

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

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Release 136-1

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A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Wednesday, March 6th *Star-Ledger*. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to “**The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.**”

DROUGHT EMERGENCY:

NEW JERSEYANS READY TO DO THEIR PART

New Jerseyans are prepared to fight the state’s drought by voluntarily conserving water in their homes, according to a new *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*. As of Monday, when Governor James McGreevey declared a drought emergency in the state, most New Jerseyans were already well aware of the state’s water shortage problems – 51 percent say they had heard “a lot” about the drought and another 32 percent had heard “some.” Only eight percent of New Jerseyans say they had heard or read “nothing at all” about the drought, and another eight percent had heard “not much.”

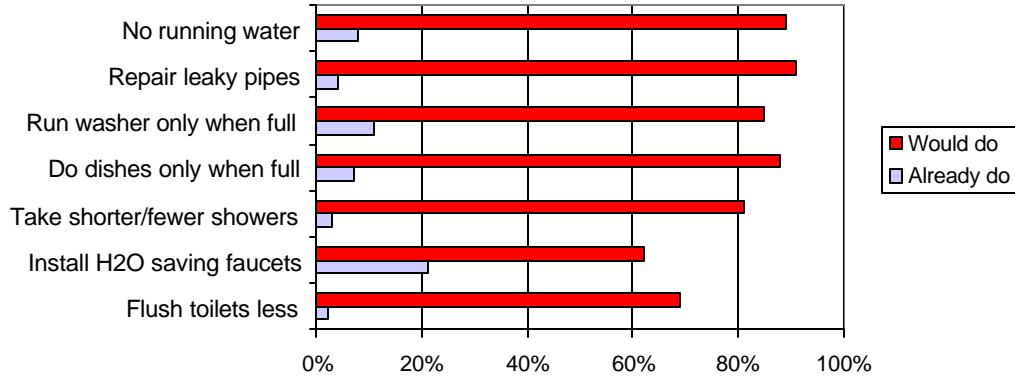
Among those who had heard or read at least some news about the problem, nearly three-quarters – 73 percent – report that they had already been taking steps to conserve water in their homes. And while these conservation efforts were not enough to avoid the drought emergency, Garden State residents are prepared to do more. When asked about a host of water conservation measures recommended by the state’s Department of Environmental Protection, overwhelming majorities of New Jerseyans say they are willing to do their part in a drought emergency.

The *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* was conducted by telephone with a scientifically-selected random sample of 616 New Jersey residents between February 28 and March 4. The sampling error for this survey is ± 4 percentage points.

Nearly nine in ten residents – 89 percent – say that in a drought emergency they would be willing to turn off the water while brushing their teeth or shaving, and eight percent say they already do so. Just over nine in ten adults in the state say they would be willing to repair leaky pipes, faucets or toilets around their homes, and another four percent report already having done so.

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll • Eagleton Institute of Politics
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New Jerseyans and Water Conservation Measures



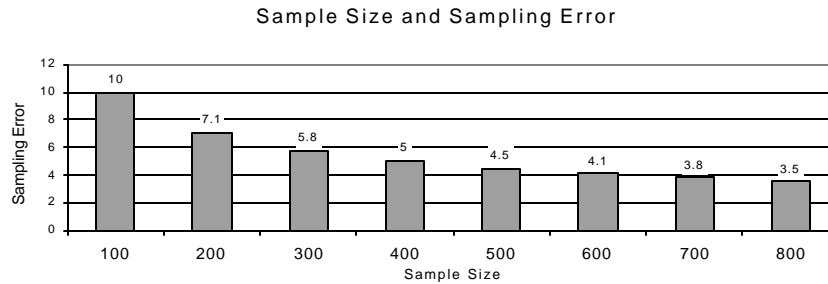
Among those who have dishwashers and washing machines, well over eight out of every ten say they would be willing to run these appliances only when they are full. And 81 percent of New Jerseyans are even willing to sacrifice some personal hygiene for the water saving effort by taking fewer or shorter showers.

New Jerseyans have already made some headway on one measure: buying and installing water saving showerheads and faucets. Twenty-one percent say they have already installed such devices in their homes, and another 62 percent are willing to do so.

The least popular of the measures included in the survey was flushing the toilet less often. Just over two-thirds (69 percent) express willingness to flush less often, but over a quarter (27 percent) of Garden State residents are not willing to make this sacrifice, even in a drought emergency.

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP136-1) March 6, 2002

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted by telephone from February 28 to March 4 with a scientifically selected random sample of 616 New Jersey adults. The figures in this release are based on this sample size. 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 is ± 4 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey residents were found willing to flush their toilet less often, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46 and 54 percent (50 ± 4) had all New Jersey residents 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 North, Central or South Jerseyans, 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 and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

“On another subject, how much have you heard or read about the current water shortages, or drought, in New Jersey – a lot, some, not much, or nothing at all?” [JP1]

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Not much</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
March 2002	51%	32%	8%	8%	1%	100%	(616)
<u>By Region</u>							
--North	58	30	7	5	--	100	(236)
--Central	54	31	7	8	--	100	(176)
--South	40	38	11	10	1	100	(193)

Asked of those who answered “A lot” or “Some” in JP1:

“Has your household been doing anything in the past month or so to try to conserve water?” [JP1A]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
March 2002	73%	25%	2%	100%	(520)
<u>By Region</u>					
--North	78	21	1	100	(208)
--Central	70	29	2	101	(152)
--South	70	29	2	101	(153)

“As you may know, Governor McGreevey is considering declaring a drought emergency in New Jersey. I am going to read you a list of things the state government currently recommends for conserving water. For each one, please tell me whether you would or would NOT be willing to do that if the state enters a drought emergency. Would you be willing to ...**[FILL – RANDOMIZE]** (Half sample: A. Repair leaky pipes, faucets, and toilets; B. Run your dishwasher only when completely full; C. Take shorter or fewer showers; D. Flush the toilet less often) (Half-sample: E. Run your washing machine only when completely full; F. Turn off water faucets when shaving or brushing your teeth; G. Flush the toilet less often; H. Buy and install water-conserving showerheads and faucets) to conserve water?” [JP2A-H]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Already do / Have done that [VOL]</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<u>Repair leaky pipes, faucets, and toilets</u>						
March 2002	91%	3%	4%	2%	100%	(310)
<u>Run your dishwasher only when completely full**</u>						
March 2002	88%	4%	7%	1%	100%	(256)
<u>Take shorter or fewer showers</u>						
March 2002	81%	14%	3%	2%	100%	(310)
<u>Flush the toilet less often</u>						
March 2002	69%	27%	2%	1%	99%	(616)
<u>Run your washing machine only when completely full**</u>						
March 2002	85%	2%	11%	2%	100%	(299)
<u>Turn off water faucets when shaving or brushing your teeth</u>						
March 2002	89%	2%	8%	1%	100%	(306)
<u>Buy and install water-conserving showerheads and faucets</u>						
March 2002	62%	15%	21%	1%	99%	(306)

**Percentages include only respondents who own respective appliance