

2003 Lethbridge Public Opinion Study (Fall)

Electricity Deregulation

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for

The Industrial Association of Southern Alberta



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City of Lethbridge

Located in southwestern Alberta, the city of Lethbridge is home to 72,717 residents, 57,674 of which are 18 years of age or older.



The city is divided into six census areas, two each for its South, North and West geographic areas. It is divided north and south by Alberta highway 3, and east west by the Oldman River.

South Lethbridge's 27,941 residents represent 38.4 of the city's total population. West Lethbridge (22,429) and north Lethbridge (22,347) represent 30.8 and 30.7 respectively.

Methodology

This report is based on data collected by students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods and PSC150 – Local Government at Lethbridge Community College in the Fall of 2003. Students interviewed 769 adult residents by telephone over a two-week period from October 1 to 15, 2003 using numbers drawn randomly from the Lethbridge telephone directory.

Using this method, the sample yields a margin of error of ± 3.5 , 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

Analysis of the demographic data indicated that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the voting age population within the city of Lethbridge.

These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at LCC. The Industrial Association of Southern Alberta sponsored this analysis and we wish to express our thanks for their support of applied research at Lethbridge Community College.

What follows is a selection of our findings based on the questions below.

Faron Ellis, Ph.D.
Citizen Society Research Lab

Questionnaire

Q. Please tell me whether you think the Alberta government's electricity deregulation policies have had a positive or negative impact on Albertans.

Q. Do you think the Alberta government should continue with its electricity deregulation policies or move back to a regulated electrical market?

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Snapshot of Opinion

Electrical Deregulation Policies Effect on Average Albertan

	(%)
Positive	12.6
Neutral	12.6
Negative	74.8

Continue With Deregulation or Re-regulate (%)

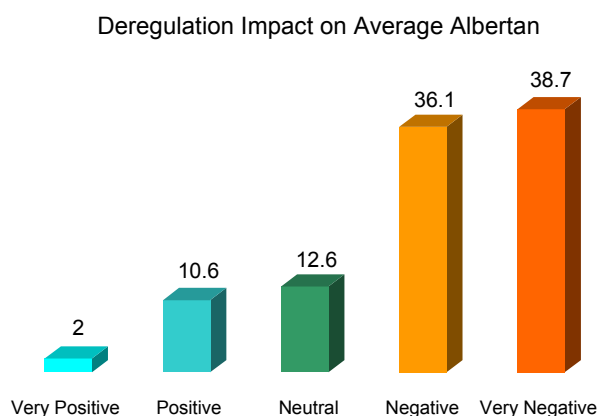
	(%)
Deregulation	18.6
Re-regulate	66.7
Don't know	14.7

Alberta Government's Electrical Policies

These data suggest that city of Lethbridge residents clearly view the Alberta government's electrical deregulation policies as having a negative impact on Albertans. Nearly three-quarters of all residents believe the policies have had a negative impact (74.8%). Almost two-in-five (38.7%) view the policies as having a very negative impact. Only 12.6% of respondents think the Alberta government's electricity deregulation policies are having a positive impact.

Only slight differences in opinion exist between demographic categories. Interestingly, upper income household members view the policies more negatively (78.3%) than do lower income household members (70.1%).

Seniors (68.3%) and the youth (64%) view the policies less negatively than do gen-xers (82.2%) and boomers (82.4%).



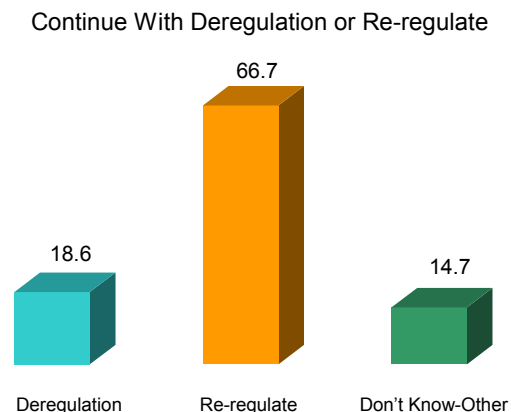
Deregulation vs. Reregulation

In concert with their opinions about the impact of deregulation, two-thirds of Lethbridge residents (66.7%) would prefer the government move back to a regulated electricity market. Less than one-in-five (18.6%) want to maintain the current deregulation policies, only slightly more than those who offered no opinion or some other solution.

Men (24.3%) are more likely than women (13.2%) to want to stick with deregulation, as are upper income household members (26.2%) when compared to middle income earners (18.1%) and lower income earners (15.8%).

An interesting pattern emerged in that where differences occur, increased support for deregulation does not correspond with a

decrease in support for re-regulation but rather a decrease in the number of undecided opinions.



Tabular Data

Impact of Electrical Policies on Albertans (%)

Q. Please tell me whether you think the Alberta government's electricity deregulation policies have had a positive or negative impact on Albertans.

Electrical Impact by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
Very Positive	2.9	1.1	2.0
Positive	11.5	9.8	10.6
Neutral	11.5	13.7	12.6
Negative	32.2	39.9	36.1
Very Negative	42.0	35.5	38.7

Electrical Impact by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
Very Positive	2.4	1.6	1.9
Positive	11.8	8.6	9.7
Neutral	13.9	11.8	12.6
Negative	31.3	38.7	40.6
Very Negative	40.6	39.2	35.3

Electrical Impact by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
Very Positive	2.0	2.0	0.6
Positive	13.9	8.1	10.2
Neutral	13.9	12.9	10.8
Negative	33.8	38.3	35.5
Very Negative	36.3	38.7	42.8

Electrical Impact by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post-Secondary	Col-Tech-Trade Grad	University Grad
Very Positive	2.5	2.3	2.2	1.1
Positive	7.5	9.1	14.1	10.8
Neutral	14.9	19.3	8.7	8.6
Negative	37.9	35.8	33.7	37.1
Very Negative	37.3	33.5	41.3	42.5

Electrical Impact by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
Very Positive	2.5	0.6	1.3	3.7
Positive	11.3	9.2	10.1	12.1
Neutral	22.2	8.0	6.2	15.9
Negative	38.4	40.5	36.1	26.2
Very Negative	25.6	41.7	46.3	42.1

Continue With Deregulation or Re-regulate (%)

Q. Do you think the Alberta government should continue with its electricity deregulation policies or move back to a regulated electrical market?

Deregulation vs. Re-regulation by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
Deregulation	24.3	13.2	18.6
Re-regulate	65.1	68.3	66.7
Other-Don't Know	10.6	18.5	14.7

Deregulation vs. Re-regulation by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
Deregulation	18.6	20.1	18.8
Re-regulate	65.7	66.0	67.3
Other-Don't Know	15.7	13.9	13.9

Deregulation vs. Re-regulation by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
Deregulation	15.8	18.1	26.2
Re-regulate	64.4	68.0	67.4
Other-Don't Know	19.8	13.9	6.4

Deregulation vs. Re-regulation by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post- Secondary	Col-Tech- Trade Grad	University Grad
Deregulation	11.7	20.3	20.3	21.9
Re-regulate	69.6	59.9	67.5	70.3
Other-Don't Know	18.7	19.8	12.2	7.8

Deregulation vs. Re-regulation by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
Deregulation	22.2	18.0	17.9	14.4
Re-regulate	57.3	68.3	74.0	67.6
Other-Don't Know	20.5	13.8	8.1	18.0