



## NEWS RELEASE

# **NATIONAL SURVEY SHOWS CANADIANS CONCERNED ABOUT POTENTIAL THREATS TO DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES**

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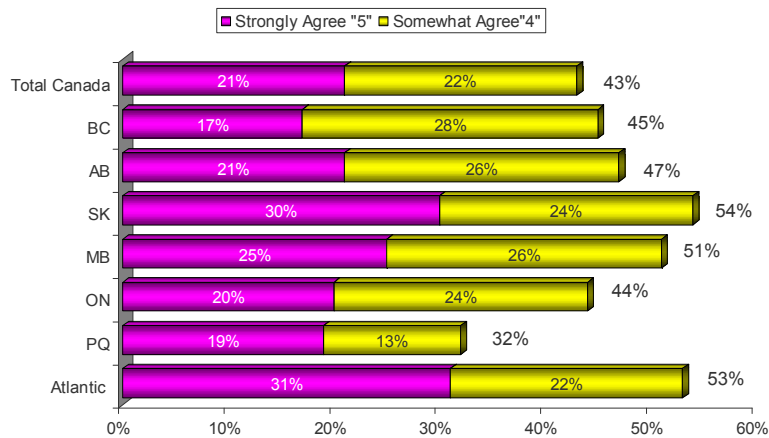
*Winnipeg, Manitoba* – According to a new national survey, fewer than one-half of Canadian adults are confident their drinking water is adequately protected from natural disasters or man-made threats such as terrorism. These findings emerged from a national telephone survey of Canadian adults taken by Probe Research, Inc. between May 23rd and June 17th, 2006 among a random and representative sampling of 2,006 Canadian adults. Other survey findings reveal residents of Atlantic Canada and Saskatchewan were most likely to express strong confidence in the security of their local drinking water supplies (31% and 30% respectively “very confident”) while those living in Quebec expressed the highest levels of anxiety about these threats to their household tap water source (21% “not at all confident”). This research was conducted as part of Probe’s third national syndicated drinking water survey entitled *A Clear Perspective of Canadians and their Drinking Water*, on behalf of subscribers from both government and private-sector organizations.

## **CANADIAN WATER SUPPLIES PERCEIVED TO BE VULNERABLE TO DISASTERS OR TERRORISM**

While only a minority of Canadians surveyed coast-to-coast felt assured that their water supplies were effectively secured (21% “very confident” and 22% “somewhat confident”), 27 percent disagreed with the statement “*I feel confident that my drinking water is adequately protected from the potential threat of vandalism, natural disasters or terrorism*”. Fully 30 percent were neutral or unsure as to the level of protection being afforded Canada’s drinking water supplies.

## Provincial Confidence in Security of Drinking Water Supplies

**Q.A2(a).** "I feel confident my drinking water is adequately protected from the potential threat of vandalism, natural disasters or terrorism". (n=2006)



(Using a 5-point scale)

Canadians' Confidence in Security of Drinking Water Supplies								
<i>"I am confident that my drinking water supplies are adequately protected from threats of vandalism, natural disasters or terrorism".</i>								
	Canada (n=2,006) %	B.C. (n=240) %	Alberta (n=204) %	Sask. (n=202) %	Man. (n=200) %	Ontario (n=500) %	Quebec (n=460) %	Atlantic (n=200) %
Very Confident	21	17	21	30	25	20	19	31
Somewhat Confident	22	28	26	24	26	24	13	22
Neutral	27	23	34	25	25	28	26	24
Not Very Confident	15	17	10	6	12	15	19	9
Not At All Confident	12	12	6	8	12	9	21	12
Unsure	4	4	3	6	2	5	2	2
Margin of Error (95% certainty)	±2.2%	±6.5%	±7.0%	±7.0%	±7.0%	±4.5%	±4.7%	±7.0%

The Canadian drinking water study conducted by Probe Research Inc. examined variations in behaviours and attitudes among different population groups. The study revealed that "Well Water Users" were twice as likely as "Municipal System Users" to express strong levels of conviction in the security of their drinking water supplies (37% versus 19% "very confident").

Those segments of the Canadian populace demonstrating the least surety regarding the security of their tap water supplies included households with higher levels of income and education. While 27 percent of households with high school or less were "very confident" that their tap water supplies were secure against potential threats, this same view was shared by just 16% of Canadians with some post-secondary education and 19% of Canadians with graduate degrees. Similarly, one quarter of households (26%) earning less than \$40k annually revealed high levels

of confidence in the security of their drinking water supplies (26% “very confident”) whereas this keen sense of assuredness was evidenced among a much smaller proportion of higher income earners (16% “very confident” among those earning \$75k or more).

**For more information on this national survey, please contact:**

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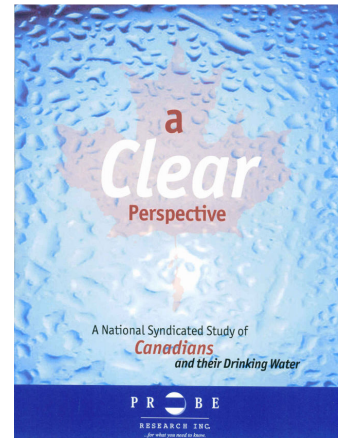
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## **A CLEAR PERSPECTIVE**

### **BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY**

Probe Research Inc. has conducted its third national analysis of Canadians' attitudes and behaviours on a wide range of drinking water issues. Entitled *A Clear Perspective of Canadians and their Drinking Water (2006)*, this comprehensive research study details Canadians' views on key drinking water issues including public confidence in drinking water supplies, evolving patterns of tap and bottled water consumption and awareness of drinking water sources and systems. The research report also tracks the degree of public support for various drinking water-related policies and practices. In addition, several new areas of enquiry are explored this year such as Canadians' efforts to conserve water and their views on the export of bulk water from Canada to the United States.



Probe Research Inc. contacted a random and representative sample of 2,006 (adult 18+) residents across Canada by telephone between May 23rd and June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006. With a sample of 2,006, one can be 95 percent certain of an accuracy rate within  $\pm 2.2$  percent (19 times out of 20) of what it would have been had the entire population of Canada been interviewed. The margin of error is higher when looking at particular sub-populations or when examining the survey results on a regional or sub-regional basis. Disproportionate sampling was applied in some regions; however, results have been statistically weighted by region to represent the entire Canadian adult population according to the most recent Statistics Canada population distributions.

The survey instrument was designed by Probe Research Inc. in close consultation with its syndicate members and was administered among adult respondents from across the country.