

# **Wastewater Recycling Survey**

*Results: Frequency Distributions*



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The purpose of the Wastewater Recycling survey was to assess the attitudes and opinions of the community of Corvallis toward recycled water. Recycled water is water that has been recycled from appropriately treated wastewater or sewage. This water can be treated to very high standards and can be used for purposes that do not require drinking quality water such as landscape irrigation and industrial processes.

Funding for this research was provided by the OSU Institute for Water and Watersheds and the Master of Public Policy Program.

The following are preliminary results for the 2008 Wastewater Recycling Survey. This survey was sent to a random sample of 1116 homes in Corvallis during November and December of 2008.

Sample Size: 1116

Surveys Returned: 500

Response Rate: 45%

Note: Not all percentages add to 100% due to rounding.

### Section 1

In this first section, we would like to ask you some general questions about your interests, activities and knowledge about wastewater and recycled water.

**Q-1** In general, how informed would you consider yourself to be concerning wastewater treatment in Corvallis?

- |                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 1. Not informed       | 33% |
| 2. Somewhat informed  | 49% |
| 3. Informed           | 14% |
| 4. Very well informed | 4%  |

**Q-2** How often do you talk about city issues with your family, friends, or other acquaintances?

- |                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| 1. Never       | 7%  |
| 2. Hardly ever | 29% |
| 3. Sometimes   | 52% |
| 4. Often       | 12% |

**Q-3** Overall, how much impact do you think *people like you* can have in making policy decisions in Corvallis?

- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| 1. No impact at all  | 9%  |
| 2. A small impact    | 44% |
| 3. A moderate impact | 37% |
| 4. A big impact      | 11% |

**Q-4** For the following terms, please indicate if you know what the term means, have heard of the term but don't know its meaning, or have not heard of the term at all.

	Have not heard of the term at all	Have heard of the term but don't know its meaning	Know what the term means
<b>a.</b> Potable water	7%	10%	84%
<b>b.</b> Wastewater	1%	9%	91%
<b>c.</b> Greywater	18%	17%	65%
<b>d.</b> Sewage	.5%	2.5%	97%
<b>e.</b> Recycled water	4%	21%	75%
<b>f.</b> Effluent	21%	29%	49%

**Q-5** Since 1954, wastewater (or sewage) from Corvallis homes and businesses has been treated and released into the Willamette River. The plant treats over 4 billion gallons of wastewater every year.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is tightening water quality regulations on the Willamette River. The new standards will impact the city’s ability to continue discharging treated wastewater into the river. These tightened regulations over time could force the city to upgrade the plant or face fines, both of which could eventually impact your sewer bill.

Were you aware of this situation?	1. Yes	29%
	2. No	66%
	3. Unsure	6%

**Q-6** How important are each of the following when choosing an approach to meeting the new water quality regulations in the Willamette River? If you have no opinion of one, please leave it blank.

	Not Important at All	Limited Importance	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
a. Prevent pollution	0%	1%	3%	29%	68%
b. Protect human health	0%	.5%	1%	14%	85%
c. Be a long-term solution	.2%	.5%	6%	27%	66%
d. Be energy efficient	.5%	2%	13%	34%	51%
e. Be financially sound	0%	1%	9%	34%	56%
f. Protect fish and wildlife	0%	1%	6%	28%	65%
g. Have low greenhouse gas emissions	4%	5%	16%	28%	47%

**Section 2**

Recycling treated wastewater is one way to help meet the new water quality regulations in the Willamette River. In this section, we are interested in what uses of recycled water you would accept in Corvallis.

**Q-7** How much do you favor the use of recycled wastewater for each of the following?  
If you don't know or have no opinion of a use, please leave it blank.

	Highly Unfavorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable	Highly Favorable
a. Irrigate golf courses	2%	2%	8%	24%	63%
b. Irrigate landscaping in business parks	1%	2%	8%	27%	62%
c. Irrigate public parks	2%	8%	13%	31%	47%
d. Irrigate school grounds	4%	14%	18%	27%	38%
e. Irrigate non-edible agricultural crops (grass)	2%	4%	9%	28%	57%
f. Irrigate agricultural crops for human consumption	15%	26%	26%	20%	13%
g. Use in industrial processes	1%	2%	16%	27%	55%
h. Use to cool buildings	2%	3%	14%	27%	55%
i. Flush toilets in public buildings	1%	3%	8%	25%	63%
j. Supply fire hydrants in the city	2%	4%	18%	27%	50%
k. Supply car wash businesses	3%	8%	21%	25%	43%

**Q-8 a.** There are many sources of information concerning the use of treated wastewater. Which of the following sources would you find credible? Circle all that apply.

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. Oregon State University scientists                                  | 93% |
| 2. Other University scientists   | 78% |
| 3. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality                          | 75% |
| 4. Oregon Department of Health   | 77% |
| 5. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency                                | 61% |
| 6. City reports of regular testing on recycled water to ensure quality | 78% |

**b.** Which of the above sources do you think is the *most* credible?

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. Oregon State University scientists                                  | 29% |
| 2. All University scientists   | 18% |
| 3. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality                          | 18% |
| 4. Oregon Department of Health   | 10% |
| 5. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency                                | 9%  |
| 6. City reports of regular testing on recycled water to ensure quality | 16% |
| 7. Other   | 1%  |

**Q-9** Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements. If you don't know or have no opinion, please leave it blank.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>a.</b> I would support a recycled wastewater program if it were <b>cheaper</b> than continuing to discharge treated wastewater into the Willamette River.	6%	7%	14%	26%	49%
<b>b.</b> I would support a recycled wastewater program if it were <b>more sustainable</b> than continuing to discharge treated wastewater into the Willamette River.	2%	1%	7%	39%	52%
<b>c.</b> If regulations allowed it, I would support a program that recycles wastewater by using appropriate treatment to turn it into drinking water.	15%	21%	27%	22%	16%

**Q-10** If a decision was made to recycle Corvallis' wastewater, where should it be used? Please choose only one.

- a. The water should be kept for use within city limits. 15%
- b. The water should be sent outside of city limits. 1%
- c. The water should be sent wherever it is needed, whether inside or outside city limits. 73%
- d. The water should not be recycled. 1%
- e. Don't know/no opinion 7%
- f. Other 3%

**Q-11** What are the best ways to communicate with the public concerning how Corvallis will meet the new Willamette River regulations? Circle all that apply.

- a. Articles in *The City* monthly newspaper 59%
- b. Mailed informational pamphlets 57%
- c. Focus groups/workshops 5%
- d. Presentations at clubs or other meetings 9%
- e. *The Corvallis Gazette Times* newspaper 71%
- f. Public meetings 21%
- g. Informational booths at community events 21%
- h. Television programs on public channels 22%
- i. Information on the City of Corvallis website 31%

**Q-12** How much do you trust the Corvallis Public Works Department to:

	No Trust at All	Limited Trust	Moderate Trust	Great Deal of Trust
a. Serve the public interest?	1%	13%	58%	29%
b. Protect the environment?	2%	18%	56%	24%

**Q-13** There has been considerable debate over efforts to increase *citizen participation* in government policy making. Where would you locate yourself on the following scale regarding these efforts? Please circle your response.

1. Citizen participation is of no value and adds needlessly to the cost of government	.2%
2.	1%
3.	1%
4.	4%
5. Neutral	16%
6.	20%
7.	29%
8.	12%
9. Citizen participation is of great value even if it adds to the cost of government.	16%

**Section 3**

In order to better understand the results of this survey, we would like to know a little more about you. Remember that all responses are anonymous.

<b>Q-14</b> What is your gender?	1. Female	54%
	2. Male	46%

**Q-15** What is your age in years?

Average	50
Median	52
Mode	56
Standard Deviation	18

**Q-16** What is your highest level of education completed?

1. Grade school	.5%	5. Some college	22%
2. Middle or junior high school	.5%	6. College graduate	32%
3. High school	6%	7. Graduate school	36%
4. Vocational school	1%	8. Other	2%

**Q-17** If there are children living in your household, what are their ages?  
(Circle all that apply)

1. No children	67%
2. 0-5 years	10%
3. 6-10 years	8%
4. 11-15 years	11%
5. 16+ years	12%

**Q-18** How long have you lived in Corvallis? (years)

Average	27
Median	25
Mode	25
Standard Deviation	19

**Q-19** Which best describes your occupation?

1. Business Owner/Self-employed	9%
2. Clerical/Administrative	2%
3. Entrepreneur	.2%
4. Education Professional - University	7%
5. Education Professional - School Teacher	6%
6. Engineering	6%
7. Farming/Fishing	1%
8. Healthcare	4%
9. Homemaker	6%
10. Hospitality/Food Service	1%
11. Laborer	2%
12. Legal	1%
13. Management	3%
14. Other government (federal, state, local)	5%
15. Retired	24%
16. Sales	1%
17. Student	13%
18. Other	10%