

Energy Attitudes: Americans Support Clean Energy

American Climate Perspectives Survey 2021, Vol. V – Toplines

Fielded August 27-September 10, 2021

NATIONAL (%)			Rep (%)	Ind (%)	Dem (%)	18-29 (%)	30-44 (%)	45-60 (%)	>60 (%)
2021	2020	2019	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021
N= 1,110	1097	1097	272	345	388	286	235	363	224

Q1. How do you think things are going in America today? Which of the following is closest to your opinion? I am ____ with the way things are going in America today.

Very satisfied.....	9	7	13	8	6	13	14	8	7	7
Somewhat satisfied.....	27	16	27	18	23	39	27	31	26	27
Somewhat dissatisfied.....	30	27	26	21	36	31	34	30	29	25
Very dissatisfied	34	49	34	53	34	17	26	31	38	41

Q2. How much does each of these energy sources contribute to unhealthy air pollution and climate change?

Wind and Solar

A lot.....	7	8	8	8	6	8	7	7	7	5
Some.....	13	12	8	14	12	13	17	15	10	9
A little.....	27	23	23	28	28	26	26	30	26	29
Not at all.....	45	51	55	41	45	48	42	36	49	53
Not sure.....	8	6	6	9	9	5	8	11	8	5

Oil

A lot.....	47	50	51	23	46	64	47	54	42	47
Some.....	27	29	29	35	28	23	26	26	30	27
A little.....	15	13	13	23	16	7	15	11	16	16
Not at all.....	4	4	2	7	4	2	4	1	5	5
Not sure.....	7	5	5	11	6	4	7	8	7	5

American Climate Perspectives	NATIONAL			Rep	Ind	Dem	18-29	30-44	45-60	>60
	NATIONAL			(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
	2021	2020	2019	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021
	N= 1,110	1,097	1,097	272	345	388	286	235	363	224

Natural Gas										
A lot.....	18	16	17	10	16	25	23	25	14	10
Some.....	36	38	36	24	37	45	37	37	35	36
A little.....	26	28	30	37	28	18	25	22	28	30
Not at all.....	10	8	8	18	9	5	7	2	12	17
Not sure.....	10	11	9	11	10	7	9	13	11	7

Coal										
A lot.....	47	53	59	24	48	63	41	50	45	56
Some.....	27	23	21	38	26	20	30	25	26	26
A little.....	14	13	12	20	13	10	17	11	16	12
Not at all.....	5	4	3	8	5	3	6	4	5	3
Not sure.....	7	6	6	10	7	4	6	11	9	3

Nuclear										
A lot.....	24	30	29	18	23	26	26	24	24	18
Some.....	22	24	22	20	23	24	21	29	19	20
A little.....	22	22	22	22	22	23	22	21	21	23
Not at all.....	15	13	15	19	15	14	12	11	16	23
Not sure.....	18	12	13	22	17	14	18	15	20	17

Q3. In the next few years, should the United States be spending more or less on research and development of each of the following energy sources?

Wind and Solar										
A lot more.....	50	54	59	30	50	66	47	54	47	56
More.....	27	27	25	33	31	23	26	27	30	25
Less.....	10	8	8	18	11	4	14	7	10	9
A lot less.....	6	4	4	11	4	4	6	6	5	6
Not sure.....	6	7	5	9	5	3	6	6	8	4

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Oil	2021	2020	2019	Rep	Ind	Dem	18-29	30-44	45-60	>60
A lot more.....	9	9	8	11	9	10	11	7	10	8
More.....	22	22	18	33	20	17	18	23	21	25
Less.....	27	31	33	28	29	25	31	24	28	25
A lot less.....	30	28	32	13	32	41	27	34	28	35
Not sure.....	11	11	9	15	10	7	13	12	13	7

Natural Gas	2021	2020	2019	Rep	Ind	Dem	18-29	30-44	45-60	>60
A lot more.....	13	14	14	16	12	11	11	10	15	15
More.....	34	34	33	43	34	31	27	36	34	42
Less.....	24	27	28	20	28	25	28	24	22	24
A lot less.....	12	11	12	7	10	18	15	13	12	9
Not sure.....	17	14	13	14	16	15	20	17	18	10

Coal	2021	2020	2019	Rep	Ind	Dem	18-29	30-44	45-60	>60
A lot more.....	7	7	6	10	6	8	9	5	9	5
More.....	18	17	15	25	17	14	18	19	16	18
Less.....	24	28	27	28	26	20	31	20	24	21
A lot less.....	37	37	44	19	40	50	29	40	36	49
Not sure.....	13	11	8	18	11	8	13	15	16	6

Next Generation Nuclear Energy	2021	2020	2019	Rep	Ind	Dem	18-29	30-44	45-60	>60
A lot more.....	23	23	22	20	26	23	25	21	21	25
More.....	34	34	34	38	31	36	29	37	33	39
Less.....	16	16	18	18	16	16	21	14	15	15
A lot less.....	9	11	10	7	9	8	11	9	9	6
Not sure.....	18	16	15	18	18	16	14	20	23	14

Q4. America's traditional nuclear power plants produce around 20% of our electricity. Which is closest to your opinion?

Strongly support nuclear power.....	20	19	20	22	23	20	19	18	18	28
Somewhat support nuclear power.....	39	37	35	42	38	40	38	42	37	41
Somewhat oppose nuclear power.....	20	21	22	17	18	22	22	17	21	17
Strongly oppose nuclear power.....	7	9	11	5	8	7	6	6	9	8
Not sure.....	14	14	13	14	13	11	15	17	15	7

American Climate Perspectives

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Q5. If you learned that we can clean up unhealthy pollution and make the climate stable by modernizing nuclear power, would this shift your opinion?

NOTE: Only those who oppose nuclear in Q4.

Yes, I would support nuclear power after learning it pollutes the climate much less.....	18	17	16	17	21	16	26	22	12	11
Perhaps, but I would only support nuclear power until lower cost renewable energy becomes available.....	44	43	45	43	37	47	48	48	41	42
No, I would want to phase out nuclear power as soon as we can replace it with clean safe energy.....	31	36	33	32	33	30	24	24	37	36
Not sure.....	8	5	7	8	9	7	3	6	11	11

Q6. What are the most important reasons for supporting nuclear energy? *NOTE: Only those who support nuclear in Q4.*

Nuclear power plants generate a lot of our electricity, reliably

Very important.....	36	37	36	37	41	31	32	32	36	43
Somewhat important.....	35	33	33	35	33	37	37	41	34	29
A little important.....	17	18	16	14	14	20	20	17	16	17
Not at all important.....	6	7	8	7	6	7	7	3	8	7
Not sure.....	6	6	7	6	6	5	4	8	7	5

Nuclear power plants keep America competitive and energy independent

Very important.....	32	32	34	38	36	27	23	32	35	40
Somewhat important.....	32	32	31	33	32	33	32	33	33	31
A little important.....	19	20	18	16	17	21	24	22	16	14
Not at all important.....	10	10	10	8	8	12	14	5	9	9
Not sure.....	7	5	7	5	7	7	6	8	6	6

American Climate Perspectives

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(%)			(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
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We have thousands of years of uranium and thorium for truly sustainable energy

Very important.....	26	27	30	25	29	26	30	23	23	29
Somewhat important.....	31	31	29	34	30	32	29	35	33	28
A little important.....	21	18	17	21	21	20	25	24	18	18
Not at all important.....	8	10	11	6	9	10	6	7	10	10
Not sure.....	13	13	13	15	11	12	10	13	15	14

Nuclear power plants should be kept running as long as they are cost effective in the long term

Very important.....	28	28	29	33	32	23	22	25	29	38
Somewhat important.....	34	34	31	39	32	35	34	39	32	32
A little important.....	22	20	21	16	21	25	28	24	22	15
Not at all important.....	10	12	13	8	10	11	13	5	11	8
Not sure.....	6	6	6	4	6	5	4	7	5	6

Nuclear power plants should be kept running until lower cost renewable energy becomes available

Very important.....	30	29	33	30	34	28	22	26	31	40
Somewhat important.....	37	40	33	38	34	40	38	39	38	33
A little important.....	20	18	19	22	15	20	27	23	15	16
Not at all important.....	8	8	8	7	9	7	8	6	10	7
Not sure.....	6	5	6	4	7	5	6	6	6	4

Nuclear power plants do not emit pollutants that harm our health or our climate compared to alternatives

Very important.....	38	41	44	33	40	41	35	37	38	42
Somewhat important.....	29	27	25	31	27	29	29	29	29	29
A little important.....	16	17	14	19	16	16	21	17	16	12
Not at all important.....	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	5	7	9
Not sure.....	10	9	9	10	10	8	6	12	11	10

American Climate Perspectives

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N= 1,110	1,097	1,097	272	345	388	286	235	363	224

Nuclear power helps us grow our economy while reducing pollution to our climate and health

Very important.....	35	35	39	33	42	32	36	32	35	39
Somewhat important.....	33	32	28	35	27	37	34	36	29	37
A little important.....	17	18	18	20	16	17	23	18	17	11
Not at all important.....	7	8	8	6	6	8	4	5	9	9
Not sure.....	7	7	7	6	7	5	3	9	10	5

Q7. American engineers invented molten salt reactors in the early 1960s to be cheap, produce little waste, and be fail-safe so human errors can't cause widespread damage. Power failures and mechanical breakdowns can't damage anything outside the building. Some nations and several small companies in the USA are now racing to bring it to market for the first time. Assuming the claims are true, would you support moving on to better nuclear energy?

Strongly support.....	33	33	38	30	37	34	30	31	31	39
Somewhat support.....	41	41	40	42	37	45	40	45	41	39
Somewhat oppose.....	11	10	9	10	10	12	17	10	9	7
Strongly oppose.....	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	2	5	2
Not sure.....	12	12	10	15	13	8	11	12	14	13

Q8. Which of the following most closely matches your view?

We should allow Wall Street investors to choose whatever energy system makes the most money this week.....	6	5	3	7	6	6	12	6	4	3
We should get engineers, scientists, and economists to choose energy systems to make us safe and prosperous within 20 years, investing in new jobs and technology as required.....	42	43	47	35	41	49	38	40	44	48
We should do what it takes to choose energy that makes us safe and prosperous for 400 years.....	31	32	36	29	35	30	32	34	30	29

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We should protect today's jobs and companies and accept the possible risks to climate and health that result.....	12	12	7	19	11	10	12	13	12	11
Not sure.....	8	8	10	11	7	5	6	6	10	10

Q9. People have concerns about upgrading nuclear energy. Which of the following make you concerned?

Health and Safety

A lot.....	50	54	58	39	52	57	41	45	53	61
Some.....	23	22	20	27	22	21	23	25	25	17
A little.....	16	14	12	22	15	13	21	16	15	12
Not at all.....	6	6	6	7	6	6	9	6	3	7
Not sure.....	5	5	4	6	4	3	7	7	5	2

Cost

A lot.....	24	26	27	24	23	24	21	23	26	24
Some.....	34	34	31	35	31	39	32	33	33	40
A little.....	24	22	26	26	24	21	25	22	24	22
Not at all.....	11	11	10	9	14	10	13	13	10	8
Not sure.....	8	6	6	6	9	5	10	10	7	5

Waste Disposal

A lot.....	50	53	62	39	52	59	38	46	56	63
Some.....	25	25	19	30	23	23	28	27	23	21
A little.....	14	12	12	17	14	11	19	16	11	10
Not at all.....	4	5	3	5	4	3	7	2	3	2
Not sure.....	7	5	5	9	7	4	9	9	7	3

Security, Weaponization

A lot.....	40	41	46	34	42	42	29	36	43	51
Some.....	28	27	24	30	26	29	31	26	27	27
A little.....	18	17	18	20	18	19	22	21	19	11
Not at all.....	7	8	7	9	7	7	11	9	5	5
Not sure.....	7	7	6	7	7	4	7	9	6	5

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	N= 1,110	1,097	1,097	272	345	388	286	235	363	224

Overpopulation, Overdevelopment, Leading to Natural Habitat Loss

A lot.....	37	38	47	26	39	44	32	34	39	44
Some.....	26	28	25	28	27	26	26	27	27	24
A little.....	19	18	15	21	20	17	21	21	19	13
Not at all.....	9	9	11	15	7	7	13	6	7	11
Not sure.....	9	6	2	10	8	7	9	12	7	8

Q10. How personally concerned are you about climate change?

Very concerned.....	45	44	47	17	43	67	41	45	44	50
Somewhat concerned.....	28	28	25	34	31	23	33	29	27	23
A little concerned.....	15	15	15	23	16	7	15	16	15	11
Not concerned.....	10	10	11	22	7	2	8	6	11	14
Not sure.....	3	3	2	3	3	1	4	3	3	2

Q11. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

Republican.....	25	25	25	100	0	0	19	23	28	29
Independent.....	31	26	29	0	100	0	34	29	33	28
Democrat.....	35	36	33	0	0	100	38	35	31	37
Other.....	9	13	13	0	0	0	9	13	9	7

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DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

< 18.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18 - 29.....	26	23	31	20	28	28	100	0	0
30 - 44.....	21	23	16	19	20	21	0	100	0
45 - 60.....	33	34	22	37	34	29	0	0	100
> 60.....	20	31	31	24	18	21	0	0	100

Gender

Male.....	47	45	45	48	50	45	44	51	45	53
Female.....	53	55	55	52	50	55	56	49	55	47

Household Income

\$0 - \$9,999.....	7	7	9	8	7	8	13	6	6	3
\$10,000 - \$24,999.....	12	11	14	10	11	12	18	8	10	9
\$25,000 - \$49,999.....	21	19	23	19	19	23	21	24	21	20
\$50,000 - \$74,999.....	16	19	14	17	16	14	12	16	16	19
\$75,000 - \$99,999.....	16	14	9	21	17	14	12	18	17	20
\$100,000 - \$124,999.....	8	8	8	8	7	9	6	8	8	10
\$125,000 - \$149,999.....	4	4	4	3	6	4	1	5	6	4
\$150,000 - \$174,999.....	3	2	2	1	3	4	3	3	1	4
\$175,000 - \$199,999.....	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
\$200,000 +	3	5	4	2	3	3	2	4	4	1
Prefer not to answer.....	9	8	14	8	10	9	12	7	10	8

Region

New England.....	5	5	4	3	4	6	3	4	6	5
Middle Atlantic.....	13	12	12	12	10	15	15	14	11	11
East North Central.....	13	15	16	13	14	11	13	9	15	12
West North Central.....	7	6	7	6	10	6	4	9	8	9
South Atlantic.....	19	17	19	23	16	19	16	17	21	20
East South Central.....	5	7	5	6	7	3	4	3	7	6
West South Central.....	11	10	11	9	14	8	12	10	11	9
Mountain.....	8	8	8	10	9	7	8	7	7	12
Pacific.....	20	20	19	18	17	25	25	27	15	16

Methodology

ecoAmerica designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online on August 27-September 10, 2021 using Survey Monkey. The survey yielded a total of 1,110 complete adult responses. The sample was drawn from an online panel and the respondents were screened to ensure that they were over the age of 18. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3%. In interpreting the survey results, it is important to note that all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from the results that would be obtained if the entire population was interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of the responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of the respondents in a sample of 1,110 respondents answered, “Yes” to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within 3 points, or range from 47% to 53%.

Suggested Citation

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For survey results from New York, California, and Georgia, view the [state topline](#)s.

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ecoAmerica does not hold a formal position on nuclear energy.

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