



Key Findings of America's Environmental Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors*

Environmental Knowledge

Americans do know a lot about some environmental issues:

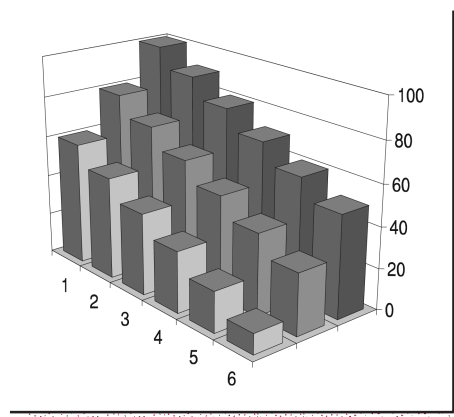
- 83% know garbage ends up in landfills
- 73% know that species loss is primarily due to habitat loss
- 69% know motor vehicles are a primary source of air pollution

Americans do not know very much about other environmental issues:

- Only 23% identified runoff as the leading cause of water pollution
- 47% thought dumping of waste by factories is the major cause of water pollution
- Only 33% know that burning fossil fuels is the primary method for generating electricity and understand the impact this has on air quality

Overall, 2 out of 3 Americans do not receive a "passing grade" of correctly answering 70% of the questions on the 12-question environmental test.

* Adapted from "The National Report Card on Environmental Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors: The Sixth Annual Survey of Adult Americans" conducted by the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation and Roper Starch Worldwide (November 1997). The findings are based on a survey of 1,501 participants. For more information, contact NEETF by telephone at 202-628-8200 or visit their World Wide Web site at <<http://www.neetf.org>>.



Concern About the Environment

Americans strongly support environmental protection:

- Most felt that environmental protection and economic development can co-exist
- Most felt that the federal government should spend more on environmental programs

Most Americans are fairly optimistic about our ability to solve environmental problems:

- Over two-thirds of the respondents felt that technology will be helpful in finding solutions to environmental problems

Environmental Education in the Schools

Americans strongly support environmental education in the schools:

- 95% of Americans (and 96% of parents) support environmental education in the schools

Adults need environmental education too:

- No evidence was found to support the notion that parents with school-age children who are learning about the environment in their classroom know more about the environment than adults who do not have school-age children

Environmental Knowledge, Concern, and Behaviors are Inter-Related

Environmental knowledge affects beliefs and attitudes about the environment:

- Individuals with greater knowledge about the environment are more likely to believe that economic development and environmental protection can co-exist
- These individuals are also more optimistic about our ability to protect the environment