

## New York City Tops the Charts in Understanding Climate Facts

*The American Climate Metrics Survey found that New Yorkers report strong concern about climate change, but remain hopeful, and feel strong senses of urgency and empowerment to elevate action on solutions. They report being personally affected by record heat waves and damage and harm from extreme weather more than other Americans do nationally. They feel a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for themselves and their children and that clean air and water are crucial rights for all. A vast majority support clean energy and other climate solutions and want NYC to prepare. They see how solutions can help improve their health at higher levels than adults nationally. Lastly, New Yorkers possess some of the strongest motivation to act both individually and collectively for climate solutions, and have engaged in climate-friendly activities and advocacy at rates often higher than other Americans nationally..*

*This annual survey was first 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 2018, during President Trump's second year in office.*

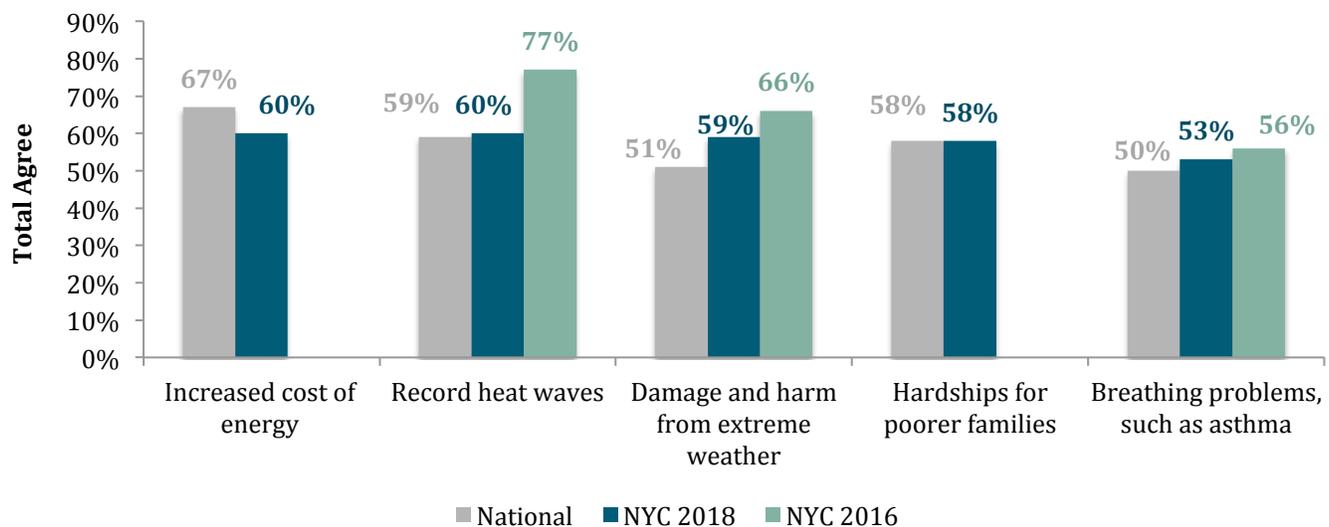
## Notable climate change sentiments of New Yorkers, Spring 2018

1. **BELIEF AND CONCERN: NYC citizens understand that climate change is happening, and are concerned, at significantly higher rates than Americans nationally. The majority have noticed increased weather activity in recent years.**
  - a. 88% believe that climate change is happening (vs. 80% nationally)
  - b. 87% have noticed more severe weather and changing seasonal weather patterns where they live over the last several years (vs. 78%)
  - c. 86% are concerned about climate change (vs. 76%)
2. **CAUSATION: Over one in three NYC citizens understand that climate change is due to human activity, with nearly half acknowledging human causation. Only one in ten attribute climate change to natural causes, significantly less than other Americans.**
  - a. 48% attribute climate change to a combination of both human activities and natural causes (vs. 49% nationally)
  - b. 36% attribute climate change to human activities (vs. 27%)
  - c. 9% attribute climate change to natural causes (vs. 17%)
3. **IMPACTS: Affects of climate change are felt by over half of NYC citizens, including energy costs, record heat waves, extreme weather, and health impacts.**
  - a. 60% claim to be affected by an increased cost of energy (vs. 67% nationally)
  - b. 60% claim to be affected by record heat waves during the summer (vs. 59% nationally and down from 77% in NYC 2016)

- c. 59% claim to be affected by more damage and harm from extreme weather like storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes (vs. 51% nationally and 66% in 2016 in NYC)
- d. 58% claim to be affected by increased hardships for poorer families (vs. 58%)
- e. 53% claim to be affected by increased rates of breathing problems, such as asthma (vs. 50%)

**For each of the following issues, please indicate how much they are personally affecting you.**

802 respondent(s) total nationally, % Total "A Lot / Some" and % "A Lot"



**4. BENEFITS: A majority of NYC citizens see the benefits that climate solutions can bring to health, the economy, and jobs, but there is room to educate them on these benefits.**

- a. 77% say if the U.S. took steps to prevent future climate change, it would improve our health (vs. 67% nationally)
- b. 72% say if the U.S. took steps... it would improve the economy (vs. 64%)
- c. 64% say if the U.S. took steps... it would increase jobs (vs. 61%)
- d. 46% say if the U.S. took steps... it would increase the cost of energy (vs. 54%)

**5. VALUES: Climate values are strong among NYC citizens, particularly regarding clean air and water and a moral responsibility for solutions, more so than national sentiments.**

- a. 90% say clean water is a critical right for all people (vs. 88% nationally)
- b. 90% say clean air is a critical right for all people (vs. 86%)
- c. 87% say we have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for ourselves and our children (vs. 83%)

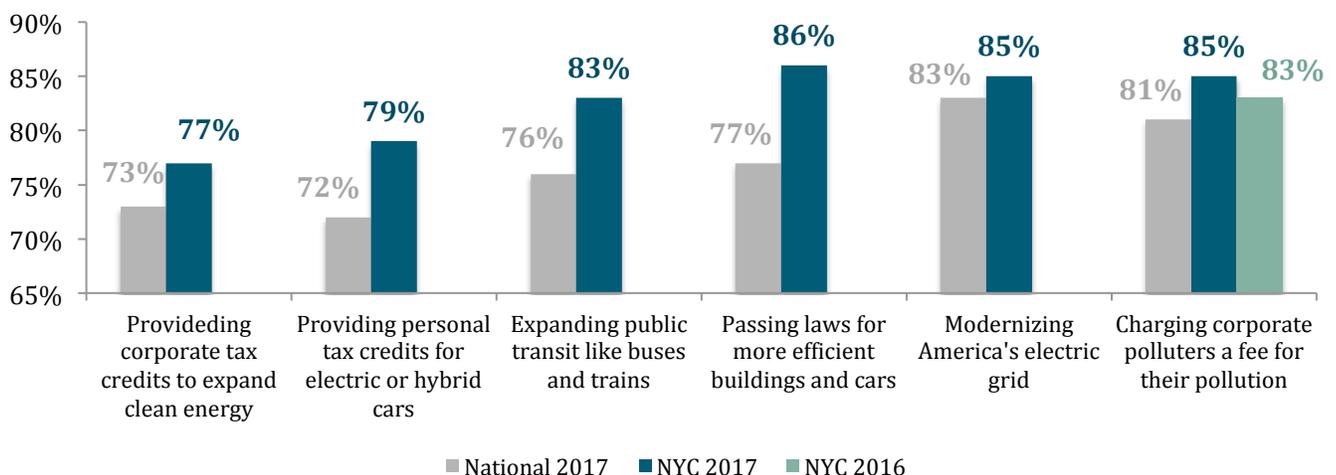
- d. 86% say communities need to prepare for floods and droughts to minimize their impact (vs. 83%)
- e. 83% say the government needs to protect all people from the impacts of extreme weather (vs. 70%)

**6. SOLUTIONS: A majority of NYC citizens favor a proposal that charges companies a fee for the pollution they create. They believe in investing the money collected in clean energy and public transportation at higher rates than national. NYC citizens are ready for legislation to address climate change.**

- a. 86% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by passing laws for more efficient buildings and cars (vs. 77% nationally)
- b. 85% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by modernizing America’s electric grid (vs. 83%)
- c. 85% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by charging large companies a fee for the pollution they create (vs. 81%)
- d. 83% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by expanding public transportation, like buses and trains (vs. 76%)
- e. 79% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by providing corporate tax credits to expand clean energy (vs. 72%)
- f. 77% favor a proposal to reduce climate change pollution by providing personal tax credits for electric or hybrid cars (vs. 72%)

**Below are proposals to reduce climate change pollution. Please indicate if you strongly favor, not so strongly favor, not so strongly oppose, or strongly oppose each one.**

802 respondent(s) total nationally, % Total “strongly favor” and not so strongly favor”



**7. URGENCY: NYC citizens have an urgency to act and reduce the pollution that is causing climate change at higher rates than national averages. There is concern, however, about the perceived costs and sacrifices of climate action that needs to be addressed.**

- a. 84% believe that *we*, and 78% that *they personally*, **can** reduce the pollution that is causing climate change (vs. 76% and 68% nationally, and 82% and 76% in 2016 in NYC, respectively)
- b. 83% believe that *we*, and 78% that *they personally*, **need to** take action now to reduce the pollution that is causing climate change (vs. 77% and 70% nationally, and 86% and 76% in 2016 in NYC, respectively)
- c. 48% say that we should prioritize economic growth over climate action (vs. 51%)
- d. 42% say that we could address climate change, but the costs and sacrifices are too high (vs. 43% nationally and an increase from 37% in 2016 in NYC)

**8. ENERGY: NYC citizens want the U.S. to reduce dirty energy at rates higher than national averages. They believe wind and solar energy are the lowest cost, on par with national opinion, and would like to see a large increase in production.**

- a. 88% say that the U.S. should produce more wind and solar energy, with 66% saying much more (vs. 87% and 64% nationally, respectively)
- b. 61% say the U.S. should produce less coal (vs. 54% nationally)
- c. 52% say the U.S. should produce less oil (vs. 42%)
- d. Compared to less sustainable sources, 51% believe wind and solar energy are the lowest cost for consumer (vs. 47%)

**9. ENGAGEMENT: While many are beginning to notice NYC climate leadership, there is room to better educate on current programs. Residents desire climate preparation for NYC.**

- a. 37% say that New York is taking action to prepare for the impacts of climate change (vs. 30% nationally); 82% wish NYC would prepare (vs. 72% nationally and 83% in 2016 in NYC)
- b. 34% say that New York is conserving energy (vs. 32%); 43% wish New York would do this (vs. 41%)
- c. 30% say that New York is educating others about climate change (vs. 24% nationally and 20% in 2016 in NYC); 39% wish New York would do this (vs. 33%)
- d. 20% say that New York is using renewable energy like wind or solar energy (vs. 22% nationally and 24% in 2016 in NYC); 40% wish New York would do this (vs. 37% nationally and 26% in 2016 in NYC)

**10. ADVOCACY: NYC citizens engage in climate-friendly behaviors, but slightly less than in 2016. They also have a interest in discussing and voting on climate change.**

- a. 66% have discussed climate change with family and friends and 47% with colleagues (vs. 69% and 41% nationally, down from 73% and 51% in 2016 in NYC)

- b. 64% have upgraded appliances or lighting to conserve energy at home (vs. 66% nationally and down from 72% in 2016 in NYC)
- c. 49% have shifted toward public transportation, 23% toward hybrid cars, and 48% toward biking and walking as a more energy-efficient form of transportation (vs. 31%, 24% and 39% nationally, respectively)
- d. 36% have contacted or voted for a candidate based on his or her support for taking action on climate change (vs. 35% nationally)

**11.SOURCES: NYC citizens receive information about climate change from a variety of sources, with the news and media as the most common sources, on par with national averages. Notably, they are hearing from federal officials significantly less than in 2016.**

- a. 65% have heard or read about climate change from the news and media recently (vs. 65% nationally)
- b. 38% from family and friends (vs. 36%)
- c. 23% from federal elected officials (vs. 29% nationally and 34% in 2016 in NYC)

**12. TRUST: Scientists, environmental organizations, and health professionals are the most trusted messengers for climate information, and at rates higher than national averages. The most significant change in trust for NYC citizens from 2016 is a large decrease in trust from President Obama to President Trump.**

- a. 78% trust scientists as a source of information about climate change (vs. 70% nationally)
- b. 71% trust environmental organizations (vs. 61%)
- c. 70% trust health professionals (vs. 62%)
- d. 53% trust newspapers, TV news, and Internet news sites (vs. 46%)
- e. 36% trust church and faith leaders (vs. 29%)
- f. 32% trust celebrities (vs. 25%)
- g. 27% trust Congress (vs. 25%)
- h. 24% trust President Trump (vs. 31%); down from the 54% who trusted the President Obama in 2016

**13.MOTIVATIONS: NYC citizens are motivated to act on climate change on a personal and city level with regard to the safety and security of family and future resources.**

- a. 34% want to do more to address climate change to protect their family (vs. 38% nationally)
- b. 34% want... to reduce pollution (vs. 27%)
- c. 32% want... to use more renewable and less polluting energy (vs. 31%)
- d. 28% want... to protect clean air (vs. 26%)
- e. 27% want... to protect clean water (vs. 30%)

- f. 42% want their community to do more to address climate change to use more renewable energy (vs. 41%)
- g. 41% want their community... to prepare for extreme weather (vs. 33%)
- h. 32% want their community... to save energy (vs. 32%)

## Methodology

ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners (LRP) designed and LRP administered this survey, which was conducted online nationally on September 25–27, 2017 and New York City from April 16-26, 2018. The survey yielded a total of 802 adult responses and, separately, 640 adults in New York. 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 New York 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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