94% of Democrats.
- In fact, 71% of voters go so far as to say that "building new coal-fired power plants ought to be a last resort because of the pollution and health impacts associated with burning coal." Again, agreement with this view crosses demographic (urban voters 78%, suburban voters 70%, small town voters 67%, rural voters 70%) and party lines (Republicans 58%, Independents 74%, Democrats 85%).
- This consensus among Colorado voters is not surprising given some of the core beliefs they hold regarding clean energy. For example, nearly three-quarters (73%) agree that "renewable energy like wind and solar power is one of the fastest, cheapest, most reliable ways to increase energy supplies and hold down energy prices."

There also is strong support for several proposals to increase the use of clean energy in Colorado.

- 83% would consider "purchasing or leasing a new automobile which meets stronger pollution standards and has improved gas mileage." More compellingly, 68% said they still would consider buying or leasing a more fuel-efficient car even if the vehicle had a higher price tag.
- 58% of Colorado voters favor "phasing out the use of traditional light bulbs and allowing only newer CFL light bulbs to be sold in Colorado starting in 2015."
- 77% favor Colorado setting a clean-fuels standard for vehicles that would "reduce global warming pollution and encourage the use of ethanol, biodiesel and other renewable fuels."

A huge majority of Colorado voters, regardless of income, say they would be willing to pay higher monthly energy prices “to increase the amount of our energy needs which are met by renewable energy sources.”

- Nine out of every 10 voters in Colorado say they would be willing to pay higher monthly energy prices in order to increase the amount of the state’s energy needs met by renewable energy.
- Even more importantly, voters say they would be willing to shell out more than just the minimum; 70% said they would increase their monthly bills by at least \$5; and 30% would be willing to pay \$15 or more every month to support clean energy.
- Willingness to pay higher energy bills is ubiquitous across the state, as fully 90% of the lowest income households (making under \$40,000 annually) and 86% of typically cost-sensitive seniors (65 and older) say they would be willing to pay more in order to increase the amount of Colorado’s energy needs met by renewable energy sources. In fact, 62% of the lower income households and 59% of seniors would be willing to pay \$5 or more a month to boost clean-energy use.
- Similarly, Colorado voters also would be willing to pay more “to increase the amount of electricity that comes from cleaner power plants.” Almost two-thirds (62%) said they would be willing to pay at least \$5 a month.

In summary, there is broad support for increasing the use of clean energy and investing in energy efficiency in Colorado. By a stunningly lopsided margin, Coloradans reject an approach to meeting the state’s energy needs that relies on more coal-fired power plants, clearly suggesting this should be a last resort in the state’s strategy. The support proposals to boost clean-energy use in homes and businesses, and on the highways. Moreover, voters are willing to “put their money where their mouth is” by paying higher energy prices for clean energy sources.

The survey was conducted by Lori Weigel, a partner with Public Opinion Strategies, the largest Republican polling firm in the nation with offices in Washington, Denver and Los Angeles. Public Opinion Strategies' clients include 55 Republican Members of Congress, 8 Governors, 18 U.S. Senators and numerous Fortune 500 companies. Weigel serves as the political pollster for *Rocky Mountain News* and News4 in Denver. The firm is the GOP partner on both the *NBC/Wall Street Journal* and National Public Radio media polls.