

# Public Opinions on Water Quality Issues - 2014

## Background

In 2014, the Colorado Watershed Assembly (CWA) was asked by the Colorado Water Quality Control Division to repeat a phone survey of Colorado residents first conducted in 2007 to understand opinions towards water quality and to see if opinions have changed over time. Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority funding was utilized and CWA retained Corona Insights, the same Denver-based market research and strategic consulting firm that conducted the initial survey.

In order to better target differences among state residents, this study was conducted in five distinct regions of the state as was done in 2007. Both surveys measured opinions towards general environmental issues, opinions towards water quality, personal actions taken in relation to water quality, benefits of and barriers to taking action, and avenues to education and communication. CWA engaged stakeholders from the 2007 effort along with others to inform survey design and discuss survey results in support of developing outreach strategies.

## Methodology

Corona Insights conducted the telephone survey in September and October 2014, collecting responses from a random sample of adults who live in Colorado. Because a large proportion of adults do not use a landline for personal calls, Corona derived 60 percent of responses from cellular phone numbers. The table to the right shows the subpopulations of survey respondents.

Analyses involved weighting the data, calculating descriptive statistics such as means and percentages, and in some cases, testing for statistically significant relationships or differences between segments. There was a margin of error of  $\pm 4.3\%$  within a 95% confidence interval.

Subpopulation	Survey Respondents
Eastern Mountains	396
Eastern Plains	389
Front Range	388
San Luis Valley	384
Western Slope	402
Males	1,009
Females	950
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>1,959</b>

## Summary of Findings

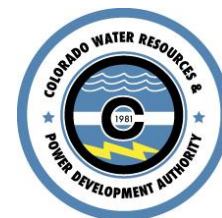
After gathering 1,959 survey responses from individuals around the state, Corona Insights reported their detailed research findings, including a comparison to the 2007 results, which can be found in the full report at [npscolorado.com](http://npscolorado.com). Below are key insights pulled from the data collected:

- Water quality has clearly become the most important environmental issue.
- There is some willingness to pay more in taxes or fees
- Many of the beliefs centered around concerns about water quality and how individuals' previous actions may have impacted it.
- Residents are most likely to say their drinking water comes from the government or an organization, such as a water district.
- Most residents believe home water is safe, but this belief decreased slightly since 2007.
- Residents do not perceive all pollution sources to have the same effect.
- Many residents take actions to preserve water quality, but only a minority typically do so with the intent of preserving water quality.
- Public health is the greatest motivator to taking action to preserve water quality; pet health is quickly increasing.
- Some actions are adopted primarily to preserve water quality, while other actions are not.
- Many residents who did not take actions, did so with good intentions.
- Water quality messages differed by regions.
- Social media could be a good way to engage with residents who have yet to take action to preserve water quality.

## Links

- [Npscolorado.com](http://Npscolorado.com)
- [Coloradowater.org](http://Coloradowater.org)

## Partners



**COLORADO**  
Water Quality Control Division  
Department of Public Health & Environment

