



PORTLAND WATER USERS COALITION

***LIKELY PORTLAND
VOTER SURVEY***

MEDIA REPORT

APRIL 12, 2011

Riley Research Associates



RESEARCH | INSIGHT | KNOWLEDGE



INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

Riley Research Associates surveyed 300 likely City of Portland voters, regarding their opinions on topics of current interest. The scientific telephone poll is representative of Portland’s voting public, including a random sample of those who have voted in at least two of the past four major elections. A majority of respondents (51 percent) had voted in all four of the past four elections.

A sample of 300 is accurate to within +/-5.6 percent at a 95 percent level of confidence. Interviews took place from March 9th through 13th, 2011. The sample demographics are comparable to Portland, Oregon’s voting population, including relative proportions for political party, gender and age.



EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

A majority of likely voters believe Portland’s water rates are “too high” (65 percent), while 22 percent feel they are “just right” and just 2 percent feel they are “too low.” Some voters (12 percent) are unsure, but those unsure are most likely to be renters rather than home owners.

Portland Water Rates	Response*
Extremely high	33%
Somewhat high	32
About right	22
Somewhat low	1
Extremely low	1
Not sure / Don't know	12

* May not add to 100% due to rounding.

Voters were also asked to indicate their level of support or opposition to the following:

Issue	Support	Oppose	Unsure
Raising water rates 85% over next five years	11%	77%	12%
Postponement of proposed new construction	63	29	8

- Voters were asked if they would support or oppose a proposed rate increase of 85 percent over the next five years. About three-quarters of Portland voters oppose this idea, either “strongly” (59 percent) or “somewhat” (18 percent).
- Voters were asked their level of support or opposition to a postponement of current plans to spend \$400 million dollars for new water storage tanks. A majority of likely voters support postponement (63 percent), either “strongly” (49 percent) or “somewhat” (14 percent).

Over half of voters would support removing the Portland Water Bureau from City Council control and establishing a Public Utility District (57%), either “strongly” (27%) or “Somewhat” (30%).



RESULTS

As you may know, the Portland Water Bureau provides water for the people in the region, and bills residents for water, as well as for sewer and storm water services. Which of the following best represents your feelings about the Portland water rates? (Read Options)*

*Actual question language ("Don't know" was not asked).

	GENDER		AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	300	162 138	43 60	57 69	71	199	51 48	54 93	153	256	34				
		54% 46%	14% 20%	19% 23%	24%	66%	17% 16%	18% 31%	51%	85%	11%				
High															
Rates are extremely high	33	36 30	28 20	32 39	44	31 47	29 33	29 36	21						
Rates are somewhat high	32	30 34	28 33	35 35	27	33 25	33 35	38 27	24						
About right															
Rates are about right	22	20 24	23 22	23 23	18	23 16	25 11	22 25	18						
Low															
Rates are somewhat low	1	1 1	- 2	- 2	- 1	1 -	- 1	1 1	-						
Rates are extremely low	1	1 1	- 2	2 -	1 2	- -	- 2	1 1	-						
Unsure															
Don't know / not sure	12	14 9	21 22	9 3	8	12 12	13 20	9 10	7						
Chi Square		3.33		26.67		7.97		14.04					29.59		
		.649		.145		.632		.171					.001		

As you may know, the Portland Water Bureau has more than doubled its rates in the last ten years, and is proposing to raise water rates another 85 percent over the next five years. Do you support or oppose this proposed additional rate increase? Is that "strongly" or "somewhat"?

	GENDER		AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	300	162 138	43 60	57 69	71	199	51 48	54 93	153	256	34				
		54% 46%	14% 20%	19% 23%	24%	66%	17% 16%	18% 31%	51%	85%	11%				
Support															
Support strongly	4	2 6	5 3	2 4	6 4	4 4	6 2	6 3	3						
Support somewhat	7	4 10	5 15	7 4	4 4	11 -	- 2	6 9	15						
Oppose															
Oppose somewhat	18	15 22	26 22	19 14	14 14	15 20	31 19	18 18	29						
Oppose strongly	59	65 52	56 38	53 70	73 57	73 52	67 61	55 61	38						
Unsure															
Don't know / not sure	12	13 10	9 22	19 7	3 3	14 4	10 11	8 14	12						
Chi Square		9.82		34.17		22.49		8.72					8.35		
		.044		.005		.004		.366					.079		

Portland is currently planning to spend an additional \$400 million dollars to build new water storage tanks, to comply with a federal plan regulating the harmful protozoa *Cryptosporidium*. However, as the Oregonian newspaper reported this week, recent water quality testing at Portland's existing reservoirs indicates the water is already pure and completely free of *Cryptosporidium*.

In light of this new evidence, would you support or oppose a postponement of this new construction, which would save hundreds of millions of dollars and stop the 85 percent rate increase? (Strongly or somewhat?)

	GENDER		AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME		
	FE	MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT	
Total Participants	300	162	138	43	60	57	69	71	199	51	48	54	93	153	256	34
		54%	46%	14%	20%	19%	23%	24%	66%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%
Support	63%	57%	70%	77%	63%	63%	72%	45%	63%	63%	63%	67%	61%	63%	65%	53%
Support strongly	49	47	52	65	42	44	65	35	48	55	46	52	46	50	51	44
Support somewhat	14	10	17	12	22	19	7	10	15	8	17	15	15	12	14	9
Oppose	29%	32%	25%	21%	22%	28%	25%	45%	28%	31%	31%	30%	33%	26%	27%	38%
Oppose somewhat	7	9	4	7	10	9	-	8	8	4	4	6	4	8	5	15
Oppose strongly	22	23	21	14	12	19	25	37	20	27	27	24	29	18	22	24
Unsure	8%	10%	5%	2%	15%	9%	3%	10%	9%	6%	6%	4%	5%	11%	8%	9%
Don't know / not sure	8	10	5	2	15	9	3	10	9	6	6	4	5	11	8	9
Chi Square		8.01			42.35				6.00			9.63		5.42		
		.091			.001				.647			.292		.247		

One other option under consideration is to remove the Portland Water Bureau from City Council control and establish an independent Public Utility District, with a citizen-elected board, to manage the Water Bureau. Would you tend to support or oppose this idea? (Strongly or somewhat?)

	GENDER		AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME		
	FE	MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT	
Total Participants	300	162	138	43	60	57	69	71	199	51	48	54	93	153	256	34
		54%	46%	14%	20%	19%	23%	24%	66%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%
Support	57%	56%	58%	53%	48%	67%	65%	49%	55%	59%	60%	57%	53%	59%	57%	59%
Support strongly	27	27	26	23	18	28	35	27	28	25	23	30	32	22	28	21
Support somewhat	30	28	32	30	30	39	30	23	27	33	38	28	20	37	29	38
Oppose	16%	12%	20%	16%	17%	19%	14%	14%	19%	10%	13%	13%	20%	14%	16%	12%
Oppose somewhat	8	6	10	7	7	12	7	7	9	6	8	6	10	8	9	6
Oppose strongly	8	6	10	9	10	7	7	7	10	4	4	7	11	7	8	6
Unsure	27%	32%	22%	30%	35%	14%	20%	37%	27%	31%	27%	30%	27%	27%	26%	29%
Don't know / unsure	27	32	22	30	35	14	20	37	27	31	27	30	27	27	26	29
Chi Square		6.20			17.04				5.65			9.73		1.95		
		.185			.383				.686			.285		.745		



DEMOGRAPHICS

Do you own or rent your home?

	GENDER			AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	300	162	138	43	60	57	69	71	199	51	48	54	93	153	256	34
		54%	46%	14%	20%	19%	23%	24%	66%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%
Own	85%	83%	88%	72%	73%	91%	93%	92%	84%	88%	85%	81%	77%	92%	100%	-
Rent	11	15	7	21	25	7	4	4	12	10	10	11	19	7	-	100
Refused	3	2	5	7	2	2	3	4	4	2	4	7	3	2	-	-
Chi Square		6.25		26.20					0.71			13.41			290.00	
		.044		.001					.951			.009			.001	

Gender (From voter list)

	GENDER			AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	300	162	138	43	60	57	69	71	199	51	48	54	93	153	256	34
		54%	46%	14%	20%	19%	23%	24%	66%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%
Female	54%	100%	-	51%	50%	58%	45%	65%	56%	49%	52%	50%	51%	58%	53%	71%
Male	46	-	100	49	50	42	55	35	44	51	48	50	49	42	47	29
Chi Square		300.00		6.49					0.83			1.56			3.86	
		.001		.166					.659			.459			.049	

Age (Categorized - From voter list)

	GENDER			AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	300	162	138	43	60	57	69	71	199	51	48	54	93	153	256	34
		54%	46%	14%	20%	19%	23%	24%	66%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%
18-24	2%	1%	2%	12%	-	-	-	-	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%
25-34	13	12	13	88	-	-	-	-	11	10	25	19	15	9	11	24
35-44	20	19	22	-	100	-	-	-	21	10	27	31	23	14	17	44
45-54	19	20	17	-	-	100	-	-	21	10	21	30	15	18	20	12
55-64	23	19	28	-	-	-	100	-	22	29	19	13	27	24	25	9
65+	24	28	18	-	-	-	-	100	24	39	6	6	17	34	25	9
Mean	53	55	52	30	40	49	60	76	53	60	45	44	51	58	55	43
Chi Square		6.77		1000+					26.24			35.17			23.26	
		.238		.001					.003			.001			.001	

Political affiliation (From voter list)

	GENDER			AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	298	161	137	43	59	57	68	71	199	51	48	53	93	152	254	34
		54%	46%	14%	20%	19%	23%	24%	67%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%
Democrat	67%	69%	64%	56%	69%	74%	65%	68%	100%	-	-	42%	68%	75%	66%	71%
Republican	17	16	19	14	8	9	22	28	-	100	-	13	15	20	18	15
Non-affiliated	14	14	14	23	19	16	13	4	-	-	88	40	15	5	15	12
Other party	2	1	3	7	3	2	-	-	-	-	13	6	2	1	2	3
Chi Square		1.80		29.60					596.00			47.11			0.73	
		.614		.003					.001			.001			.865	

Voting frequency (From voter list)

	GENDER		AGE					POLITICAL AFFILIATION			VOTING PROPENSITY			OWN OR RENT HOME	
	Total	FE MALE	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	DEM	REP	OTHR	2/4	3/4	4/4	OWN	RENT
Total Participants	300	162 138	43 60	57 69	71	199	51	48	54	93	153	256	34		
		54% 46%	14% 20%	19% 23%	24%	66%	17%	16%	18%	31%	51%	85%	11%		
2/4	18%	17% 20%	26% 28%	28% 10%	4%	11%	14%	50%	100%	-	-	17%	18%		
3/4	31	29 33	40 35	25 36	23	32	27	33	-	100	-	28	53		
4/4	51	54 47	35 37	47 54	73	57	59	17	-	-	100	55	29		
Chi Square		1.56		34.06		47.11		600.00		9.67					
		.459		.001		.001		.001		.008					

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