



Alberta Government Environment Policies

Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – Winter 2016

February 2016

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Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 94,804 residents (2015 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (75,840). A total of 46,394 Lethbridge residents are male (49%) while 48,410 are female (51%). South Lethbridge is home to 31,337 residents (33.1%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 36,716 residents (38.7%). There are 26,751 north Lethbridge residents (28.2%).
-  **Sample Data** Collected by Lethbridge College students enrolled in a variety of social science courses in the winter of 2015. Students interviewed 834 randomly selected, adult Lethbridge residents by telephone from February 6–10, 2016 under the supervision of School of Liberal Arts faculty member Faron Ellis. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge and Alberta Public Opinion Studies can be obtained by visiting the CSRL web pages at: www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl.
-  **Representativeness** Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge. The sample has been statistically weighted to even better reflect that of the population (sex, age, and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of ± 3.37 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.
-  **IB Commons Call Centre** Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre.
-  **Sponsorship** These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at Lethbridge College. This particular set of questions was derived from student and faculty interest in the topics.

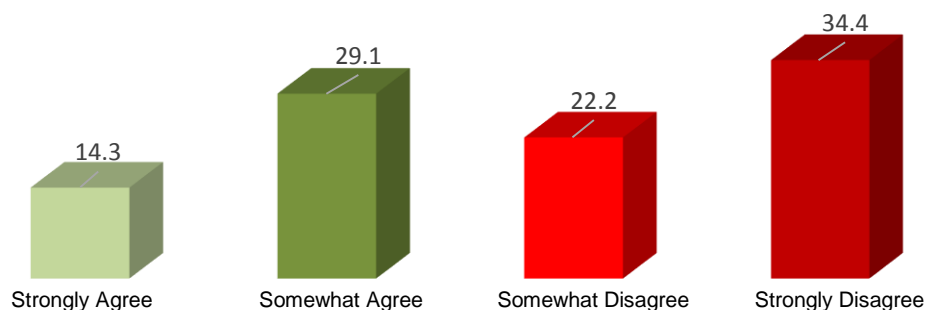
Carbon Tax

- A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (56.6%) are opposed to the Alberta government's plans to introduce a carbon tax in 2017. Most of those strongly disagree (34.4%) while more than one in five (22.2%) somewhat disagree. A significant plurality of Lethbridge residents agree with the new carbon tax plans (43.4%), but agreement is less intense than is opposition given that most of those who are supportive only somewhat agree (29.1%), while only 14.3% strongly agree.
- Several important demographic patterns in support and opposition are evident. Initially, only income and education significantly impact opinion about the carbon tax. Lower income residents (34.2%) are much less supportive than are middle (43.8%) and upper (47.1%) income residents. University graduates (59.7%) are much more supportive than are all other education groups and are the only demographic group to show majority support.
- Only modest opinion differences between men and women, or between different age groups are evident, although men (40.9%) are slightly less supportive than are women (46.0%), and seniors (40.5%) are less supportive than are other age groups. None of these differences are statistically significant.
- Partisanship differences, both federal and provincial, account for most of the significant differences in Lethbridge residents' opinions about a carbon tax. Clear and substantial majorities of provincial NDP (74.0%) and Liberal (67.5%) supporters agree with the Alberta government's carbon tax plans. Wildrose (81.3%) and provincial Progressive Conservative (72.1%) voters are strongly opposed to the carbon tax plan.

Similarly, a clear and substantial majority of federal Conservative voters are opposed (75.4%) while strong majorities of federal Liberal (72.0%) and NDP (61.8%) voters are supportive. Interestingly, a majority of federal Green Party voters are opposed to the carbon tax plan (58.8%).

Carbon Tax (%)

Strongly agree	14.3	Agree	43.4
Somewhat agree	29.1	Disagree	56.6
Somewhat disagree	22.2		
Strongly disagree	34.4		



Carbon tax by demographic group (February 2016) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	40.9	46.0	43.4
Disagree	59.1	54.0	56.6

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	43.7	39.4	45.9
Disagree	56.3	60.6	54.1

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	34.2	43.8	47.1
Disagree	65.8	56.3	52.9

Religious Attendance	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	37.7	51.6	45.9
Disagree	62.3	48.4	54.1

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	30.9	43.4	33.3	59.7
Disagree	69.1	56.6	66.7	40.3

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	45.0	47.3	43.8	40.5
Disagree	55.0	52.7	56.2	59.5

Provincial Vote*	NDP	Wildrose	PC	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	74.0	18.7	27.9	67.5	49.2
Disagree	26.0	81.3	72.1	32.5	50.8

Federal Vote*	CPC	Liberal	NDP	Green	Undecided
Agree	24.6	72.0	61.8	41.2	45.6
Disagree	75.4	28.0	38.2	58.8	54.4

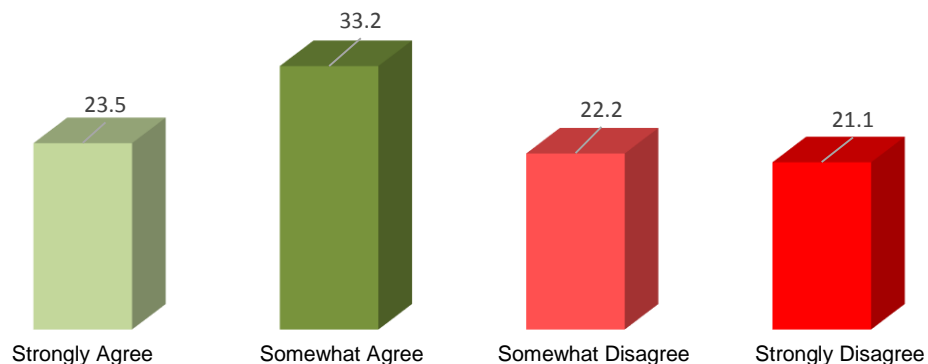
Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Phase Out of Coal-fired Electrical Power Generation

- A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (56.7%) support the Alberta government's plans to phase out coal-fired electrical power generation by 2030. Most of those residents somewhat agree with the government's plans (33.2%), while the remainder (23.5%) strongly agree. A significant plurality of Lethbridge residents (43.3%) disagree with the phase out. Approximately half of those strongly disagree with the plan (21.1%) while a similar number only somewhat disagree (21.1%). There is very little difference between the levels of intensity of support or opposition to this plan.
- Similar to opinion about the carbon tax, few significant opinion differences are measured between different demographic groups, although university graduates again distinguish themselves from all other education groups by being most supportive (69.3%), and the youth are more supportive (66.5%) than are other age groups.
- Partisanship differences, both federal and provincial, account for most of the significant differences in Lethbridge residents' opinions about the phasing out of coal-fired electricity generation. Clear and substantial majorities of provincial NDP (86.9%) and Liberal (69.5%) voters agree with the phase out plan. Wildrose voters are most opposed (68.2%). Provincial Progressive Conservative voters are more nuanced in as much as they are most divided on this issue, but a majority (55.3%) are opposed. Similarly, a clear majority of federal Conservative voters are opposed (60.9%), while strong majorities of federal Liberal (76.5%), NDP (80.0%) and Green (73.7%) voters support the plan to phase out coal-fired electrical power generation in Alberta by 2030.

Phase-out of coal-fired electricity (%)

Strongly agree	23.5	Agree	56.7
Somewhat agree	33.2	Disagree	43.3
Somewhat disagree	22.2		
Strongly disagree	21.1		



Phase-out of coal-fired electric power generation by demographic group (February 2016) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	53.7	59.6	56.7
Disagree	46.3	40.4	43.3

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	53.4	58.7	58.3
Disagree	46.6	41.3	41.7

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	55.6	55.9	56.1
Disagree	44.4	44.1	43.9

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	50.4	56.7	62.4
Disagree	49.6	43.3	37.6

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	51.4	55.1	48.0	69.3
Disagree	48.6	44.9	52.0	30.7

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	66.5	54.9	55.1	52.6
Disagree	33.5	45.1	44.9	47.4

Provincial Vote*	NDP	Wildrose	PC	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	86.9	31.8	44.7	69.5	57.4
Disagree	13.1	68.2	55.3	30.5	42.6

Federal Vote	CPC	Liberal	NDP	Green	Undecided
Agree	39.1	76.5	80.0	73.7	62.1
Disagree	60.9	23.5	20.0	26.3	37.9

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	48.8	South	32.8	Under \$40,000	25.5	H-School/less	18.4	18-29	23.7
Female	51.2	North	27.4	\$40-100,000	43.6	Some P-Sec.	26.4	30-44	24.2
		West	39.8	Over \$100,000	30.9	Col-Tech-Grad	25.3	45-64	28.9
						University Grad	29.9	65 or older	23.2

Church Attendance (%)	
2-3/month +	36.6
Several/year	17.7
Rarely/never	45.7

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Questions

As part of its climate change strategy, the Alberta government is planning to introduce a carbon tax in Alberta beginning next year. Please tell me how much you support or oppose the introduction of a carbon tax in Alberta.

(Optional Read: the carbon tax will require Albertans to pay 4.7-cents more per liter of gas at the pumps in 2017, and 5.5 cents more per liter of diesel, plus an extra \$320 to heat their homes in 2017, rising to \$470 by 2018.)

As part of its climate change strategy, the Alberta government is planning on phasing out coal-fired electric power generation plants in Alberta by 2030. Please tell me how much you support or oppose phasing out coal-fired electricity in Alberta.

(Optional Read: 55% of Alberta's electricity is produced from coal-fired plants. The plan would replace this source of electricity with electricity generated from wind, other renewable sources and natural gas.)

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know (unprompted)
- Refused (unprompted)