

**BACKYARD BURNING  
TELEPHONE SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

**PRE-INTERVIEW STATEMENT**

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. We're talking with people from in your region today about residential trash disposal and the backyard burning of household trash. This information will be used for research purposes only, and your participation is completely voluntary. Your views are very valuable to us, and we would appreciate it if you could spend some time to help us with our research.

**SCREENING QUESTIONS**

A. Are you at least 18 years of age?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / Refuse [THANK AND TERMINATE]

**<IF QA=1, GO TO Q1; IF QA=2, GO TO QB>**

B. Is there anyone else living there who is 18 years of age or older?

1. Yes
2. No [THANK AND TERMINATE]
3. Don't know / Refuse [TERMINATE AND TALLY AS REFUSAL]

**<IF QB=1, GO TO QC; IF QB=2, THANK AND TERMINATE>**

C. May I speak with that person, please? (NOTE: If unavailable, arrange for a callback.)

1. Yes
2. No, not available now
3. Don't know / Refuse [THANK AND TERMINATE]

**<IF QC=1, REPEAT INTRO AND ASK QA; IF QC=2, THANK AND TERMINATE>**

**INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS**

To make sure that we're interviewing people who qualify for this survey, I need to ask a few questions that tell me about you and the area where you live. All comments you make during the course of the interview will be treated in the strictest of confidence and no responses will be attributed to individuals.

1. First of all, please tell me what town and state you live in.

1. Town of \_\_\_\_\_
2. State of \_\_\_\_\_
3. Refuse

2. And what county is that in?
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Don't know / not sure
  3. Refuse
  
3. How long have you lived in this area? Would you say... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
  1. Less than 1 year
  2. 1 to 5 years
  3. 5 to 10 years
  4. More than 10 years
  5. All of your life
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
  
4. Do you work as a member of a town, county, or state government? (ACCEPT full-time, part-time, or volunteer)  
[NOTE: Someone who would be in a position to have knowledge of issues facing a town, county, or state, such as a town council member, school board member, public health official, etc.]
  1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
  
5. Do you work as a firefighter, either as a volunteer or full-time?
  1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
  
6. How would you describe the area where you live? Would you say it is ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
  1. Very rural
  2. Somewhat rural
  3. Not very rural
  4. Not rural at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
  
7. To the best of your knowledge, how many people would you say live in your town? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
  1. Less than 1,000
  2. Between 1,000 and 10,000
  3. Between 10,000 and 25,000
  4. More than 25,000
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

## GENERAL BACKYARD BURNING QUESTIONS

READ: For the purposes of this research, we define “**backyard burning**” as the disposal of household trash by burning it in a barrel or open pit. And, by “**household trash**,” we mean waste items produced in the home during the course of a normal day, such as paper, cardboard, food wastes, etc., but not items such as tires, yard waste, or other things that are normally disposed of only once or twice a year. [NOTE: Respondents may consider trash burned by small businesses when answering, but they should not be encouraged to do so.]

Now, thinking about the area where you live,

8. In your opinion, what do you think is *the main reason* that people burn their household trash? In other words, what would you say is the main motivation for people to use backyard burn barrels? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS) (ACCEPT FIRST RESPONSE ONLY)

1. Convenience
2. Habit or custom
3. Avoided cost
4. Lack of collection service
5. Avoided landfill disposal
6. Privacy
7. Unaware of harmful effects
8. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (DO NOT READ)
9. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
10. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

9. How big of a problem do you think backyard burning is there? Would you say it is ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. A very big problem
2. Somewhat of a problem
3. Not much of a problem
4. Not a problem at all
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

10. In general, how do you think *most* people feel about backyard burning to dispose of household trash? Would you say that most people are ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very much in favor of eliminating backyard burning
2. Somewhat in favor of eliminating backyard burning
3. Somewhat against eliminating backyard burning
4. Very much against eliminating backyard burning
5. Don't care at all about the issue of backyard burning
6. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
7. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

11. Do you think that eliminating the practice of backyard burning is a priority for your local government (town or county government)? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

12. Some people may have practiced backyard burning for many years and may not be willing to stop. In your opinion, what would be the best way to change these people's minds and to get them to stop burning their household trash? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS) (ACCEPT FIRST RESPONSE ONLY)
1. Educate them about the adverse health effects associated with backyard burning
  2. Strictly enforce the bans or restrictions by making them pay fines or citations
  3. Make trash removal services more affordable
  4. Make transfer station more convenient
  5. Make recycling more convenient
  6. Nothing will ever change their minds and get them to stop
  7. Nothing, they should be left alone
  8. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (DO NOT READ)
  9. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  10. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
13. In your opinion, how knowledgeable do you think that most people are of the harmful environmental impacts and human health effects from backyard burning? (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very knowledgeable
  2. Somewhat knowledgeable
  3. Not very knowledgeable
  4. Not knowledgeable at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
14. Again, in your opinion, how knowledgeable do you think most people are of the fire hazards associated with backyard burning? (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very knowledgeable
  2. Somewhat knowledgeable
  3. Not very knowledgeable
  4. Not knowledgeable at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
15. Still, in your opinion, do you think that most people consider backyard burning to be a local, state, or nationwide problem? (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Local
  2. State
  3. Nationwide
  4. Not a problem at any level (DO NOT READ)
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

## **BANS OR RESTRICTIONS**

16. Are you aware of any bans or restrictions on backyard burning in your area?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

**<IF Q16=1, GO TO Q17; IF Q=2-4, GO TO Q20>**

17. To the best of your knowledge, is this ban or restriction a state law, a local law, or both?

1. State law
2. Local law
3. Both a state and a local law
4. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
5. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

18. Again, to the best of your knowledge, how long has this ban or restriction been in effect?  
(READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Less than one year
2. One to two years
3. Two to five years
4. Five years or more
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

19. In your opinion, do you think that most people are aware of these bans or restrictions?  
Would you say most people are ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very aware
2. Somewhat aware
3. Not very aware
4. Not aware at all
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

20. Do you recall seeing any television commercials, reading any newspaper ads, hearing any radio ads, or seeing anything else that talks about bans or restrictions?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

**<IF Q20=1, GO TO Q21; IF Q20=2-4, GO TO Q25>**

21. And where specifically did you see this information (in what form)? (DO NOT READ OPTIONS) (ACCEPT MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE)

1. Pamphlets
2. Advertised in local newspaper
3. Advertised on local television
4. Notified through the mail
5. Materials handed out door-to-door
6. The Internet (website or e-mail)
7. Word-of-mouth
8. Outreach at community events
9. Local officials did nothing at all
10. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

22. In general, since the bans or restrictions were put in place, how much of a change have you noticed in the rate of asthma, respiratory illnesses, heart disease, and other adverse health effects in your area? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Adverse health effects have decreased a great deal
2. Adverse health effects have decreased slightly
3. Adverse health effects have stayed about the same
4. Adverse health effects have increased slightly
5. Adverse health effects have increased a great deal
6. Too early to tell (DO NOT READ)
7. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

23. How successful do you think these bans or restrictions have been in encouraging individuals to stop backyard burning? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very successful
2. Somewhat successful
3. Somewhat unsuccessful
4. Not successful at all
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

24. On a scale of one to ten, where *one means not successful at all* and *ten means extremely successful*, how would you rate the success of the bans or restrictions on backyard burning?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7
8. 8
9. 9
10. 10
11. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

<IF Q24=1-4, GO TO Q24a; IF Q24=5-10, GO TO Q24b; IF Q24=11, GO TO Q25>

24a. What would you say is the main reason for the failure of the bans or restrictions to discourage the practice of backyard burning?

1. [OPEN QUESTION]
2. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
3. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

24b. What would you say is the main reason for the success of the bans or restrictions to discourage the practice of backyard burning?

1. [OPEN QUESTION]
2. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
3. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

## **ENFORCEMENT AND REGULATION**

Now, I'd like to talk just a minute about enforcing backyard burning bans and regulations.

25. In your opinion, do you think that the existing fines or penalties are strict enough to discourage people from backyard burning? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

26. How strongly do you believe that *increasing* the fines or penalties for backyard burning would discourage people from burning their household trash? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very strongly
2. Somewhat strongly
3. Not very strongly
4. Not strongly at all
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

27. How active do think that most people are in reporting those who burn their household trash? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very active in reporting backyard burning
2. Somewhat active in reporting backyard burning
3. Not very active in reporting backyard burning
4. Not active at all in reporting backyard burning
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

28. Do you think that backyard burning regulations are adequately enforced in your area?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

<IF Q28=2, GO TO Q28a; IF Q28=1 OR 3, GO TO Q29>

- 28a. What do you think is the main reason that backyard burning regulations are not adequately enforced within your area?
1. [OPEN QUESTION]
  2. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  3. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
29. How aggressive do you think local officials have been in enforcing the regulations? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very aggressive
  2. Somewhat aggressive
  3. Not very aggressive
  4. Not at all aggressive
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
30. Overall, how responsive do you think local officials are to backyard burning complaints? Would you say they are ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Extremely responsive to complaints
  2. Somewhat responsive to complaints
  3. Not very responsive to complaints
  4. Not responsive at all to complaints
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
31. And who is responsible for enforcing these regulations in your area? (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Local police department
  2. Local fire department
  3. Department of Agriculture agent
  4. Forest Service agent
  5. Not enforced at all
  6. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (DO NOT READ)
  7. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  8. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
32. In your opinion, what is *the one thing* that local (town or county) government officials could do to adequately enforce the regulations on backyard burning? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS) (ACCEPT FIRST RESPONSE ONLY)
1. More aggressive enforcement
  2. Increase fines and penalties
  3. Make public more aware through outreach campaigns
  4. Offer affordable curbside trash removal
  5. Make recycling facilities more convenient/accessible
  6. Nothing
  7. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  8. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

33. Again, in your opinion, do you think that eliminating the practice of backyard burning should be the responsibility of local governments, or should it be left to state governments?
1. Local government
  2. State government
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

#### **PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS**

34. In some towns or communities, local or state officials or health officers use public education campaigns to make people aware of the dangers and harmful health effects from backyard burning. Are you aware of any outreach efforts to discourage people from burning their household trash? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

**<IF Q34=1, GO TO Q35; IF Q34=2-3, GO TO Q44>**

35. What types of public education campaigns about backyard burning have there been? (DO NOT READ OPTIONS) (ACCEPT MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE)

1. Pamphlets
2. Advertised in local newspaper
3. Advertised on local television
4. Notified through the mail
5. Materials handed out door-to-door
6. The Internet (website or e-mail)
7. School programs (aimed specifically at children)
8. Word-of-mouth
9. Local officials did nothing at all
10. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

36. How available would you say that public education materials are to the people? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very available
2. Somewhat available
3. Somewhat unavailable
4. Not available at all
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

37. What would you say the public education campaigns are mostly concerned with? (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. The bans or restrictions in place where you live
  2. The possible health effects due to using backyard burn barrels
  3. What should and shouldn't be burned in backyard burn barrels
  4. What alternatives to backyard burn barrels exist where you live (for instance, trash pick-up, landfills, recycling programs, etc.)
  5. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (DO NOT READ)
  6. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
38. How clear do you think this message is to most people? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very clear
  2. Somewhat clear
  3. Somewhat unclear
  4. Not clear at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
39. In your opinion, do you think that the public education materials helped to inform most people about backyard burning?
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
40. To the best of your knowledge, did these public education materials supply a telephone number, Internet website address, or some other means of contacting someone if you wanted to ask questions or wanted more information?
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
41. How responsive do you think people are to the education campaigns? In other words, how motivated do you think people are to limit or stop burning their household trash as a result of these public education campaigns? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very motivated
  2. Somewhat motivated
  3. Not very motivated
  4. Not motivated at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

42. Again, on a scale of one to ten, where *one means not successful at all* and *ten means extremely successful*, how would you rate the success of the public education campaigns?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7
8. 8
9. 9
10. 10
11. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

43. To the best of your knowledge, is the success of these public education campaigns being measured or monitored in any way?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

**<IF Q43=1, GO TO Q43a; IF Q43=2-4, GO TO Q44>**

43a. And how is the success being measured?

1. [OPEN QUESTION]
2. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
3. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

44. To your knowledge, were there any public education campaigns in local schools or directed specifically toward children?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

45. How important do you think it is to educate children about the adverse health effects of backyard burning? (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not very important
4. Not important at all
5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

46. In your opinion, what would be *the most effective* type of public education campaign to stop people from burning their household trash? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS — PROMPT IF NECESSARY) (ACCEPT FIRST RESPONSE ONLY)
1. Pamphlets
  2. Advertised in local newspaper
  3. Advertised on local television
  4. Notified through the mail
  5. Materials handed out door-to-door
  6. Website or e-mail
  7. School programs (aimed specifically at children)
  8. Word-of-mouth
  9. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (DO NOT READ)
  10. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
47. Again, in your opinion, what should be *the main focus* of these public education materials and their message? In other words, what do people need to know that would change their minds about backyard burning? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. The bans or restrictions in place
  2. The possible health effects due to backyard burning
  3. What should and shouldn't be burned
  4. Reducing the nuisance of neighborhood smoke, bad smells, and breathing difficulties
  5. The potential of fire hazards associated with backyard burning
  6. What alternatives to backyard burning exist (for instance, trash pick-up, transfer stations, recycling programs, etc.)
  7. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (DO NOT READ)
  8. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

### **ALTERNATIVES TO BACKYARD BURNING**

Now, to change the subject just a bit, I'd like to talk a little about alternatives to backyard burning.

48. Is there a trash removal service available in your area? [READ IF NECESSARY: A trash removal service, for instance, is when a company comes to your home once or twice a week on a regular basis to pick up and haul away your garbage.] (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Yes
  2. Yes, but only in some areas
  3. No, but it will be in the future
  4. No, not anymore
  5. No, not at all
  6. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
49. In your opinion, how effective do you think a trash removal service would be/is in discouraging people from burning their household trash? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very effective
  2. Somewhat effective
  3. Not very effective
  4. Not effective at all

5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
50. How much do you think most people would be willing to pay *each month* to have a trash removal service haul away their household trash? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Less than \$10
  2. \$10 to \$15
  3. \$15 to \$20
  4. \$20 to \$25
  5. More than \$25.00
  6. Nothing at all / they wouldn't be willing to pay anything
  7. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  8. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
51. Is there a transfer station available in your area? [READ IF NECESSARY: A transfer station is a public landfill or town dump where residents can dispose of their garbage.] (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Yes
  2. Yes, but only in some areas
  3. No, but it will be in the future
  4. No, not at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
52. In your opinion, how effective do you think a transfer station would be/is in discouraging people from burning their household trash? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very effective
  2. Somewhat effective
  3. Not very effective
  4. Not effective at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
53. Similarly, some towns have a recycling program or make recycling facilities available for people that live there. Is there a recycling program or recycling facility available in your area? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Yes
  2. Yes, but only in some areas
  3. No, but it will be in the future
  4. No, not at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)

**<IF Q53=1 OR 2, GO TO Q53a; IF Q=3-5, GO TO Q54>**

- 53a. Does the recycling program or recycling facility offer any type of incentives for people to recycle? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  4. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

54. In your opinion, how effective do you think a recycling program or recycling facility would be/is in discouraging people from burning their household trash? Would you say ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. Very effective
  2. Somewhat effective
  3. Not very effective
  4. Not effective at all
  5. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

### **DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS**

Finally, I need to ask just a few more questions to help us categorize the people participating in this survey. As I said before, all your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

55. First, in which of the following age groups would you include yourself? Are you between ... (READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)
1. 18 to 25 years of age
  2. 26 to 35 years of age
  3. 36 to 45 years of age
  4. 46 to 55 years of age
  5. Over the age of 55
  6. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
56. Gender (DO NOT READ)
1. Male
  2. Female
57. Next, what is your race or ethnic background? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS) (ACCEPT FIRST RESPONSE ONLY)
1. Caucasian
  2. African-American
  3. Hispanic
  4. Asian
  5. Native American
  6. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  7. Refuse (DO NOT READ)
58. How many people, including children, live in your household?
1. One
  2. Two
  3. Three
  4. Four
  5. Five or more
  6. Don't know / not sure (DO NOT READ)
  7. Refuse (DO NOT READ)

### **CONCLUSION STATEMENT**

Thank you for taking part in this research, your comments are very valuable to us.