

Angelenos Want Climate Solutions and Understand the Personal Benefit

The 2017 American Climate Metrics Survey, conducted by ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners, found that Los Angeles residents have a more established understanding of climate change and stronger support for solutions than other Americans. Angelenos' climate concern is strong, and they recognize human causation at higher rates than national averages. They hold high values for clean air, water, and safe energy sources as critical rights for all peoples, and feel a strong moral obligation to address climate to ensure the health and safety of future generations. Currently, Angelenos report being personally affected by some climate impacts more than Americans do nationally, including record heat waves and the increased hardships for poorer families. Angelenos want to increase the production of wind and solar, however, support for coal production is rebounding. Majorities of Angelenos support a wide variety of climate solutions, and increasing majorities see the benefits that climate solutions will bring to their health, the economy, and jobs at rates notably higher than national averages. Ultimately, this survey found that Angelenos are ready to elevate leadership and action on climate change, and want their city to do the same.

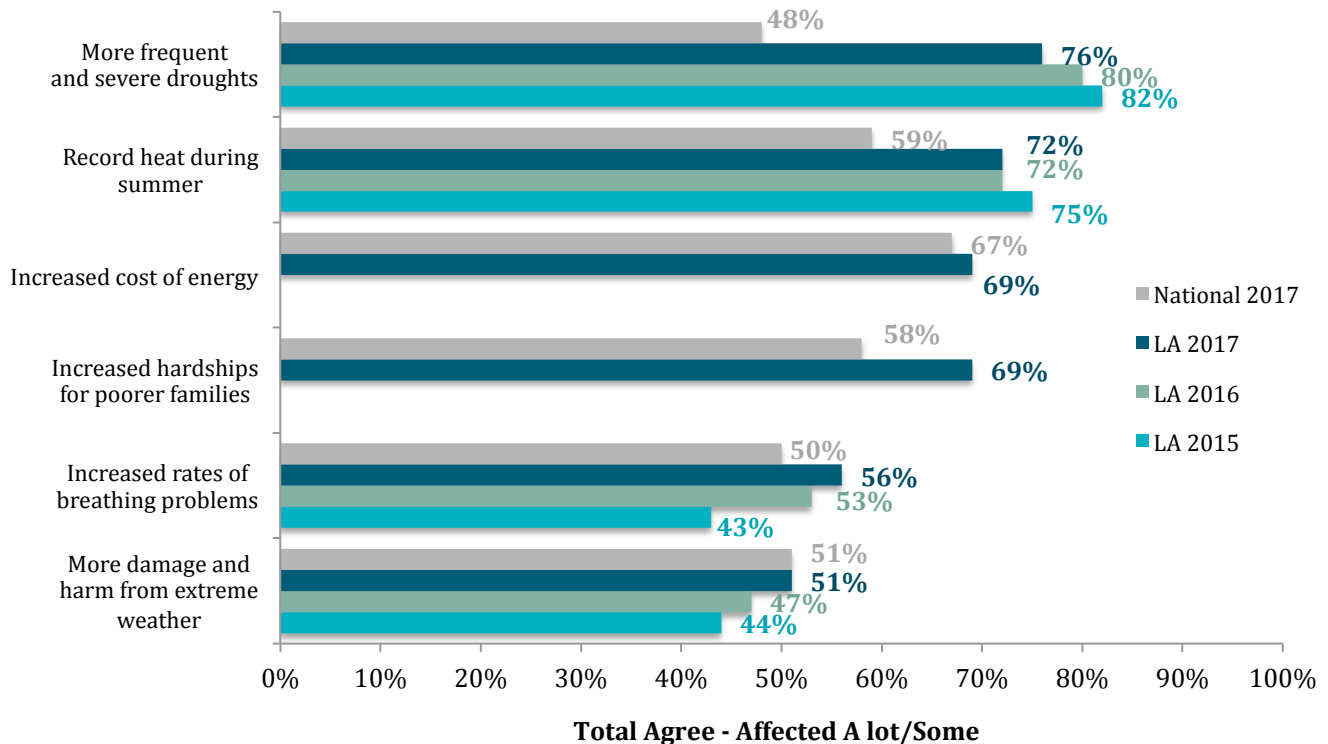
Note: This annual survey was previously conducted in September 2015 and 2016, prior to the election of President Trump, whose views on climate change have varied, and whose plans to address it have moved from uncertain to regressive. The following survey was conducted in 2017, during President Trump's first term.

Notable climate change sentiments of Los Angeles Residents in 2017

1. **BELIEF AND CONCERN: A high majority of Angelenos believe and are concerned about climate change, at notably higher rates than national averages and increasing annually. The vast majority have noticed increased weather activity in recent years.**
 - a. 89% believe that climate change is happening (vs. 80% nationally, 86% LA 2015)
 - b. 87% are concerned about climate change (vs. 76%, 78%)
 - c. 84% have noticed more severe weather and changing seasonal weather patterns where they live over the last several years (vs. 78%, 81%)
2. **CAUSATION: An increasing number of Angelenos understand that climate change is the result of human activity, at rates higher than national averages.**
 - a. 48% attribute climate change to a combination of both human activities and natural causes (vs. 49% nationally, 56% LA 2015)
 - b. 36% attribute climate change to human activities (vs. 27%, 28%)
 - c. 11% attribute climate change to natural causes (vs. 17%, 10%)
3. **IMPACTS: Climate impacts are felt among Angelenos at higher-than-national rates.**

Note: "Increased cost of energy" and "Increased hardships for poorer families" were first asked in 2017

- a. 76% claim to be affected by more frequent and severe droughts (vs. 48% nationally, 82% LA 2015)
- b. 72% claim to be affected by record heat waves during the summer (vs. 59%, 75%)
- c. 69% claim to be affected by an increased cost of energy (vs. 67% nationally)
- d. 62% claim to be affected by increased hardships for poorer families (vs. 58% nationally)
- e. 56% claim to be affected by increased rates of breathing problems, such as asthma (vs. 50%, 43%)
- f. 51% claim to be affected by more damage and harm from extreme weather like storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes (vs. 51%, 44%)



Note: "Increased hardships for poorer families" and "Increased cost of energy" were first asked in 2017

4. BENEFITS: An increasing majority of Angelenos see the benefits that climate solutions can bring to health, the economy, and jobs. However, over half believe addressing climate change would increase the cost of energy.

Note: "Increase the cost of energy" was first asked in 2017

- a. 77% say if the U.S. took steps to prevent future climate change, it would improve our health (vs. 67% nationally, 67% LA 2015)
- b. 74% say if the U.S. took steps... it would improve the economy (vs. 64%, 57%)
- c. 68% say if the U.S. took steps... it would increase jobs (vs. 61%, 51%)

d. 51% say if the U.S. took steps... it would increase the cost of energy (vs. 54%)

5. VALUES: Climate values are pervasive, and stronger among Angelenos than of Americans nationally, particularly regarding clean water, air and energy. They agree with our moral responsibility to ensure the health and safety of future generations.

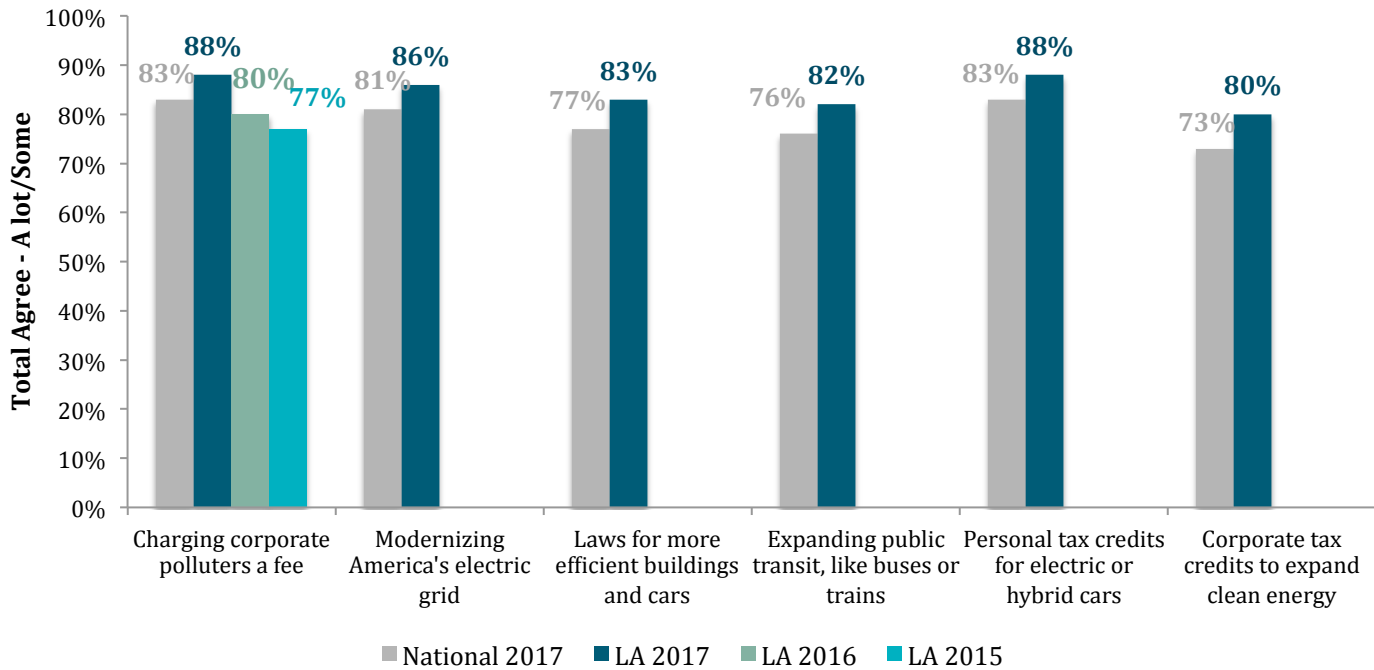
Note: All questions were first asked in 2017, except "Clean water is a critical right..." and "We have a moral responsibility..."

- a. 91% say that clean water is a critical right for all people (vs. 88% nationally, 89% LA 2015)
- b. 90% say clean air is a critical right for all people (vs. 86% nationally)
- c. 89% say that we have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for ourselves and our children (vs. 83%, 87%)
- d. 87% say that communities need to prepare for floods and droughts to minimize their impact (vs. 83%)
- e. 88% say clean energy that does not pollute the air or water is a critical right for all people (vs. 84%)
- f. 77% say the government needs to protect all people from the impacts of extreme weather (vs. 70%)

6. SOLUTIONS: Large majorities of Angelenos favor a range of climate solutions. They believe in investing the money collected from charging large companies for pollution in clean energy, public transportation, and education and health services at slightly higher rates than do Americans nationally.

Note: All questions were first asked in 2017, except "Charging large companies a fee..."

- a. 88% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by modernizing America's electric grid (vs. 83% nationally)
- b. 86% favor... charging large companies a fee for the pollution they create (vs. 81% nationally, 77% LA 2015)
- c. 83% favor... passing laws for more efficient buildings and cars (vs. 77%)
- d. 82% favor... expanding public transportation, like buses and trains (vs. 76%)
- e. 79% favor... providing personal tax credits for electric or hybrid cars (vs. 72%)
- f. 80% favor... providing corporate tax credits to expand clean energy (vs. 73%)
- g. 38% say the money collected (from carbon fees) should be used to fund research and development of new, clean energy sources, topping the listed options (vs. 39%)
- h. 21% say the money collected (from carbon fees) should be used to improve education and health services, the second highest ranked of the options provided (vs. 15%)



Note: All questions were first asked in 2017, except "Charging corporate polluters a fee"

7. URGENCY: Increasing majorities of Angelenos believe we can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change. There is increasing urgency to act and reduce climate pollution. Angelenos are split on economic vs. solutions prioritization, and have rising concern about the costs of addressing climate change.

- 87% believe that *we*, and 83% that they *personally*, **need to take action now** to reduce the pollution that is causing climate change (up from 77% and 70% nationally, and 84% and 76% LA 2015, respectively)
- 86% believe that *we*, and 79% that they *personally*, **can reduce** the pollution that is causing climate change (vs. 76% and 68%, 80% and 73%, respectively)
- 50% believe that we could address climate change, but the costs of doing so are too high (vs. 43% nationally, 37% LA 2015)
- 48% believe that we should prioritize economic growth over climate change (vs. 51% nationally)

8. ENERGY: Large majorities of Angelenos want the U.S. to produce more clean energy. Many say the U.S. should produce less coal and oil. However, support for coal seems to be rebounding in the past year.

- 88% say that the U.S. should produce more wind and solar energy (vs. 87% nationally, 90% LA 2015), with 69% saying much more (vs. 64%, 64%)
- 58% say the U.S. should produce less coal (vs. 54%, 67%)
- 46% say the U.S. should produce less oil (vs. 42%, 49%)

- d. Compared to other sources of energy (including fossil fuels), 51% believe wind and solar energy are the lowest cost for consumer (vs. 47%, 49%)

9. ENGAGEMENT: Although Angelenos are becoming increasingly informed on the efforts LA is doing to prepare, address, and educate about climate change, there is still room to better educate and support Angeleno desire for LA climate leadership.

- a. 45% say Los Angeles is conserving energy (vs. 32% nationally, 42% LA 2015); 43% wish LA would conserve (vs. 41% nationally, 31% LA 2015)
- b. 40% say the city is taking action to prepare for the impacts of climate change (vs. 30%, 26%); 84% wish LA would prepare (vs. 72%, 77%)
- c. 31% say the city is using renewable energy like wind or solar energy (vs. 22%, 18%); 42% wish LA would do this (vs. 37%, 30%)
- d. 30% say the city is educating others about climate change (vs. 24%, 20%); 38% wish LA would educate (vs. 33%, 21%)

10. ADVOCACY: Angelenos engage in climate-friendly behaviors slightly more than adults do nationally. They also have a stronger interest in discussing and voting on climate change.

Note: All questions were first asked in 2017, except "Upgraded appliances or lighting..."

- a. 73% have discussed climate change with family and friends and 50% with colleagues (vs. 69% and 41% nationally, respectively)
- b. 67% have upgraded appliances or lighting to conserve energy at home (vs. 66% nationally, 67% LA 2015)
- c. 36% have shifted toward public transportation, 33% toward hybrid cars, and 46% toward biking and walking as a more energy-efficient form of transportation (vs. 31%, 24% and 39% nationally, respectively)
- d. 43% have contacted or voted for a candidate based on his or her support for taking action on climate change (vs. 35% nationally)

11. SOURCES: Angelenos receive climate information from a variety of sources, with the news and media as the most common sources on climate change, on par with national averages. They are increasingly hearing about climate from friends and family.

- a. 66% have heard or read about climate change from the news and media recently (vs. 65% nationally, 71% LA 2015)
- b. 38% from family and friends (vs. 36%, 32%)
- c. 28% from professors and educators (vs. 24%, 28%)

12. TRUST: Scientists, health professionals and environmental organizations are the most trusted messengers for climate information, with notably annual increase and at rates higher than national averages. The most significant change in trust from 2016 is a 28% decrease from trusting President Obama to President Trump, whom Angelenos ranked as their least trusted source on climate change.

- a. 78% trust scientists as a source of information about climate change (vs. 70% nationally, 76% LA 2015)
- b. 70% trust health professionals (vs. 62%, 59%)
- c. 69% trust environmental organizations (vs. 61%, 62%)
- d. 57% trust newspapers, TV news, and Internet news sites (vs. 46%, 42%)
- e. 32% trust celebrities (vs. 25%, 12%)
- f. 29% trust Congress (vs. 25%, 17%)
- g. 28% trust President Trump (vs. 31% nationally); 51% trusted President Obama in 2016 (vs. 41% nationally)

13. MOTIVATIONS: Angelenos have an annual increase in motivation to act on climate change on a personal level for a variety of reasons, with the top reason being to protect their family. They want their community to do more to save energy, use clean energy, and prepare for extreme weather.

Note: All questions were first asked in 2017

- a. 42% want to do more to personally address climate change to protect their family (vs. 38% nationally)
- b. 29% want to do more... to use more renewable and less polluting energy (vs. 31%)
- c. 27% want to do more... to protect clean air (vs. 26%)
- d. 26% want to do more... to protect clean water (vs. 30%)
- e. 43% wish LA would save energy (vs. 41% nationally, 31% LA 2015)
- f. 42% wish LA would use more renewable energy (vs. 37%, 30%)
- g. 36% wish LA would prepare for extreme weather (vs. 33%)

Methodology

ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners (LRP) designed and LRP administered this survey, which was conducted online September 25–27, 2017. The survey yielded a total of 802 adult responses nationally and, separately, 401 adults in Los Angeles. The samples were drawn from an online panel, and the respondents were screened to ensure that they were over the age of 18. Both the national and the Los Angeles sample were weighted slightly by gender, region, age, race and education. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3.5%. In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those that would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of respondents in a sample of 900 respondents answered “Yes” to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage will fall within 3.3 points or from 46.7% to 53.3%.

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Suggested Citation

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For more information contact Meighen Speiser, ecoAmerica Chief Engagement Officer at meighen@ecoAmerica.org