

2009 Green Light Report Summary

The 2009 Green Light Report follows the first Green Light Report produced in 2008 and details changes in the environmental attitudes, behaviours and household features of Victorians.

Data collection for the 2009 Green Light Report comprised a telephone survey of a random sample of 2,150 Victorians, 15 years or older. An additional 3,096 interviews were conducted in 15 local government areas (LGAs). All interviews took place in February and March 2009.

Below is a summary of the 2009 Green Light Report.

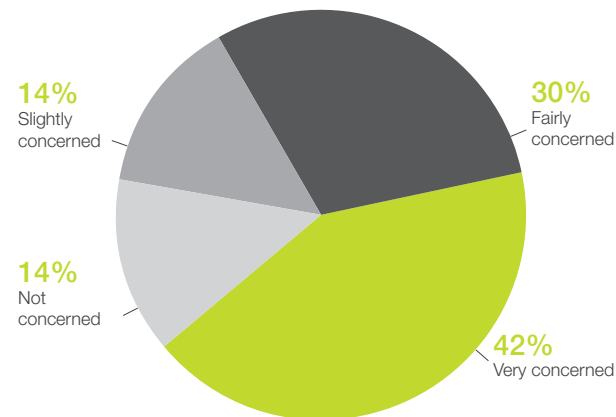
Personal environmental attitudes and beliefs

In 2009, 86% of Victorians expressed concern about the environment.

As shown in Figure 1, 42% of Victorians were very concerned about the present state of the environment, an increase of 4% since 2008.

Figure 1.

Concern about the environment



Base: All respondents (n = 2,150)

Young males aged 15–24 were most likely to say they were not concerned about the environment (29%), while older females (45 years plus) were more likely to be very concerned (58%).

Key considerations for the Victorian Government

Eighteen per cent of Victorians nominated (without prompting) an environmental issue as the most important issue for the Victorian Government's attention. At least 1 in 10 also nominated education, public transport, health and the economy.

The most important environmental issues nominated for the Victorian Government's attention were lack of water (53%) and climate change issues (26%).

Most Victorians (89%) agree the Government should consider environmental concerns when making decisions, and support government investment in renewable energy sources.

Environmental attitudes

Most Victorians feel they can do something about the environment as individuals (86%) and feel it is worth doing something to help the environment even if others do not (79%).

These sentiments have declined in the last year, however. More Victorians feel climate change effects are too far in the future to really worry them and that cost is a barrier. This suggests the community has lost some confidence in being able to personally influence climate change.

Regarding knowledge of climate change, 23% of Victorians feel very well informed while 56% feel fairly well informed about this issue.

Personal sustainability behaviour

In 2009:

- 71% of Victorians had often taken a short shower of four minutes or less, up from 64% in 2008.
- 64% had often avoided plastic bags to carry shopping home in 2009, up from 60% in 2008.
- 30% had often turned off their television at the powerpoint.
- 35% had often deliberately chosen products with less packaging.
- 22% had often talked to their friends about being environmentally friendly.
- 73% had purchased locally grown fruit and vegetables, up from 65% in 2008.
- 50% had grown their own fruit and vegetables, up from 42% in 2008.
- 38% had reduced their consumption of red meat, up from 29% in 2008.
- 55% usually made short trips of about 2 kms by walking, cycling or public transport.
- 7% had travelled by air and offset their carbon emissions, a significant increase on 3% in 2008.

Household sustainability

Water

Since 2008, there are more homes with rainwater tanks (up 4% to 34% of households), particularly in Melbourne, up 4% to 26% in 2009.

The presence of dual-flush toilets (88%), low-flow showerheads (71%) and professionally installed greywater recycling systems (8%) remains unchanged from 2008, although there has been an increase in front-loading washing machines (28% from 25% in 2008).

Energy

Most households use gas for hot water (69%, up from 66% in 2008). This is well above the use of electric (27%) and solar (3%) hot water systems.

For space heating, gas is the fuel used most often (70%), followed by electric heating (23%) and wood (10%, down from 13% in 2008).

Just 2% of households use solar panels to generate electricity.



2009 Green Light Report

Victorians and the Environment Summary



Conclusion

Despite a slight loss of confidence in being able to personally influence climate change, Victorians are increasingly 'very concerned' about the environment and generally continue to pursue environmentally sustainable behaviours with a number of these more prevalent since 2008.

The full *2009 Green Light Report* and multimedia version are available online from Sustainability Victoria www.sustainability.vic.gov.au

Hard copies of the report, the technical report and detailed tables are available from Sustainability Victoria, **1300 363 744**.

© Copyright State of Victoria

The *Green Light Report* is a Victorian Government initiative. It was commissioned by Sustainability Victoria and in 2009, produced in partnership with the Department of Sustainability and Environment and EPA Victoria.

Printed on 100% recycled paper

Improving household sustainability

Victorians aim to improve the sustainability of their homes in the next year:

- 24% of households said they were likely to install rainwater tanks.
- 44% (up from 39% in 2008) said they were likely to install a solar hot water system.
- 10% were likely to install low-flow showerheads.
- 3% were likely to install insulation.
- Almost 2 in 3 households using a cooling thermostat setting below 26°C were willing to raise the temperature, up from just under 1 in 3 in 2008. Households were also more willing to try a lower setting on heating thermostats than in 2008.

Local government area summary

Residents of regional Victoria, particularly Glenelg, were more likely to have grown their own fruit and vegetables (58% versus 47% of Melbourne residents). In the metropolitan area, residents of Darebin (61%), Mornington Peninsula (62%) and Yarra Ranges (57%) were more likely to have done this than the average Melbourne resident.

Regional Victorians were also more likely to have purchased locally grown fruit and vegetables (79% versus 71% of Melbourne residents). In the metropolitan area, however, this was above average in Melton, Mornington Peninsula and Yarra Ranges (all 80%).

The use of public transport, cycling or walking for short trips was much more likely in the metropolitan area where distances are usually shorter and infrastructure (e.g. bike lanes) more available (59% use these methods for short trips versus 46% in regional Victoria). This was particularly the case for Port Phillip (88%), Darebin (78%), Stonnington (75%) and Boroondara (67%).

Multiple refrigerators and stand-alone freezers (64% versus 41% of Melbourne households) were more likely to be found in regional Victoria, as were multiple televisions (68% versus 62% of metropolitan households), although not in Colac-Otway (55%).

In the last 12 months, more households use more than one fridge or stand-alone freezer (48% in 2009, 43% in 2008) and more than one television set (64% in 2009, 58% in 2008). On average, each Victorian household now has two television sets. The presence of plasma screens (up 7% to 20%) and LCD screens (up 10% to 29%) has increased markedly since 2008.

Most Victorian households have insulation of some kind (79%) and most use door snakes or other forms of draught proofing (57%).

In winter, 19% of households heat the entire house, not just rooms in use. Further, 26% use a heating thermostat setting above 20°C in winter. In summer, 33% use a cooling system setting of 25°C or lower.

Compact fluorescent light globes (CFLs) usage has increased in households, from 62% in 2008 to 66% in 2009. On average, households have 9.2 CFLs in 2009, up from 7.8 in 2008. Halogen downlights are in 40% of households.

Waste and recycling

Most Victorian households have bins for general waste (98%) and recycling (94%). In 2009, more households have a green waste bin (64%, up from 59% in 2008).

On average, households produce an estimated 12.9 kg of general waste and 6.1 kg of general recycling material each week.

Almost half of Victorian households (44%) often compost their food or garden waste.

Transport

On average, Victorian households have 1.7 registered motor vehicles. Only 1% of households have a hybrid car.