

The Star-Ledger/**Eagleton-Rutgers Poll**

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A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Sunday, April 16 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

NEW JERSEYANS ON THEIR DAILY SERVICES AND LIFE IN THE GARDEN STATE: IT'S ALL COMING UP ROSES

Life in New Jersey is good. The vast majority of New Jersey residents are extremely well satisfied with a wide array of services they use in their daily lives. And relatedly, three-quarters rate the Garden State an "excellent" or "good" place to live.

Overall, New Jerseyans give an enthusiastic two thumbs up to essential services topped by the post office, drug store, bank, and supermarket they "go to most often." They are almost as positive about local shopping centers and their neighborhood merchants. New Jerseyans give slightly lower, but still highly positive ratings to companies that provide their phone, Internet, insurance and utility coverage. The only service New Jerseyans are somewhat less contented with is their cable company, and even here, a majority of subscribers report being satisfied.

The latest Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll, conducted by telephone between February 29 and March 9, asked a random sample of 800 New Jersey adults to rate 14 daily services. Those interviewed in the statewide poll, which has a sampling error of ± 3.5 percent, were asked if they were "very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied" with each.

New Jerseyans are most content with their neighborhood post offices, drug stores, and supermarkets, with over 90 percent saying they are at least "somewhat satisfied" and at least 6-

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in-10 saying they are “very satisfied” with these services.

More than 80 percent of New Jerseyans favorably rate their neighborhood merchants along with the bank, gas station and shopping center they go to most often, with more than half saying they are “very satisfied” with each of these.

People’s satisfaction with the companies that they rarely deal with in person but that provide them with services they use daily is also very high. More than 80% of New Jersey residents are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with their insurance agent or company, their utility company, the Internet provider they use at home, and the companies that provide them with local, long distance and cellular phone coverage. More than 4-in-10 New Jersey residents report being “very satisfied” with these companies.

The only service that New Jerseyans give less than stellar marks to is their cable company. Three-in-ten report being “somewhat” or “very dissatisfied” with this service. Even still, 7-in-10 New Jersey residents say they are at least somewhat satisfied with their cable provider—a more than passing grade.




The poll found that there was a fairly strong connection between how satisfied people are with their daily life services and their rating of the state as a place to live. Of those New Jerseyans who are very satisfied with less than 1/3 of the twelve services common to all New Jerseyans (between zero and four services), only 17% give New Jersey an excellent rating as a place to live. Of those who are very satisfied with between five and eight daily services, 26% give New Jersey an excellent rating. Of those who are very satisfied with more than two-thirds of their daily services (more than 9), 35% give New Jersey an excellent rating—twice as many as those who are very satisfied with less than 1/3 of their daily services.












Cliff Zukin, director of the Poll, commented: “Those people who are consistently satisfied with their daily services tend to be more satisfied with life in general. What goes on in our everyday lives affects how we view the bigger picture of life in New Jersey.”

While a large majority of New Jerseyans are satisfied with their daily services, women consistently say they are “very satisfied” more than do men. Women are especially more satisfied than men are with the services that involve weekly interactions, such as the gas station (55% to 45%), the bank (65% to 54%), the supermarket (66% to 54%) and the shopping center (61% to 47%) they go to most often. Women are also more likely to say they are very satisfied with their local phone company (52% to 40%).

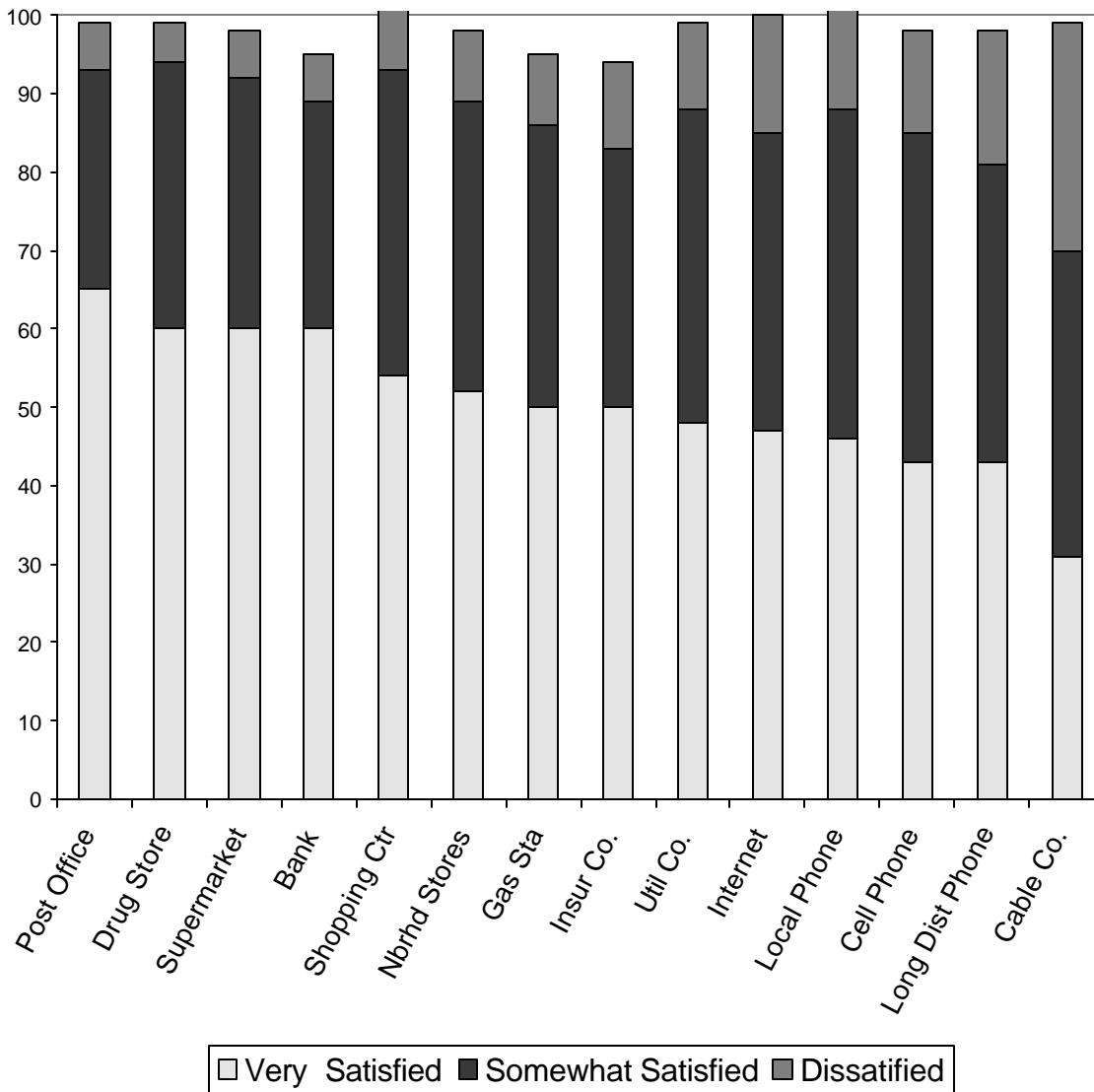
Satisfaction with neighborhood merchants varies by age, race, and region of the state. Younger people aged 18 to 29 are the least likely (43%) to say they are very satisfied with their neighborhood merchants, while those aged 65 and over are the most likely (61%). Fifty-three percent of those aged 30-49 and 49% of those aged 50-64 are very satisfied with their local merchants. Whites are more likely to say they are very satisfied with their neighborhood merchants (57%) than are Blacks and Hispanics (33%). Those living in South Jersey are more likely to report being somewhat or very satisfied with their neighborhood merchants (94%) than are those living in Central Jersey (90%) or Northern Jersey (84%).

Subtracting the percentage saying “very” or “somewhat dissatisfied” from the percentage saying “very” or “somewhat satisfied” leads to an overall score for each service asked about.

HOW WE RATE	DAILY SERVICES
	The Drug Store you go to most often
	The Post Office you go to most often
	The Supermarket you go to most often

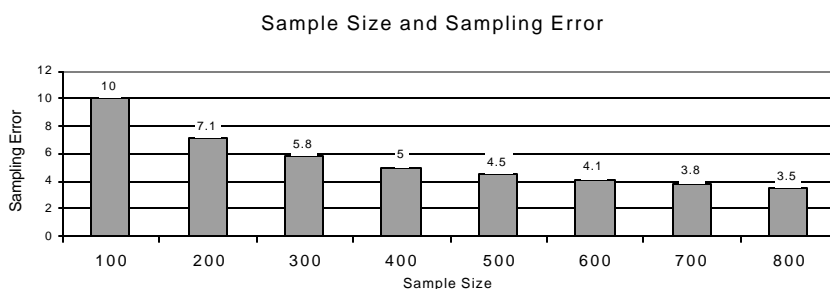
	The Bank you use most often
	The Shopping Center you go to most often
	Your Neighborhood Merchants
	The Gas Station you go to most often
	Your Utility Company
	Your Local Phone Company
	Your Cellular Phone Company
	Your Insurance Agent or Company
	The Internet Provider you use at home
	Your Long Distance Phone Company
	Your Cable Company

Satisfaction with Daily Life Services



BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP125-6), SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2000

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted between February 28 and March 9 with a scientifically selected random sample of 800 New Jersey adult residents interviewed by telephone. All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The sampling error for this survey is ± 3.5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jerseyans are very satisfied with the quality of service from their phone company, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.5 and 53.5 percent (50 ± 3.5) had all New Jerseyans been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported for Republicans, Independents or Democrats, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. The following chart shows the relationship between sample size and sampling error.



Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects. The verbatim wording of all questions asked is reproduced in this background memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age, gender and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

Overall, how would you rate New Jersey as a place to live—excellent, good, only fair, or poor? (Q2)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair/Poor</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
March 2000	25%	51%	24%	100%	(800)
<u>Previous Surveys</u>					
-- May 1999	22	54	24	100	(800)
-- February 1994	18	53	29	100	(801)
-- July 1990	16	43	40	99	(800)
-- February 1988	27	51	21	99	(800)
<u>Number of Daily Services People Report Being "Very Satisfied" with *</u>					
-- 0 – 4 Daily Services	17	55	28	100	(280)
-- 5 – 8 Daily Services	26	51	22	99	(335)
-- 9 – 12 Daily Services	35	47	18	100	(182)

* The daily services are: Drug store, post office, supermarket, bank, shopping center, neighborhood merchant, gas station, utility company, local phone company, long distance phone company, insurance agent, and cable company. Not included among the daily services are cellular phone company and Internet provider, because only half of the respondents use these services.

Now on another subject, I'm going to read you a short list of some business services you probably use and would like you to tell me how satisfied you are with their overall level of performance. For each just tell me if you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat DISsatisfied, or very dissatisfied. If you don't use some, just say so. FIRST...very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied. RANDOMIZE LIST (QDL1 & QDL2)

	<u>Very satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Your utility company	48%	40%	5%	4%	2%	99%	(781)
Your cable company	31	39	14	15	1	100	(692)
Your long distance phone company	43	38	8	9	2	100	(741)
Your cellular phone company	43	42	6	7	3	101	(425)
The bank you use most often	60	29	5	6	1	101	(773)
Your neighborhood merchants	52	37	6	3	3	101	(745)
The supermarket you go to most often	60	32	4	2	1	99	(778)
Your insurance agent or company	50	33	5	9	2	99	(751)
Your local phone company	46	42	5	6	1	100	(773)
The post office you go to most often	65	28	3	3	1	100	(754)
The shopping center you go to most often	54	39	4	2	1	100	(760)
The gas station you go to most often	50	36	5	6	2	99	(746)
The Internet provider you use at home	47	38	9	6	1	101	(427)
The drug store you go to most often	60	34	3	2	1	100	(755)

A Statistical Portrait of Daily Services*

Number of Daily Services People Reported Being “Very Satisfied” with:

	<u>0-4</u>	<u>5-8</u>	<u>9-12</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Statewide, March 2000	34%	42%	24%	100%	(800)
<u>By Sex</u>					
--Male	44	37	19	100	(368)
--Female	26	46	28	100	(432)
<u>By Age</u>					
--18-29	42	43	14	99	(135)
--30-49	36	41	24	101	(347)
--50-64	29	51	20	100	(164)
--65+	27	35	39	101	(124)
<u>By Region</u>					
--North	33	43	25	101	(336)
--Central	33	48	19	100	(206)
--South	35	38	27	100	(226)
<u>By Race</u>					
--White	31	44	25	100	(591)
--Black and Hispanic	45	36	19	100	(146)
<u>By Area</u>					
--Large City	39	44	17	100	(66)
--Suburb	34	47	20	101	(224)
--Small City/Town	34	41	25	100	(372)
--Rural	35	36	29	100	(136)

* The twelve daily services are: Drug store, post office, supermarket, bank, shopping center, neighborhood merchant, gas station, utility company, local phone company, long distance phone company, insurance agent, and cable company. Not included among the daily services are cellular phone company and Internet provider, because only half of the respondents use these services.