



George Mason University
Center for Climate Change Communication

Americans' Actions to Conserve Energy, Reduce Waste, and Limit Global Warming

June 2010

Interview dates: May 14, 2010 – June 1, 2010

Interviews: 1,024 Adults (18+)

Margin of error: +/- 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled. Totals may occasionally sum to more than 100 percent due to rounding.

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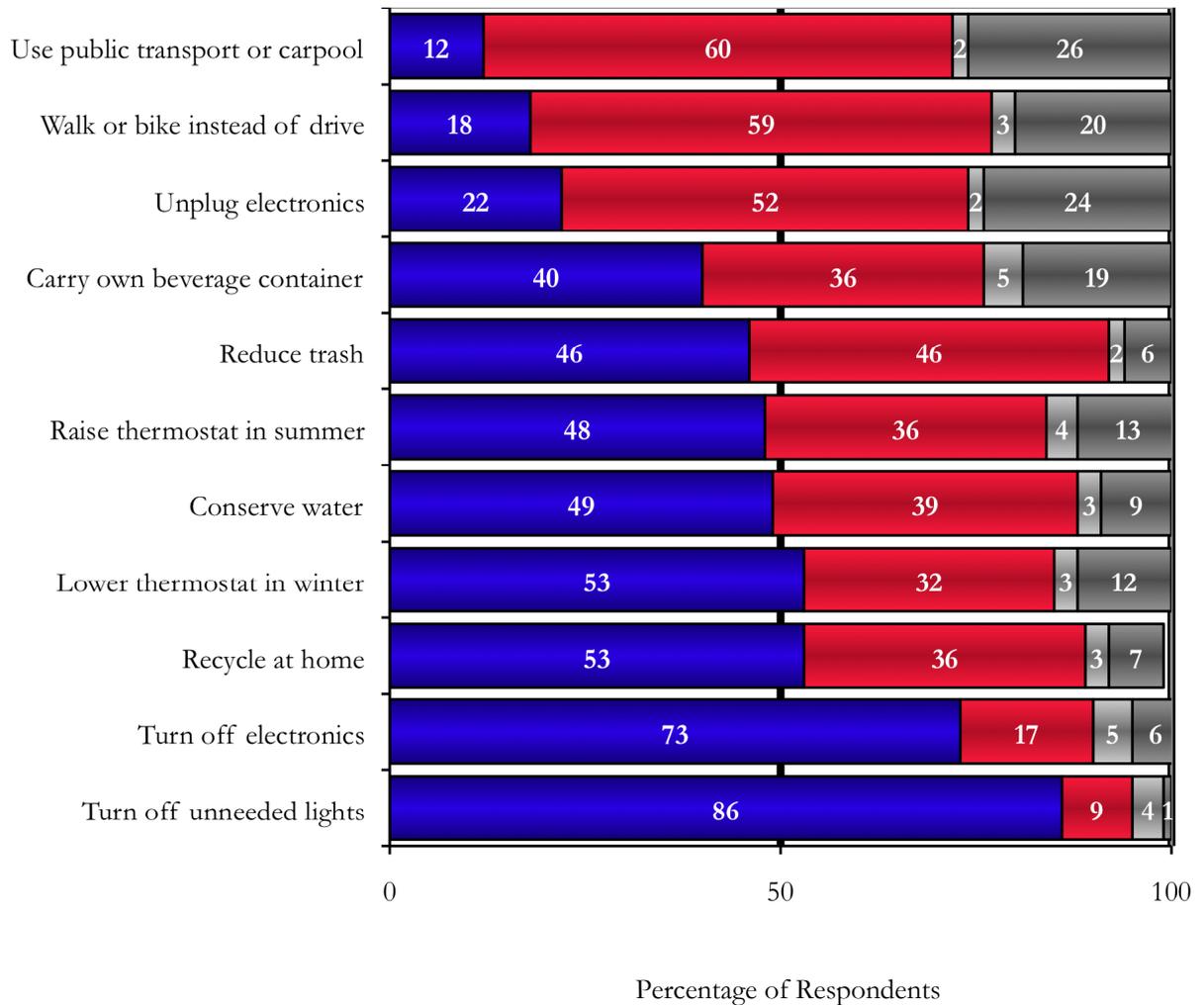
<http://environment.yale.edu/files/BehaviorJune2010.pdf>

The Conservation Attitude – Behavior Gap

Behaviors ranked from the largest to smallest gap

For specific questions and responses, see the tables below this chart.

- Believe the action is important¹ & currently engage in it².
- Believe the action is important, but do not currently engage in it.
- Believe the action is unimportant, but currently engage in it.
- Believe the action is unimportant & do not currently engage in it.



¹ “somewhat” or “very important”

² “often” or “always”

Household Behaviors

Q1.³ To start, we'd like to ask you some questions about some things you may be doing. How often do you do this now?⁴

Turn off the lights when they are not needed.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	57	51	63
Often	33	38	31
Sometimes	8	8	4
Rarely	1	1	1
Never	2	2	1
Not Applicable	1	1	1

Turn off electronics, like TVs and computers, when they're not being used.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	44	42	--
Often	34	34	--
Sometimes	16	17	--
Rarely	4	5	--
Never	2	2	--
Not Applicable	0	1	--

Unplug electronics or turn off their power strips and surge protectors when they're not being used.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	12	12	--
Often	12	10	--
Sometimes	18	22	--
Rarely	26	28	--
Never	32	26	--
Not Applicable	1	1	--

³ Items are listed in the order they were asked despite occasional non-sequential item numbers. Items not shown in this report are being released separately.

⁴ 2008 wording: How often do you do the following things?

In the winter, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or cooler.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	34	33	38
Often	22	19	24
Sometimes	16	20	16
Rarely	10	10	8
Never	10	11	5
Not Applicable	7	8	9

In the summer, set the thermostat to 76 degrees or warmer, or use less air conditioning.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	29	31	35
Often	23	22	22
Sometimes	18	19	13
Rarely	11	9	8
Never	9	8	7
Not Applicable	11	11	16

Walk or bike, instead of driving.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	7	5	8
Often	14	11	11
Sometimes	20	24	20
Rarely	30	25	20
Never	24	27	31
Not Applicable	6	9	9

Take public transportation or carpool.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	6	4	9
Often	7	8	9
Sometimes	14	14	15
Rarely	19	18	19
Never	40	41	35
Not Applicable	14	16	13

Recycle everything possible at home.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	34	29	--
Often	22	24	--
Sometimes	20	18	--
Rarely	12	14	--
Never	10	14	--
Not Applicable	2	2	--

Carry your own re-usable beverage container.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	20	13	--
Often	25	22	--
Sometimes	25	25	--
Rarely	12	13	--
Never	15	24	--
Not Applicable	3	5	--

Use as little water as possible, for example, when you shower, brush your teeth, and wash dishes.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	18	18	--
Often	34	33	--
Sometimes	32	35	--
Rarely	10	11	--
Never	6	3	--
Not Applicable	0	1	--

Reduce the amount of trash and garbage you create.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Always	19	13	--
Often	28	30	--
Sometimes	30	36	--
Rarely	14	15	--
Never	8	5	--
Not Applicable	1	1	--

Q1a. In the coming year do you intend to do this less often, the same, or more often?⁵

Turn off the lights when they are not needed.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	45	42	38
The same	54	57	61
Less often	1	1	1

Turn off electronics, like TVs and computers, when they're not being used.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	43	42	--
The same	56	57	--
Less often	1	1	--

Unplug electronics or turn off their power strips and surge protectors when they're not being used.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	32	35	--
The same	66	62	--
Less often	2	3	--

In the winter, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or cooler.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	24	20	26
The same	73	76	70
Less often	3	3	4

In the summer, set the thermostat to 76 degrees or warmer, or use less air conditioning.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	23	24	23
The same	73	74	72
Less often	4	3	5

⁵ 2008 wording: For each of the actions below, over the next 12 months, would you like to do this more frequently than you are now, less frequently than you are now, or about the same as you are now?

Walk or bike, instead of driving.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	26	20	24
The same	70	73	63
Less often	4	7	13

Take public transportation or carpool.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	14	9	17
The same	76	81	68
Less often	10	11	15

Recycle everything possible at home.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	33	28	--
The same	65	69	--
Less often	2	4	--

Carry your own re-usable beverage container.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	33	26	--
The same	64	69	--
Less often	3	5	--

Use as little water as possible, for example, when you shower, brush your teeth, and wash dishes.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	35	30	--
The same	63	68	--
Less often	1	3	--

Reduce the amount of trash and garbage you create.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	36	32	--
The same	63	66	--
Less often	2	2	--

Q39. How many of the light bulbs in your home are energy-efficiency compact fluorescent lights (CFLs)?⁶

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
All	14	14	12
Most	38	33	28
Some	19	19	22
A few	16	16	16
None	10	15	18
Don't know	4	4	5

People who said "some," "a few," or "none" on Q39 were asked the following question.

Q40A. Over the next 12 months, how likely are you to change most of the light bulbs in your house to energy-efficiency compact fluorescent lights (CFLs)?⁷

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Yes, I'd like to and probably will	36	40	44
Yes, I'd like to but probably won't	26	26	26
No, I don't want to	17	22	17
I don't know	21	12	13
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>527</i>	<i>1,190</i>

Q137 – 153A. How important do you feel it is to take the following actions?⁸

Turn off the lights when they are not needed.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	67	62	--
Somewhat important	28	30	--
Somewhat unimportant	3	5	--
Not at all important	2	3	--

Turn off electronics, like TVs and computers, when they're not being used.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	55	50	--
Somewhat important	35	37	--
Somewhat unimportant	7	10	--
Not at all important	4	4	--

⁶ 2008 wording: How many of the light bulbs in your home are high energy-efficiency compact fluorescents (CFLs)?

⁷ 2008 wording: Which of the following best describes what you are likely to do over the next 12 months? Change most of the light bulbs in your home to high energy-efficiency compact fluorescents (CFLs)

⁸ The slight differences between data shown in these tables and in the figure on page 2 derive from missing data. Respondents who did not respond to both the behavior and importance questions were excluded from the figure.

Unplug electronics or turn off their power strips and surge protectors when they're not being used.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	32	31	--
Somewhat important	43	43	--
Somewhat unimportant	17	16	--
Not at all important	8	10	--

In the winter, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or cooler.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	39	40	--
Somewhat important	46	43	--
Somewhat unimportant	10	13	--
Not at all important	5	5	--

In the summer, set the thermostat to 76 degrees or warmer, or use less air conditioning.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	39	41	--
Somewhat important	44	43	--
Somewhat unimportant	11	11	--
Not at all important	5	5	--

Walk or bike, instead of driving.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	29	26	--
Somewhat important	48	49	--
Somewhat unimportant	14	17	--
Not at all important	9	8	--

Take public transportation or carpool.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	28	26	--
Somewhat important	44	47	--
Somewhat unimportant	17	18	--
Not at all important	11	9	--

Recycle everything possible at home.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	53	44	--
Somewhat important	36	44	--
Somewhat unimportant	7	8	--
Not at all important	4	4	--

Carry your own re-usable beverage container.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	34	31	--
Somewhat important	42	44	--
Somewhat unimportant	16	16	--
Not at all important	8	9	--

Use as little water as possible, for example, when you shower, brush your teeth, and wash dishes.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	46	42	--
Somewhat important	41	41	--
Somewhat unimportant	8	12	--
Not at all important	4	5	--

Reduce the amount of trash and garbage you create.

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	52	43	--
Somewhat important	40	45	--
Somewhat unimportant	6	8	--
Not at all important	3	4	--

Change most of the light bulbs in your home to energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Very important	46	--	--
Somewhat important	36	--	--
Somewhat unimportant	12	--	--
Not at all important	7	--	--

Consumer Behavior

Q201. Over the past 12 months, how many times have you rewarded companies that are taking steps to reduce global warming by buying their products?

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Many times (6+)	5	4	5
Several times (4-5)	8	7	11
A few times (2-3)	15	17	22
Once	5	5	4
Never	67	68	58

Q202. Over the past 12 months, how many times have you punished companies that are opposing steps to reduce global warming by NOT buying their products?

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Many times (6+)	9	5	7
Several times (4-5)	6	7	8
A few times (2-3)	11	13	14
Once	4	3	3
Never	71	72	69

Q203. Over the next 12 months, would you like to punish companies that are opposing steps to reduce global warming by NOT buying their products...

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More frequently than you are now?	35	32	40
About the same as you are now?	55	58	53
Less frequently than you are now?	10	10	7

Q204. Over the next 12 months do you intend to buy the products of companies that are taking steps to reduce global warming...

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More frequently than you are now?	36	34	40
About the same as you are now?	55	58	56
Less frequently than you are now?	10	8	4

Proportion who intend to engage in consumer activism over the coming year.⁹

June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
51	51	58

⁹ Includes all those who have rewarded and/or punished companies in the past year and plan to continue to do so about the same or more frequently, and all those who have never engaged in these actions, but intend to do so more frequently in the coming year.

Citizen Behavior

Q206. Over the past 12 months, how many times have you volunteered with or donated money to an organization working to reduce global warming?

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Many times (6+)	1	1	1
Several times (4-5)	3	1	1
A few times (2-3)	5	5	4
Once	8	7	7
Never	84	87	87

Q207. Over the past 12 months, how many times have you posted a comment online in response to a news stories or blog about global warming?

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Many times (6+)	1	1	--
Several times (4-5)	2	1	--
A few times (2-3)	5	4	--
Once	4	5	--
Never	89	89	--

Q208. Over the past 12 months, how many times have you written letters, emailed, or phoned government officials about global warming?¹⁰

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Many times (6+)	1	1	1
Several times (4-5)	2	1	1
A few times (2-3)	4	5	3
Once	4	4	4
Never	89	88	92

Respondents in 2010 who had contacted government officials were asked the following question.

Q209. When you contacted a government official did you...

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Urge them to take action to reduce global warming?	71	72	--
Urge them to not take action to reduce global warming?	18	22	--
Other	11	7	--
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>--</i>

¹⁰ 2008 wording: Over the past 12 months, how many times have you written letters, emailed, or phoned government officials to urge them to take action to reduce global warming?

Q210. Over the next 12 months, would you like to volunteer with or donate money to an organization working to reduce global warming ...?

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	13	12	16
About the same	69	64	68
Less often	18	24	16

Q211. Over the next 12 months, would you like to post a comment online in response to a news stories or blog about global warming...?

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	8	10	--
About the same	72	67	--
Less often	19	24	--

Q212. Over the next 12 months, would you like to write letters, email, or phone government officials about global warming ...?¹¹

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
More often	11	13	13
About the same	71	64	71
Less often	19	23	17

Respondents who said they would like to contact their government officials the same or more often were asked the following question.

If you were to contact government officials about global warming, would you:

	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
Urge them to take action to reduce global warming?	71	69	--
Urge them to not take action to reduce global warming?	14	19	--
Other	15	12	--
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>783</i>	<i>711</i>	<i>--</i>

¹¹ 2008 wording: Over the next 12 months, would you like to write letters, email, or phone government officials to urge them to take action to reduce global warming...?

Methodology

These results come from nationally representative surveys of American adults, aged 18 and older. The samples were weighted to correspond with US Census Bureau parameters for the United States. The surveys were designed by Anthony Leiserowitz and Nicholas Smith of Yale University and Edward Maibach and Connie Roser-Renouf of George Mason University and conducted by Knowledge Networks, using an online research panel of American adults.

- June 2010: Fielded May 14 through June 1 with 1,024 American adults. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percent, with 95 percent confidence.
- January 2010: Fielded December 24, 2009 through January 3, 2010 with 1,001 American adults. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percent, with 95 percent confidence.
- November 2008: Fielded October 7 through November 12 with 2,164 American adults. Data was collected in two waves: wave 1 from October 7 through October 20 and wave 2 from October 24 through November 12. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2 percent, with 95 percent confidence.