

BACKYARD BURNING SURVEY

The following is an example of the type of survey local officials can use to gather information on public opinion and community needs regarding the issues of trash disposal and open burning. It is included on the CD in this form for distribution as a written questionnaire as well as in a phone survey format.

We're gathering information from people in your region 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.

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.

All comments you make on this survey will be treated in the strictest of confidence and no responses will be attributed to individuals. Please **circle the number to the left or fill in the blanks** to select your answer for each question.

1. Which of the following age groups would you include yourself?
 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

2. What is your gender?
 1. Male
 2. Female

3. How many people, including children, live in your household?
 1. One
 2. Two
 3. Three
 4. Four
 5. Five or more

4. What town do you live in? _____

5. How long have you lived in this area?
 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. Do you work as a member of a town, county, or state government?

1. Yes
2. No

7. Do you work as a firefighter, either as a volunteer or full-time?

1. Yes
2. No

8. How big of a problem do you think backyard burning is in your community?

1. A very big problem
2. Somewhat of a problem
3. Not much of a problem
4. Not a problem at all

9. In general, how do you think *most* people feel about backyard burning to dispose of household trash?

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

10. Do you think that eliminating the practice of backyard burning is a priority for your local government (town or county government)?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

11. In your opinion, how knowledgeable do you think that most people are of the harmful environmental impacts and human health effects from backyard burning?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Somewhat knowledgeable
3. Not very knowledgeable
4. Not knowledgeable at all

12. In your opinion, how knowledgeable do you think most people are of the fire hazards associated with backyard burning?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Somewhat knowledgeable
3. Not very knowledgeable
4. Not knowledgeable at all

13. 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

14. Is there a trash removal service available in your area? (*Note: 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.*)
 1. Yes
 2. No
 3. I don't know

15. In your opinion, how effective do you think a trash removal service would be/is in discouraging people from burning their household trash?
 1. Very effective
 2. Somewhat effective
 3. Not very effective
 4. Not effective at all

16. 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?
 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

17. Is there a transfer station available in your area? (*Note: a transfer station is a public landfill or town dump where residents can dispose of their garbage.*)
 1. Yes
 2. No
 3. I don't know

18. In your opinion, how effective do you think a transfer station would be/is in discouraging people from burning their household trash?
 1. Very effective
 2. Somewhat effective
 3. Not very effective
 4. Not effective at all

19. 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?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. I don't know
20. 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?
1. Very effective
 2. Somewhat effective
 3. Not very effective
 4. Not effective at all
21. Do you think that the public education materials are needed to inform most people about backyard burning?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. I don't know
22. In your opinion, what would be *the most effective* type of public education campaign to stop people from burning their household trash? (Select one.)
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: _____
23. 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?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. I don't know

**IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO QUESTION #23, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 24-25.
IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION #26.**

24. 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?

1. Very motivated
2. Somewhat motivated
3. Not very motivated
4. Not motivated at all

25. 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? Circle one:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO QUESTION #26, PLEASE ANSWER THE REMAINING QUESTIONS. IF NOT, YOUR SURVEY IS COMPLETE. THANK YOU.

27. 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

28. To the best of your knowledge, how long has this ban or restriction been in effect?

1. Less than one year
2. One to two years
3. Two to five years
4. Five years or more

29. In your opinion, how aware do you think that most people are of these bans or restrictions?

1. Very aware
2. Somewhat aware
3. Not very aware
4. Not aware at all

30. 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. I don't know
31. How successful do you think these bans or restrictions have been in encouraging individuals to stop backyard burning?
1. Very successful
 2. Somewhat successful
 3. Somewhat unsuccessful
 4. Not successful at all
32. 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?
Circle one:
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
33. Do you think that backyard burning regulations are adequately enforced in your area?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. I don't know
34. Overall, how responsive do you think local officials are to backyard burning complaints?
1. Extremely responsive to complaints
 2. Somewhat responsive to complaints
 3. Not very responsive to complaints
 4. Not responsive at all to complaints
35. And who is responsible for enforcing these regulations in your area?
1. Local police department
 2. Local fire department
 3. Department of Agriculture agent
 4. Forest Service agent
 5. Not enforced at all
 6. Other: _____

END OF SURVEY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.