

Perceptions of Air Quality in the GTA: Executive Summary

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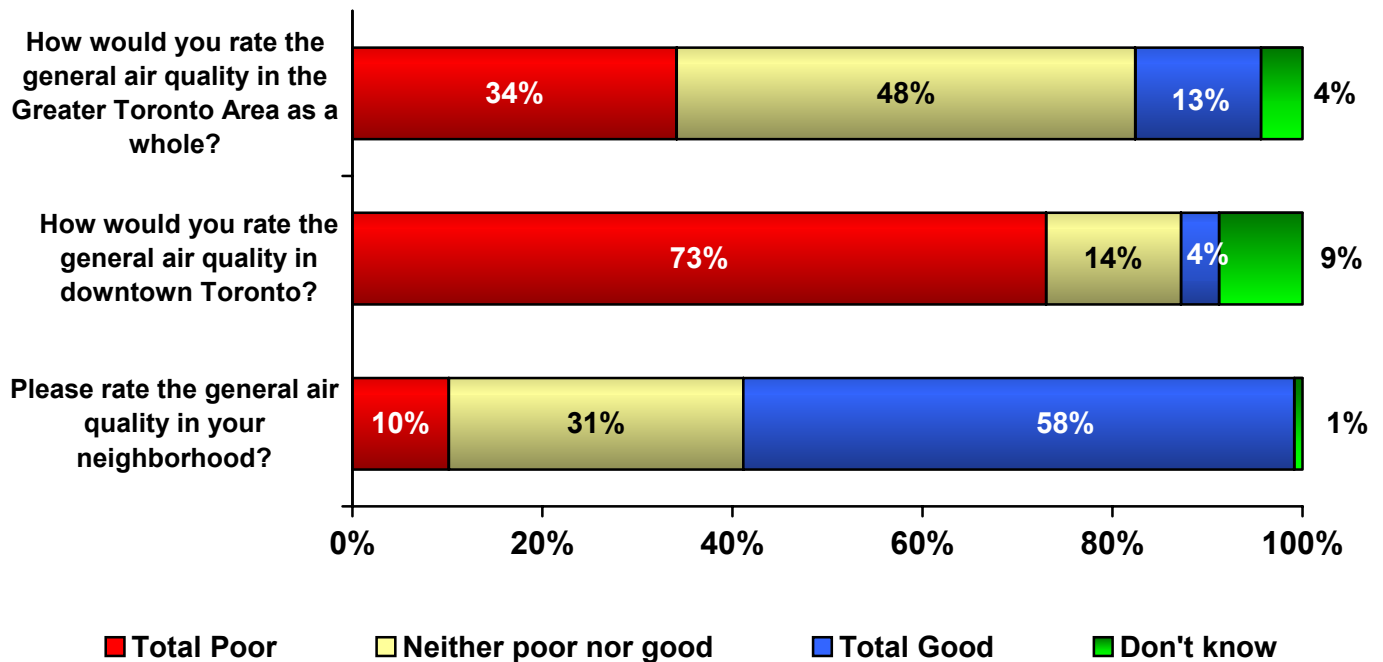
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Between May 24th and 29th a public opinion survey of voting Greater Toronto Area (GTA) residents, excluding the City of Toronto was conducted for the Clean Air Partnership.

Respondents were first asked to rate the general air quality in each of the following areas using a scale from one very poor to five very good. 452 respondents were interviewed. The margin of error \pm 4.6%, 19/20 times.

The following results of the air quality polling data collected by Oracle Research show that residents living outside downtown Toronto overestimate local air quality. Although scientific measurements of air quality collected by the Ministry of the Environment at locations across the entire GTA consistently show equally poor levels at all locations including Toronto, residents living away from the downtown have an overestimated perception of their air quality.



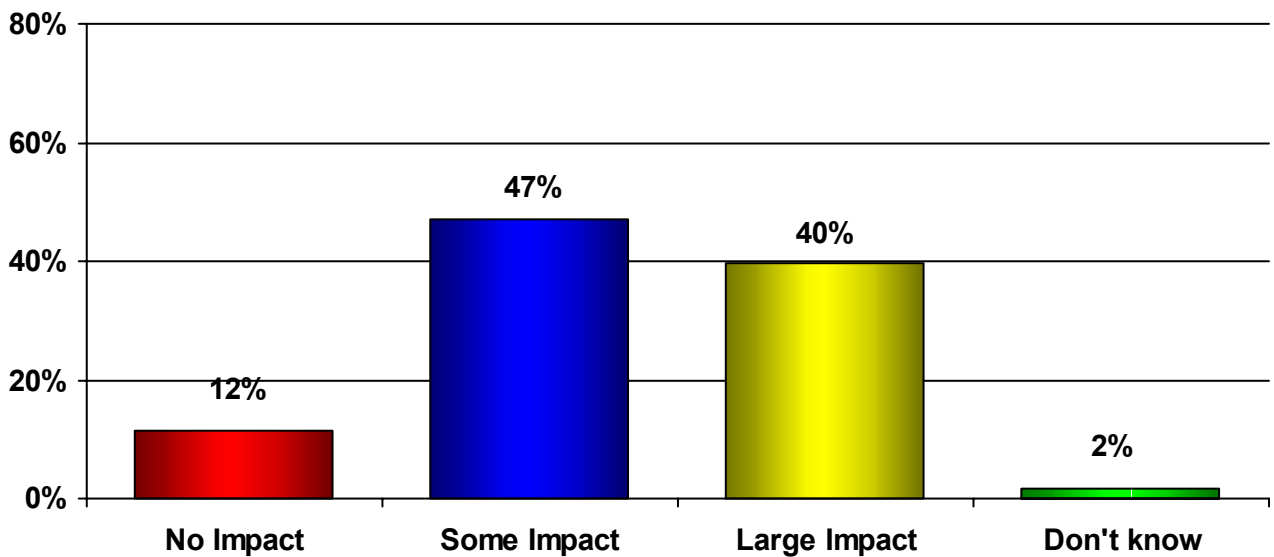
Almost six in ten Greater Toronto Area (GTA) residents rated the quality of the air in their neighborhood as good or very good, while only 10% viewed it as poor. 70% of those living in the north viewed their air quality as good, followed by 63% of those in the central area, while a lesser number in the east or 55% stated their air quality was good as did only 37% of residents in the west.

A low 13% rated the air quality of the GTA as a whole as being good or very good and only 4% had a positive opinion of the air quality in the downtown Toronto.

Air Quality and Residential Purchasing Decisions

Respondents were also asked about air quality and how it would impact on their decision to choose a community or neighborhood.

“If you were to move to another community or neighborhood, how much of an impact would that area's air quality have when you make your final decision? Would it have no impact, some impact, or a large impact?”



Air quality would influence the decision of almost nine in ten GTA residents to choose or move to another community as 47% said it would have some and 40% a large impact.

In late May, six GTA politicians took part in local air quality testing to gather information and raise awareness of the regional concerns of air quality especially for those most at risk. The politicians and the areas tested included Toronto City Councillor John Filion, Markham Deputy Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Acting Pickering Mayor Rick Johnson, Ajax Councillor Colleen Jordan, Burlington Councillor Joan Loughheed, and Peel Regional Councillor Annette Groves in Bolton.