



FONVCA AGENDA

THURSDAY December 18th 2008

Place: DNV Hall 355 W. Queens Rd V7N 2K6

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Chair: Dan Ellis – Lynn Valley Com. Assoc.

Tel: 604-985-7880 **Email:** ellis7880@shaw.ca

Regrets: David Knee, Del Kristalovich, Val Moller

1. Order/content of Agenda

2. Adoption of Minutes of Nov 20th

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/oct2008/minutes-nov2008.pdf>

3. Old Business

Update on Community Planning Working Group
(ATTACHED)

4. Correspondence Issues

4.1 Business arising from 4 regular emails:

4.2 Non-Posted letters – 0 this period

5. New Business

Council and other District issues.

5.1 Problematic Property Taxes

<http://www.cwf.ca/V2/files/PROBLEMATIC.pdf> and summary
<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/dec2008/Summary-Canada-West-Foundation%20-Problematic-Property-Tax.pdf> (ATTACHED)

Property Tax Reforms

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/dec2008/Lethbridge-Herald-on-municipal-taxes.pdf> (ATTACHED)

5.3 Tracking Council Public Participation

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/dec2008/Public%20Participation%20in%20DNV%20Council%20Meetings.txt> (ATTACHED)

5.4 Disposable Shopping Bags

Council changed “ban” to “reduce” – see agenda item #2 of council mtg of November 24/2008.

http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/Council_Agendas_Minutes/cm081124.htm

5.5 Industrial Noise Issue: K’Nud Hille

Update on CN operational noise issues/mediation.

Some interesting news to share, also with respect to DNV’s role/authority over BCRailProperty lands. See also 6.1(b)

5.6 Tap Water Survey – Ipsos Ried

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/region/tapwater/Documents/2008DrinkingWaterSurvey.pdf>

- tap water consumption >3 times bottled water
- half still filter their tap water
- 60% have no concerns about tap water
- 33% have no concerns about bottled water
- 80% consider tap water “good-excellent”
- 74% use tap water as main source of drinking water

Summary:

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/region/tapwater/Documents/2008DrinkingWaterSurveySummary.pdf> (ATTACHED)

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Legal Issues

a)Top Court to consider FOI issue

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/dec2008/FOI.pdf>

b)Top Court rules Industries liable if they excessively annoy residents (see 2 attachments)

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/dec2008/industrial-polluters.pdf>
<http://scc.lexum.umontreal.ca/en/2008/2008scc64/2008scc64.htm>

c)Dunsmuir v New Brunswick (2008 Supreme Court of Canada) Supreme Court decided to jettison the test of “patent unreasonableness” in favour of a “simplified” test of “reasonableness”.

<http://www.sms.bc.ca/logo/pdfs/LoGo-65.pdf> (attached)

d)Dangers of Drinking and Walking

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/dec2008/Lethbridge-Herald-Drinking-and-walking.pdf> (attached)

e)Municipal Election Guide 2008

http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/library/local_elections_candidate_guide.pdf

f)UBCM wins protection from the BC/Alberta Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility agreement TILMA for Munis (see attached)

http://www.islandtides.com/assets/reprint/bcgov_20080821b.pdf

To encourage local preferences limits were changed.

Goods: \$10,000+ → \$75,000+

Services: \$75,000+ → \$75,000+

Construction: \$100,000+ → \$200,000+

6.2 Any Other Issues (2 min each)

- Election signs restrictions (cancelled) – see attached
- To many secret meetings – see attached
- On last minute council consent agendas – see attached

7. Chair & Date of next meeting.

Thursday January 15th 2009

Attachments

-List of Email to FONVCA - **ONLY NEW ENTRIES**

OUTSTANDING COUNCIL ITEMS-Cat Regulation Bylaw;

District-wide OCP; Review of Zoning Bylaw; Securing of vehicle load bylaw; Snow removal for single family homes bylaw.

Correspondence/Subject Ordered by Date
17 November 2008 → 14 December 2008

LINK	SUBJECT
http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2008/17nov-to/Brian_Platts_23nov2008.pdf	Recycling - Banning plastic grocery bags
http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2008/17nov-to/Brian_Platts_27nov2008.pdf	Recycling - Banning plastic grocery bags
http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2008/17nov-to/Christy_Goerzen_28nov2008.pdf	Misc - Capilano Library Closures
http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2008/17nov-to/Wendy_Qureshi_23nov2008.pdf	Civic Democracy - Lower Lynn Process

For details/history see

<http://www.fonvca.org/letters/index-letters-total-dec2008.html>

FONVCA MINUTES

THURSDAY November 20th 2008

Place: DNV Hall 355 W. Queens Rd V7N 2K6
Time: 7:00-9:00pm
Chair: Cathy Adams – Lions Gate Neighbourhood Assoc.
Tel:604-987-8695 Email: cathyadams@shaw.ca

Members Present:

Cathy Adams (chair)	(Lions Gate N.A.)
Dan Ellis (notes)	(Lynn Valley CA)
Corrie Kost	(Edgemont CA)
Val Moller	(Lions Gate NA)
Diana Belhouse	Delbrook C.A.
Paul Tubb	(Pemberton Hts. C.A.)
Eric Andersen	(Blueridge C.A.)
Lyle Craver	(Mt. Fromme R.A.)

Regrets:

1. Order/content of Agenda
2. Adoption of Minutes of Sept 18th

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/sep2008/minutes-sep2008.pdf>

The minutes were approved (Eric/Dan) with following corrections: Diana Belhouse (Delbrook C.A.) was present. Regrets – Lyle Craver (spelling).

Motion of item 5.2 re: Community Planning Working Group was not unanimous (Dan Ellis dissenting) – Action item 5.2 of minutes- to send letter did not take place. In light of this and passage of time it was felt too late to now send. **Cathy and Corrie will try and attend meetings of this group and report back in December.**

3. Old Business

See 5.2 below.

4. Correspondence Issues

4.1 Business arising from 8 regular emails:

Contents of the letters were outlined. Some discussion took place on letter from Alan Nixon re ordering of responses to FONVCA questions. The order posted/printed (see <http://www.fonvca.org/Issues/Election-2008/replies/>) was felt to be appropriate. No further discussion was felt necessary on the issues raised in the remaining letters.

4.2 Non-Posted letters – 0 this period

5. New Business

Council and other District issues.

5.1 State of the Air 2008 - by BC Lung association.

<http://www.bc.lung.ca/pdf/2008%20BC%20State%20of%20the%20Air%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

Some encouraging trends were shown in the statistics provided on the air quality/pollution levels in North Vancouver. For example the

average annual level of NO₂ was below 30 ug/m³ (federal guidelines being 60), while SO₂ levels were below 4 (provincial guidelines being 25 ug/m³) See also <http://www.bc.lung.ca/airquality/stateoftheair-report.html>

5.2 Questions for 2008 Municipal Election

- results accurately predicted by FoNVCA members with the average score being 9 out of a maximum possible score of 10 (6 members for council and 4 members for school board)
- disappointingly low 16.7% voter turnout
- wide variations in total eligible voters list being in contrast with population numbers; Corrie queried Clerk and got no explanation.

Corrie / Cathy to check stats for other municipalities, and possibly draft a letter to ? Provincial Returning Officer???

5.3 DNV “External Links” Policy 4-1345-1

Council policy on this matter is found at <http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/cpolicy/c413451.pdf>

Attached to distributed agenda package was Nov 18/2008 SUN article by Richard Sharpe on *Who’s policing local elections?*

It seems clear that the above DNV Council policy was not adhered to in this election. DNV CAO will be investigating this external web-links policy issue. Cathy has already sent a letter noting the issue is outstanding. Hopefully FONVCA will get a reply on this matter in due course.

5.4 Wood-Frame Construction Floor Limits

The Province will increase the limit on wood-frame construction in the BC Building Code **from four to six storeys** in January 2009. This could impact height of new proposals by developers.

http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/building/wood_frame/index.htm
http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2005-2009/2008HSD0079-001459.htm

Dan noted July '08 joint submission by APEGBC & AIBC; expressed his ongoing concern that added height and complexity will raise the stakes around diligence by responsible professionals to inspect that their designs are being faithfully executed. FoNVCA will watch how this unfolds.

5.5 Climate Change and Bill 27

Corrie noted that Bill 27 dealt with several issues related to Climate Change.

http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th4th/1st_read/gov27-1.htm

Note: Sewerage & Drainage DCC exempt for apartments < 29m² (312 sq-ft)

Section 855 of LGA was amended to remove the absolute requirement of a Regional Public Hearing – it is now optional.

Section 877 is amended by adding the following subsection:

(3) An official community plan must include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.

Oct 6th presentation on Climate Change was given to Council by Ken Bennett – however it was largely symbolic since it constitutes a lot of effort to save ~ \$1/resident/year.

3 reference articles were attached to the agenda package

- Urban Form and Climate Change article by MSURJ
- Optimizing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Housing Mix and Density
- Alternative Energy Sources by Walter Youngquist

5.6 Dennis Back Retires Nov 20th.

Concern was expressed over possible loss of corporate memory as more long term senior members of DNV staff retire.

5.7 Tax Comparison puts DNV near top.

Nov 17th Vancouver Sun Article by Don Cayo, which shows DNVmunicipal spending increased 43.1% over the past 7 years with inflation of 15.2% over that period being exceeded by a factor of 2.83. This is the second highest factor (with West Vancouver taking top spot at 62%, with inflation/growth totaling 17.4%, yielding a ration of 3.93)

However FONVCA members felt that a proper comparison requires component costs. Dan to ask thru CAO for CFO to present at a future FoNVCA meeting: high-level summary of the big-ticket items.

5.8 Inside the Secret World of Ottawa and the RCMP – by Paul Palango

Material from <http://dispersingthefog.com/> was attached to the agenda package.

The relevant question for us: Is DNV well served by the RCMP? The review of that issue is forthcoming. It is unknown when the report will be publicly available.

5.9 Public Hearing Notes of West-Van on FSR changes to SF Homes.

The relevant part of the notes of the Oct 20/2008 WV Public Hearing <http://www.westvan.org/reports/2008-30.shtml> were attached to the agenda package –provides most details as did the attached NSNEWS article of Nov 7/2008 “WV amends house “bulk” rules.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Legal Issues – Corrie briefly reviewed the following legal issues.

- Supreme court to decide this fall whether trash is public or private property. This impacts both municipal due diligence and/or the public right to access the material put out as garbage.
- Is a \$1000/day fine for using plastic bags (Leaf Rapids, Manitoba) a reasonable response?
- A full review of the impact of Bill 27 should be conducted in the near future.
- The BC Supreme Court upheld the Metro's right to impose tougher emission standards for air-quality management than the provincial requirements under its agricultural waste control regulations.

6.2 Any Other Issues (2 min each)

-Something to ponder: Whereas building more hospitals does not necessarily increase the birth rate, building more roads does not necessarily increase car use. Some FONVCA members felt that this analogy was flawed.

- Spirit Trail Planning meetings were noted on the attached flyer.
- Illusion of Transit Choice - article by Wendell Cox – was attached to the agenda for information
- An article on London's housing support for key workers was attached for information.

7. Chair & Date of next meeting.

Dan Ellis – Lynn Valley C.A.

Thursday, December 18th, 2008

The meeting was adjourned ~ 9:30 pm.

Subject: Community Planning Working Group
From: Brian Bydwell <Brian_Bydwell@dnv.org>
Date: Tue, 9 Dec 2008 17:33:56 -0800
To: "kost@triumf.ca" <kost@triumf.ca>
CC: "Richard Walton, Mayor" <waltonr@dnv.org>

Dear Corrie Kost,

Mayor Walton referred your inquiry regarding the Community Planning Working Group to me for response.

The Community Planning Working Group is a working group providing advice to staff and, in turn, for Council's consideration on the process leading to the OCP Review (in 2009-2010). As such, the Working Group is not an advisory committee of Council and it's meetings are independent and not public. The Working Group liaises with and is guided by the Steering Committee, comprised of 2 Council liaisons (Mayor Walton and Councillor Nixon), the CAO and the Director of Planning. Reports on the CPWG's progress are provided to Council at key points. The CPWG's term is to March 31, 2009 at which time a potential future role for a community planning working group(s) or advisory body will be considered by Council.

The District's website contains information on the CPWG (as you have noted) at: <http://www.dnv.org/article.asp?c=1029>. The membership, terms of reference and update report on the first four meetings of the CPWG are available on this site. Further information such as educational presentations to the CPWG are currently being added to the website. The Working Group is planning to next update Council on its progress and draft recommendations in early 2009 (tentatively Feb).

In discussion with our CAO, David Stuart, it is proposed that an update to FONVCA be provided early in the New Year regarding the upcoming OCP Review process and the role of the CPWG. The timing of this meeting will be confirmed in the near future.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions on this matter.

Regards,

Brian

Brian Bydwell MAIBC CP
Director Planning Permits and Bylaws
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Publications

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Problematic Property Tax: Why the Property Tax Fails to Measure Up and What to Do About It

► [download pdf version](#)

Property tax debates have raged for years. On one side of the street are those who complain that property taxes are too high and the tax burden is growing too rapidly. On the other side of the street stands the municipal administration who responds that property tax revenue does not always grow alongside the economy and incremental increases are needed. Standing in the middle of the street are mayors and councillors confronted with the nasty choice of “raising” taxes or “cutting” services. Given the perennial nature of the property tax debate, the Canada West Foundation has issued this position paper. The paper examines the property tax from a number of different vantage points.

Position

The property tax is the only substantial tax available for local governments in Canada, and critics of the tax are right when they claim it alone is insufficient to meet the needs of today’s large modern cities. Defenders of the tax are wrong in asserting that the property tax is the only way — or even the best way — to fund all of our varied civic endeavours. What is more, property taxes across the local government sector are not out of control, and the same can be said for property taxes in most large western Canadian cities as well. In fact, property taxes are currently at some of the lowest levels seen in the past 50 years despite claims to the contrary. The property tax may have served our cities well in the past but it is no longer up to the task. For a variety of reasons — and for better or worse — the property tax will continue to form a key part of the municipal revenue mix. But our cities should not be so singularly reliant and heavily dependent on this one tax source. The amount of property tax collected in our cities should be reduced and the gap filled with different tax options.

Essential Data

For each additional dollar paid in tax since 1961, roughly 60¢ has come in the form of more federal and provincial personal income tax and premiums paid to federal and provincial social programs. Another 25¢ has come in the form of additional federal and provincial sales tax. An additional 10¢ has come in the form of corporate income tax and miscellaneous federal and provincial taxes. Only about 5¢ out of every additional tax dollar paid since 1961 has come in the form of local government taxation. In 2007, local government taxes in Canada were 8.9% of all taxes collected. This is much lower than the 16.7% recorded in 1961. Over the 1961-2007 period, local taxes grew, on average, by 1.7% annually when adjusted for population and inflation. This is one of the lowest growth rates of any tax used by any government in Canada. For example, provincial personal income tax averaged 10.2% annual growth in real per capita terms over the same time period. Setting municipal property tax against personal disposable incomes is an important measure of the tax burden, because it is out of this income that the tax has to be paid. An analysis of property taxes in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, and Winnipeg show that municipal property taxes in 2007 are at the lowest levels relative to personal disposable income since 1990. Municipal property tax has also dwindled relative to each city’s per capita share of provincial GDP. In fact, if property taxes had kept pace with provincial GDP growth, the six cities would have collected \$1.3 billion more in property tax in 2007 alone.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Historical acceptance, an immobile and stable tax base, reliable and predictable revenues, and high visibility are often cited as positive features of the property tax. But on closer inspection, many of these advantages are not as clear and plain as many suppose. Further, the property tax carries numerous inherent disadvantages, such as a tax base that tends to expand slowly and revenue that fails to keep pace with economic and population growth. Of particular concern is the way in which the property tax is currently administered and applied. Serious equity concerns are emerging. This hits on the efficiency of the tax and is negatively affecting the degree of accountability taxpayers can expect from the tax.

Conclusion

Property tax reform is a logical starting point in terms of a policy response, but this may not be possible given the current political dynamic in most cities. Even with fundamental reform, the inherent disadvantages of the tax will remain. The challenge and opportunity is to find a way forward by employing a broader range of tax tools that can supplement the property tax. This reflects the larger international experience of cities that use a wide variety of tax mechanisms to finance local services and infrastructure.

Author(s): [Casey Vander Ploeg](#)

Lethbridge mayor says simplest tax solutions the best



Written by Gerald Gauthier

Wednesday, 26 November 2008

Lethbridge's mayor agrees with a new study indicating existing property tax systems are unfair to some taxpayers and tend to provide insufficient revenue for cities.

Where Bob Tarleck differs with the study by an Alberta think tank, however, is on how the property tax system should be reformed.

The study by the Canada West Foundation recommends allowing municipalities to diversify their revenue streams by introducing selective sales taxes that target vehicle usage and visitors, modest broad-based local sales taxes, and a small income tax to help cities fund growing social expenditures. Property taxes could be reduced, the study says, and used as a smaller base component of overall revenues.

Tarleck, on the other hand, says the same thing could be accomplished much more simply if the federal and provincial governments stopped downloading expenses to local governments and removed many of the conditions that make grants harder for municipalities to obtain.

A reform Tarleck would favour is one already implemented in Manitoba where municipalities receive a share of provincial taxes.

"The simpler solutions are the best," he says. "Rather than having another layer of personal income tax and corporate income tax, it seems to me much simpler to use the system we have and have the provincial government give a portion of that to municipalities.

"Just give us the cash on a per capita basis," he says.

"The advantage of that system is that it would get away from the very contentious issue of . . . giving municipalities more taxing power. People get very, very nervous about that," he says. "Every time municipalities have tried that, there's been a huge push-back (from the public)."

Entitled *Problematic Property Tax: Why the Property Tax Fails to Measure Up and What to Do About It*, the report tracks local government taxes in Canada over the past 50 years. It finds that from 1961-2007, the total amount of taxes collected by local governments grew by an average of only 1.7 per cent annually when adjusted for population and inflation.

In the same period, the municipal share of the total tax bill has decreased by almost half, to nine per cent, while the provincial share has doubled to 41 per cent and the federal share has shrunk to about 50 per cent.

When it comes to taxation growth, federal and provincial governments get the goldmine while cities get the shaft, says the study's author Casey Vander Ploeg, senior policy analyst for the foundation.

The property tax tends to produce revenues which fail to grow at the same pace as the economy or local populations, Vander Ploeg says.

The study was partially funded by the cities of Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon and Vancouver.

In March 2007, Tarleck publicly opposed recommendations by a council of urban and rural municipal leaders that local communities be allowed to impose new levies such as a fuel tax, an amusement tax, a tourism tax, a tax on property sales and a surcharge on vehicle registrations. The broader taxation measures were recommended to help municipalities keep up with growing demands for infrastructure and services due to Alberta's then booming economy.

"Ideally, what I'd like to see is a system that puts less emphasis on property taxation. I've never thought that property taxation was the fairest of all taxation," he says, adding the property tax bite is often the worst for seniors and others on fixed incomes.

"It's so inflexible. It doesn't adjust itself to the ability of people to be able to pay."

Read More Local News

[Drinking and walking can also be dangerous: study](#)

The dangers of drinking and driving have been driven home for years but student researchers at the University of Lethbridge are now advocating for a campaign to warn people about the dangers of drinking and walking.

[County seeks input into municipal development plan](#)

The County of Lethbridge is getting ready to release a municipal development plan, but wants to know what the public thinks of it first.

[Health-care change welcomed, as long as it's not private: Friends of Medicare](#)

Lethbridge residents had a chance Wednesday night to air their grievances with the Alberta health-care system and talk about possible solutions, and many took advantage of the opportunity.

[Close Window](#)

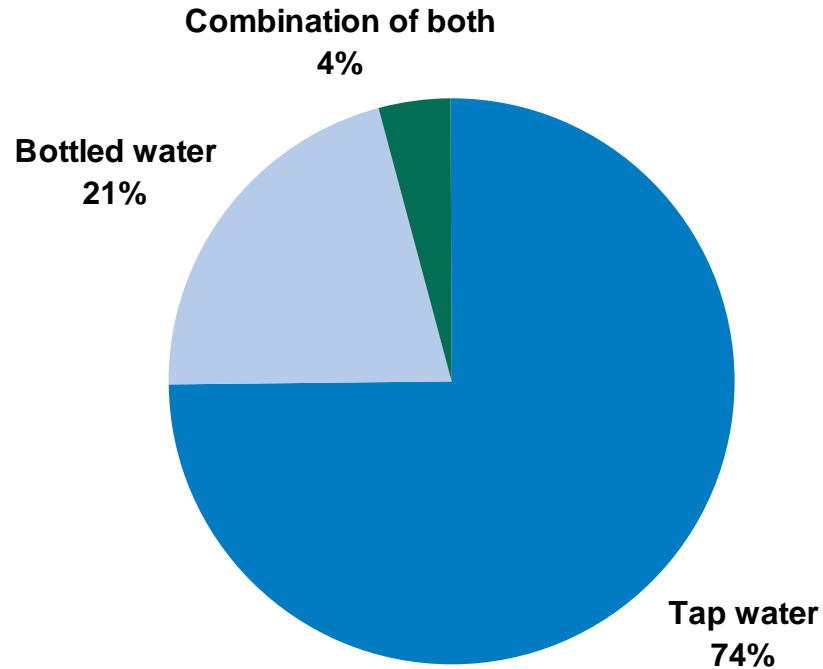
Not long ago the public was allowed to participate in about 4 weekly regular council meetings held every month.

That became Regular Council meetings held on the first and third Mondays of each month with a 30 minute public input period provided at those meetings at which members of the public can speak on any item of interest (including agenda items)

1997	44 regular council + 1 special council mtgs
1998	44 regular council + 3 special council mtgs
1999	39 regular council + 2 special council mtgs
2000	39 regular council + 9 special council mtgs
2001	38 regular council + 11 special council mtgs
2002	39 regular council + 0 special council mtgs
2003	41 regular council + 6 special council mtgs
2004	43 regular council + 2 special council mtgs
2005	37 regular council + 4 special council mtgs
2006	30 regular council + 3 special + 2 workshop council mtgs
2007	21 regular council + 3 special council mtgs
2008	20 regular council + 7 special council mtgs

Type of Drinking Water Consumed Most Often

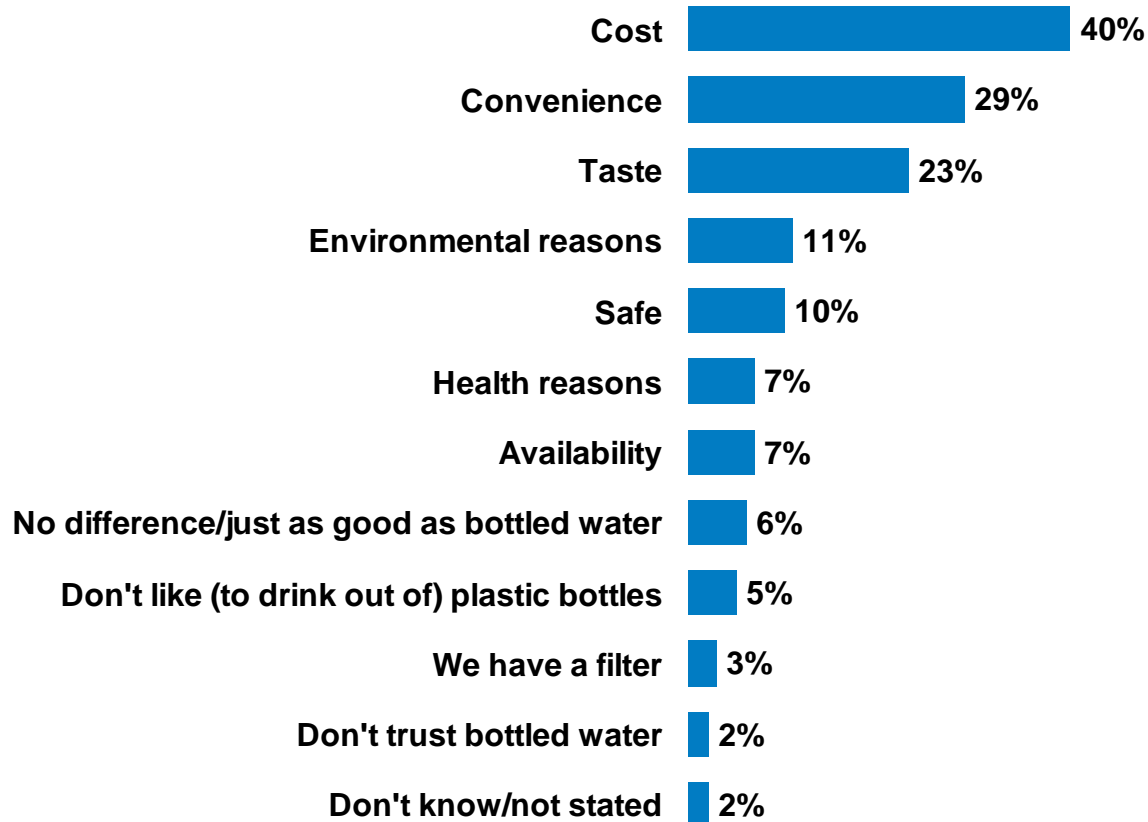
Q2. What type of drinking water do you personally consume most often? Please think about all the water that you drink in a typical day, whether that be at home, at work, or anywhere else.



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Reasons for Drinking Tap Water

Q3. What is the main reason why you usually drink tap water over bottled water? Any other reasons?



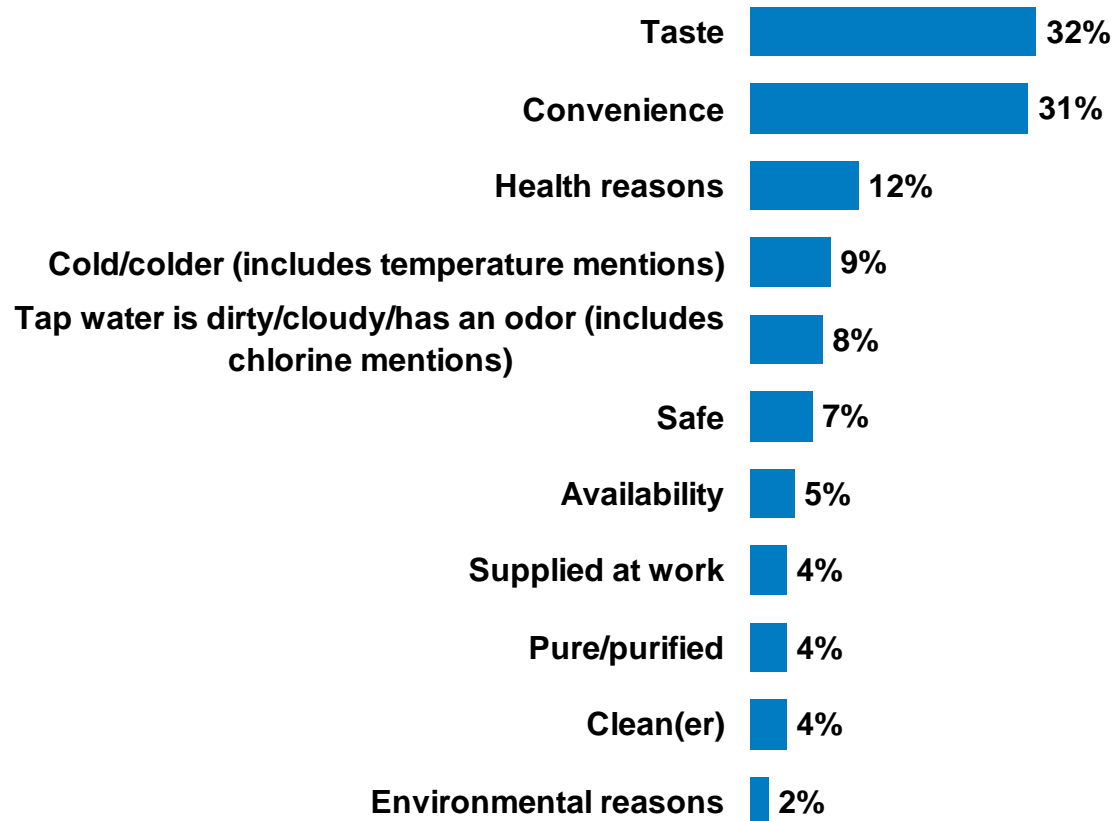
Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: Usually drink tap water (n=607)

Reasons for Drinking Bottled Water

Q4. What is the main reason why you usually drink bottled water over tap water? Any other reasons?



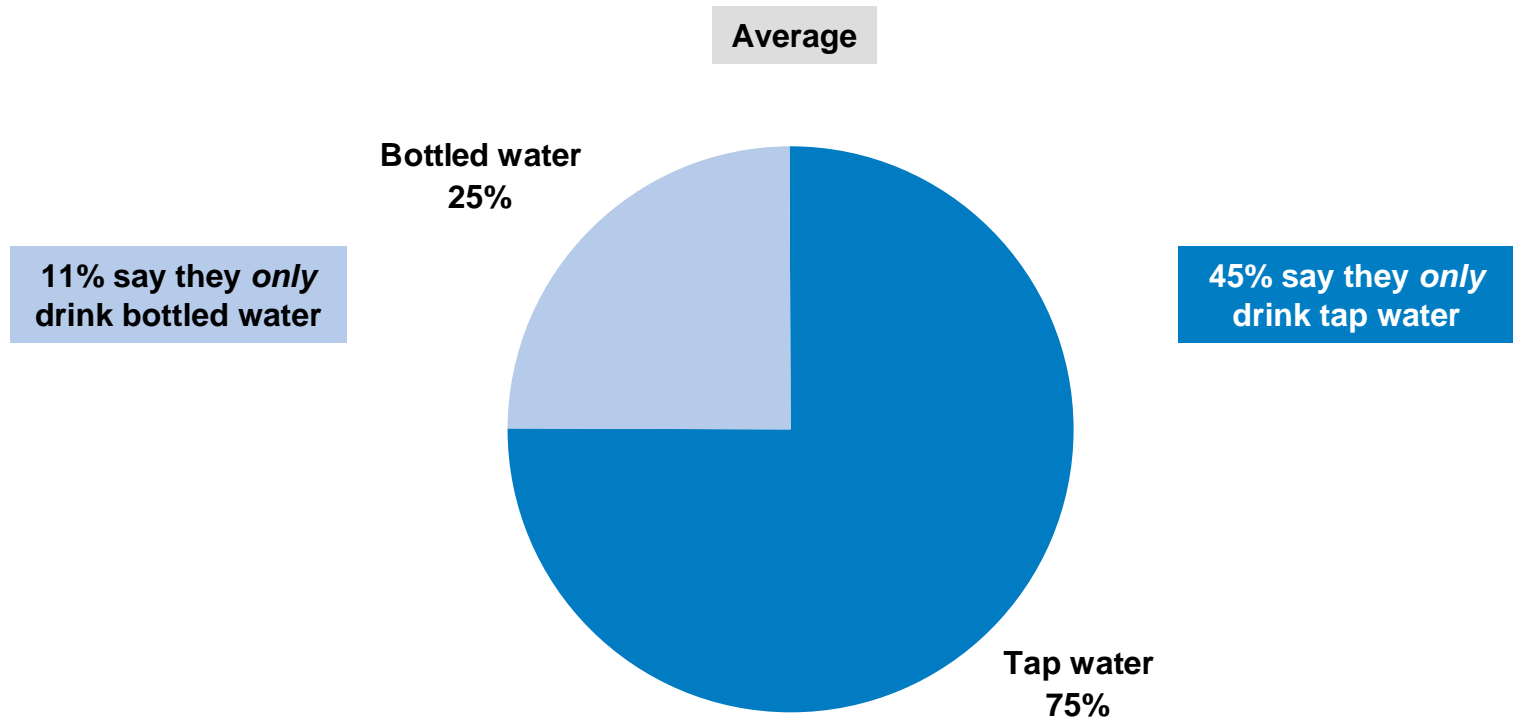
Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: Usually drink bottled water (n=162)

Percentage of Tap Water Versus Bottled Water

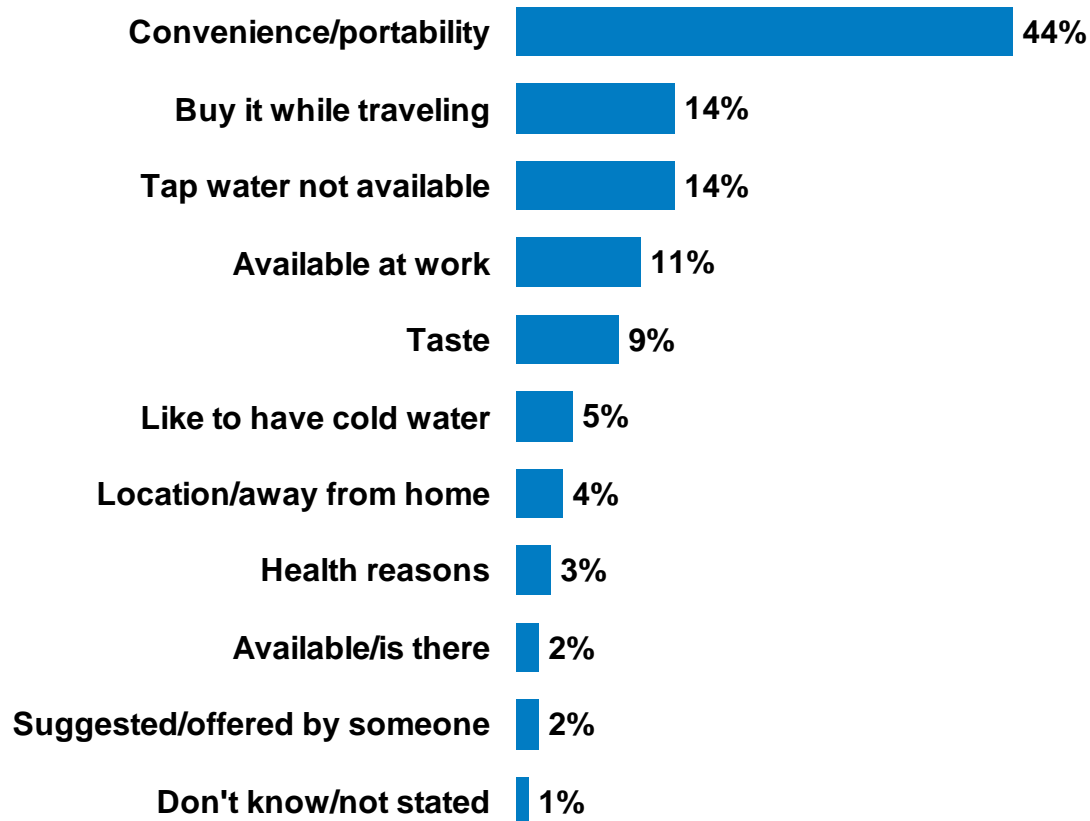
Q5. In a typical day, approximately what percentage of the water you drink is ...? And what percentage is...?



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Reasons Why Tap Water Drinkers Occasionally Drink Bottled Water

Q6. What is the main reason why you sometimes drink bottled water instead of tap water? Any other reasons?



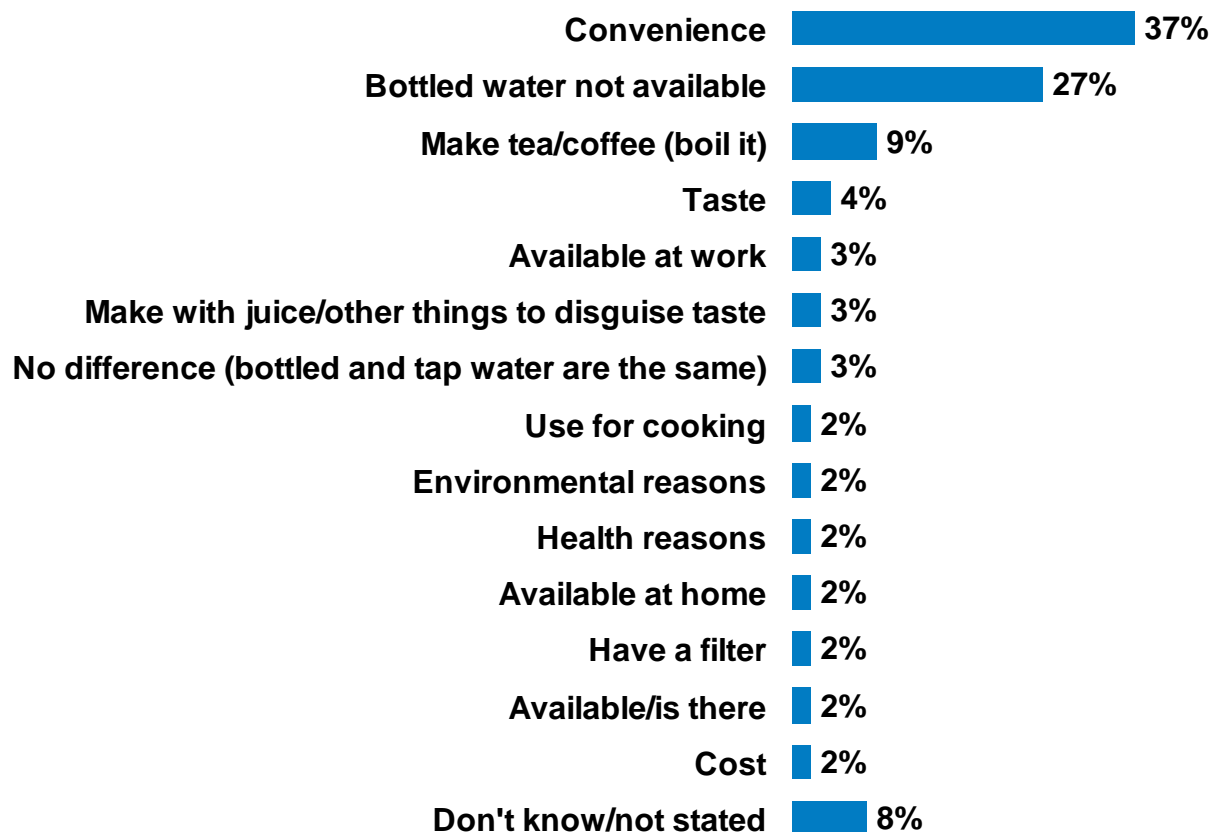
Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: Usually drink tap water but also sometimes drink bottled water (n=212)

Reasons Why Bottled Water Drinkers Occasionally Drink Tap Water

Q7. What is the main reason why you sometimes drink tap water instead of bottled water? Any other reasons?



Multiple mentions accepted.

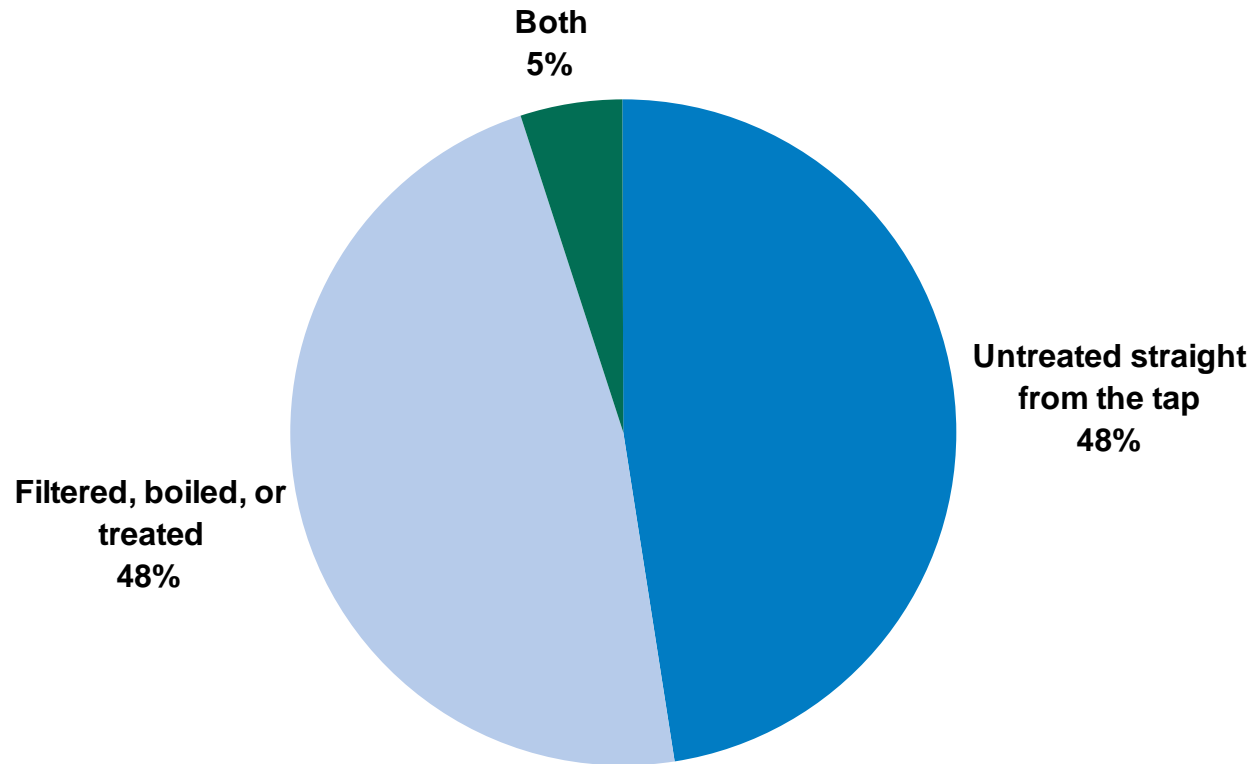
Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: Usually drink bottled water but also sometimes drink tap water (n=88*)

*Caution small sample size, interpret with caution.

Treatment of Tap Water

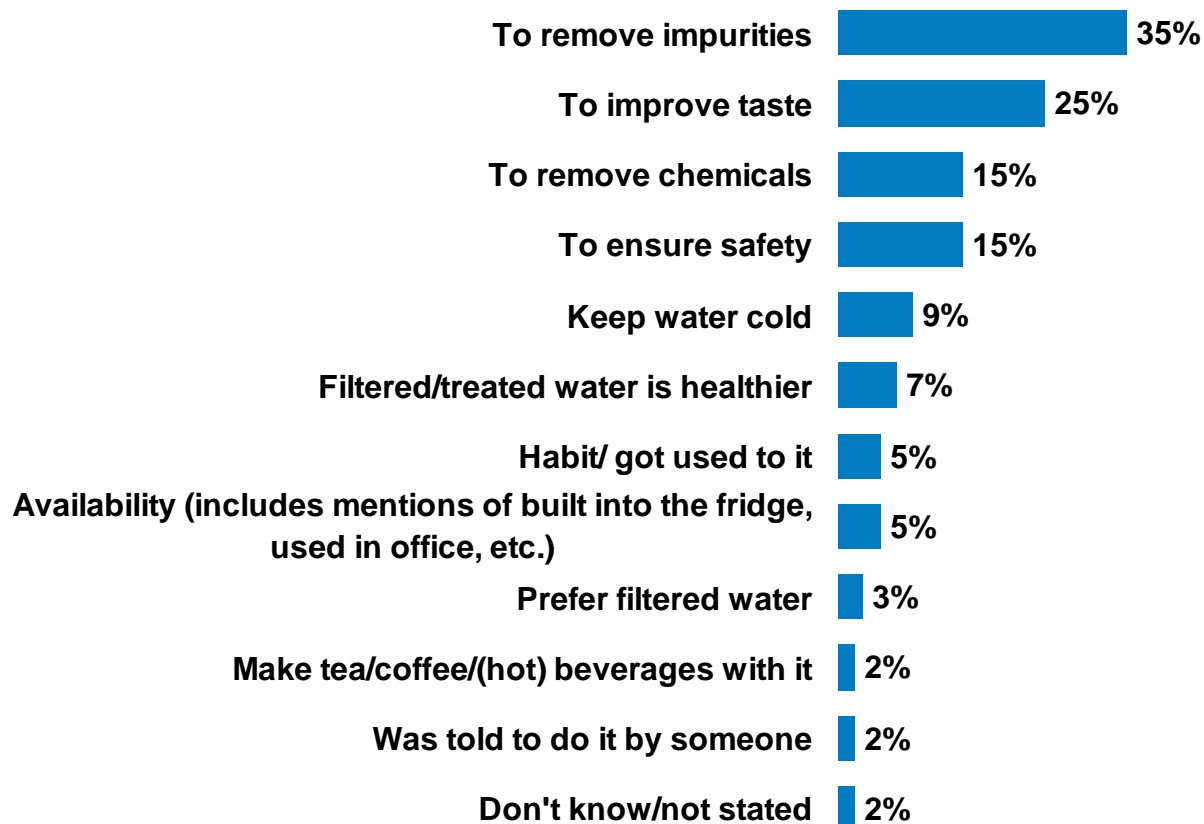
Q8. When drinking tap water, do you usually drink it straight from the tap or do you usually filter, boil, or treat it in some way?



Base: Tap water drinkers (e.g., at least 1% of the water they drink in a typical day is tap water) (n=716)

Reasons For Treating Tap Water

Q9. Why do you usually filter, boil, or treat tap water in some way before drinking it? Any other reasons?



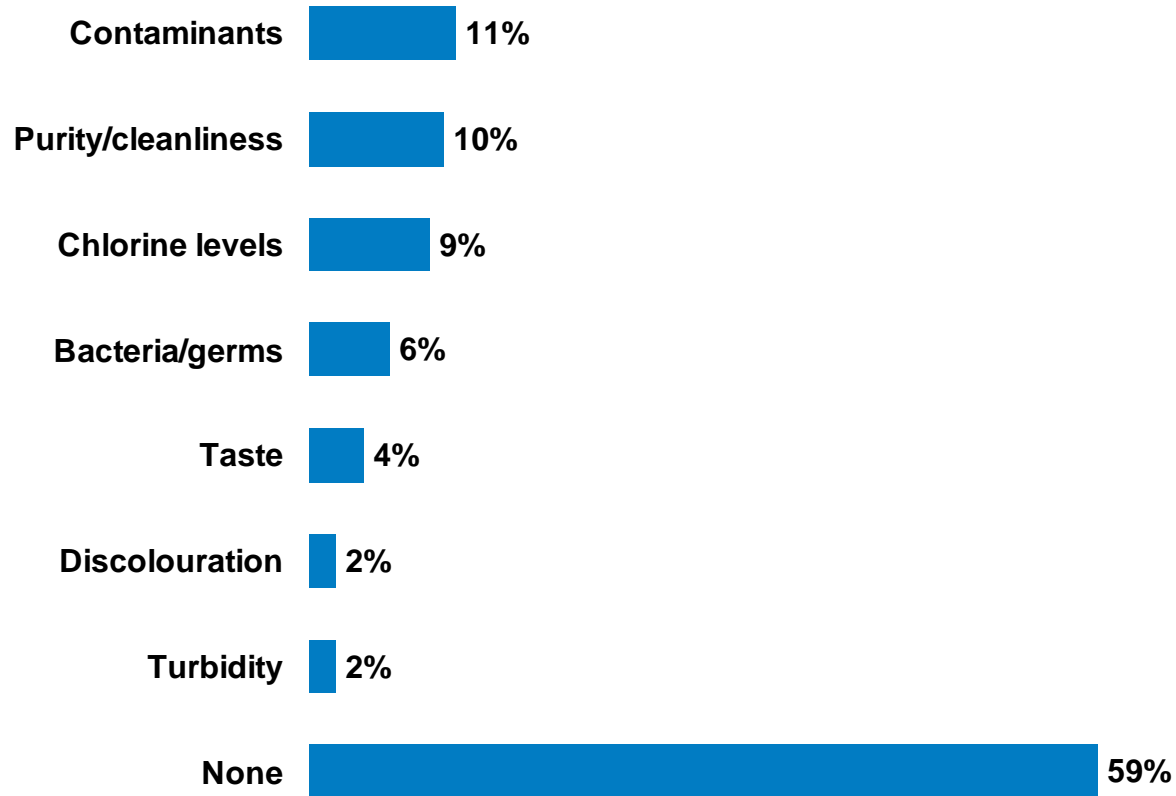
Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: Filter, boil, or treat tap water before drinking (n=332)

Concerns About Drinking Tap Water

Q11. What, if any, concerns do you have about drinking tap water? Any others?



Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: All respondents (n=800)

Concerns About Drinking Tap Water

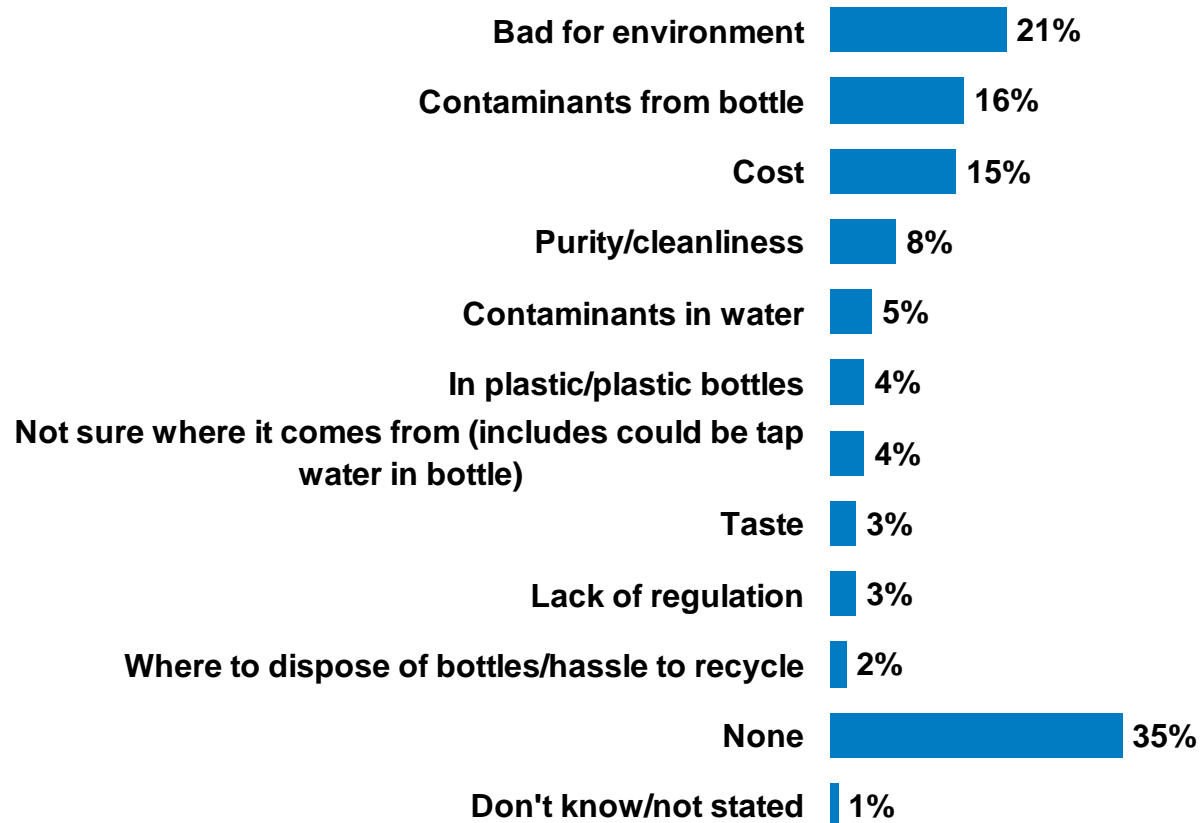
Q11. What, if any, concerns do you have about drinking tap water? Any others?

	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Contaminants	11%	8%	17%
Purity/cleanliness	10%	7%	19%
Chlorine levels	9%	8%	14%
Bacteria/germs	6%	4%	11%
Taste	4%	3%	8%
Discolouration	2%	2%	5%
Turbidity	2%	2%	1%
None	59%	68%	33%

 = Significant difference

Concerns About Drinking Bottled Water

Q12. What, if any, concerns do you have about drinking bottled water? Any others?



Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: All respondents (n=800)

Concerns About Drinking Bottled Water

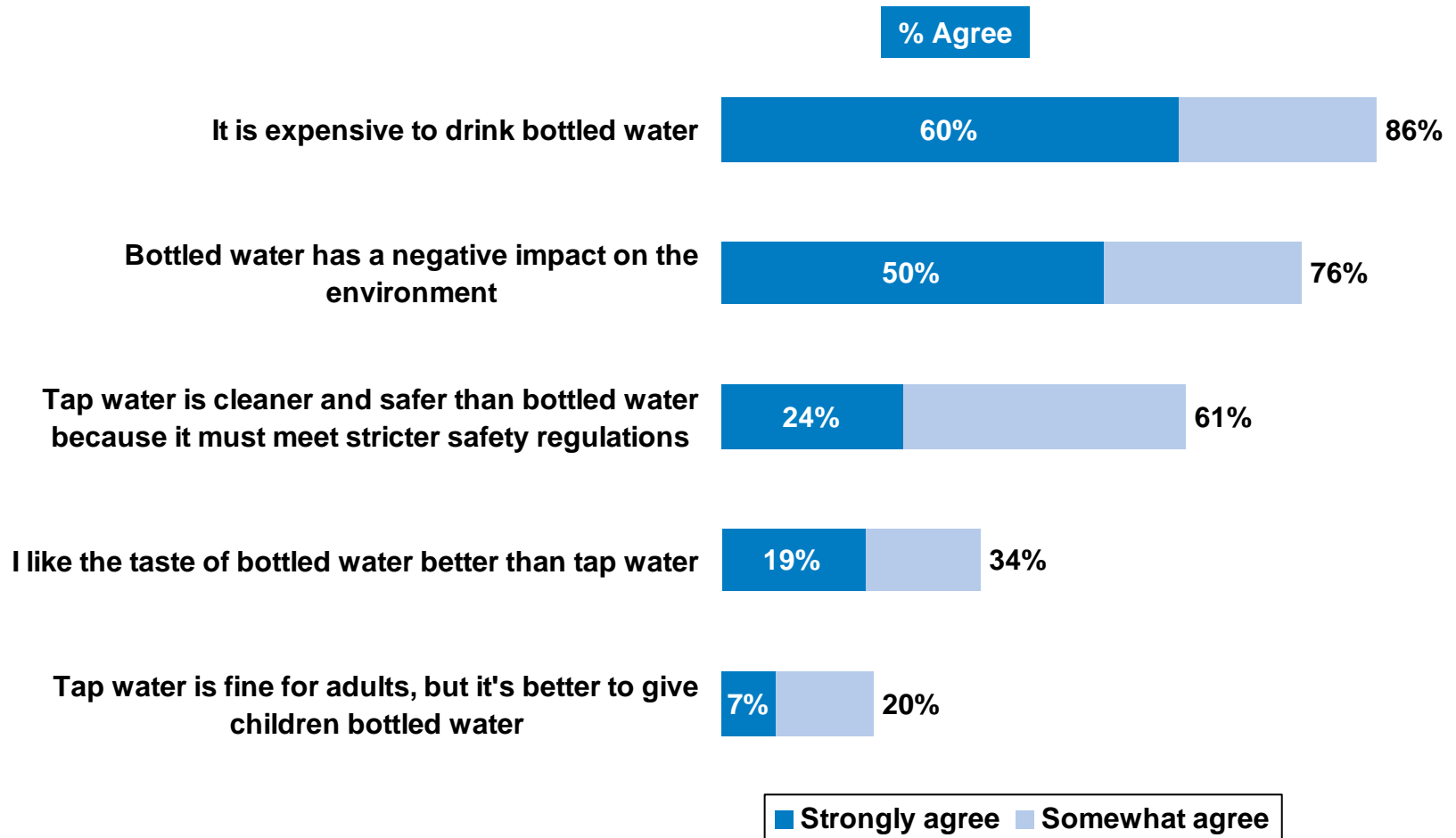
Q12. What, if any, concerns do you have about drinking bottled water? Any others?

	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Bad for environment	21%	24%	10%
Contaminants from bottle	16%	17%	15%
Cost	15%	18%	4%
Purity/cleanliness	8%	8%	8%
Contaminants in water	5%	6%	3%
In plastic/plastic bottles	4%	5%	3%
Not sure where it comes from (includes could be tap water in bottle)	4%	4%	3%
Taste	3%	3%	1%
Lack of regulation	3%	3%	<1%
Where to dispose of bottles/hassle to recycle	2%	3%	1%
None	35%	29%	53%
Don't know/not stated	1%	1%	0%

 = Significant difference

Agreement with Statements About Drinking Water

Q13. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about drinking water.



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Agreement with Statements About Drinking Water

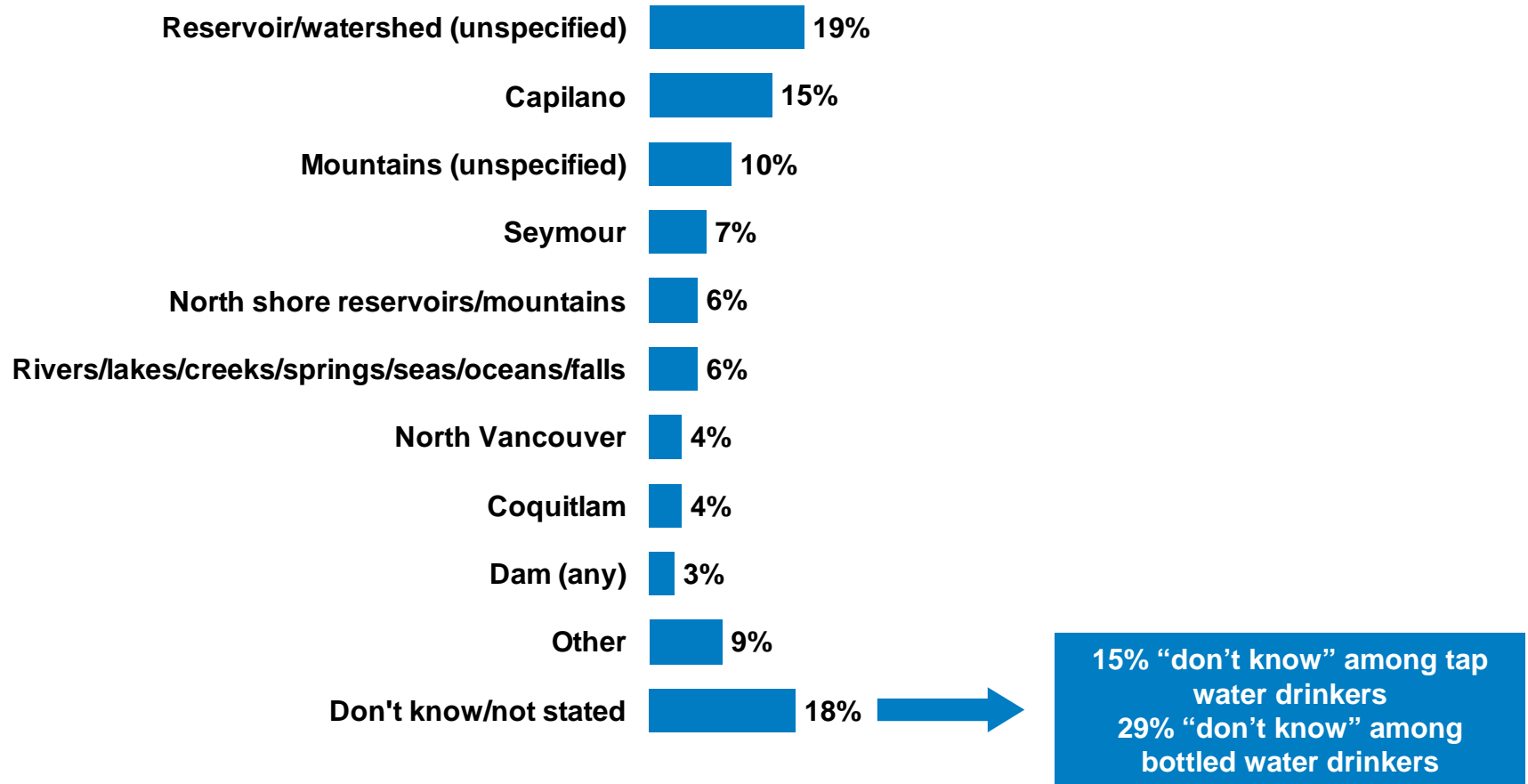
Q13. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about drinking water.

	% Agree		
	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
It is expensive to drink bottled water	86%	92%	65%
Bottled water has a negative impact on the environment	76%	81%	57%
Tap water is cleaner and safer than bottled water because it must meet stricter safety regulations	61%	69%	38%
I like the taste of bottled water better than tap water	34%	19%	81%
Tap water is fine for adults, but it's better to give children bottled water	20%	14%	33%

 = Significant difference

Source of Metro Vancouver's Tap Water

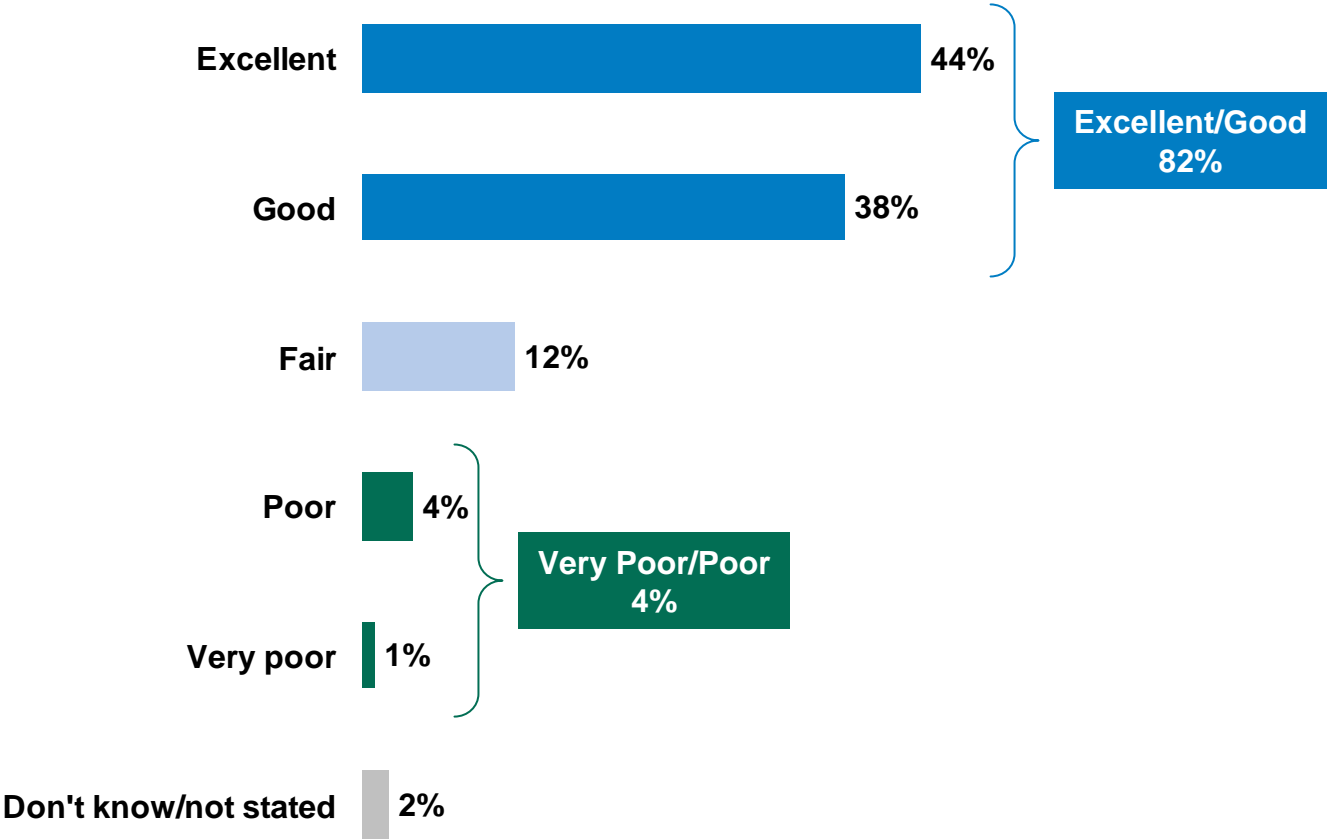
Q14. To the best of your knowledge, where does Metro Vancouver get its tap water?
That is, what is the source of Metro Vancouver's tap water?



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Overall Quality of Metro Vancouver's Tap Water

Q15. How would you rate the overall quality of Metro Vancouver's tap water? Would you say ...?



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Overall Quality of Metro Vancouver's Tap Water

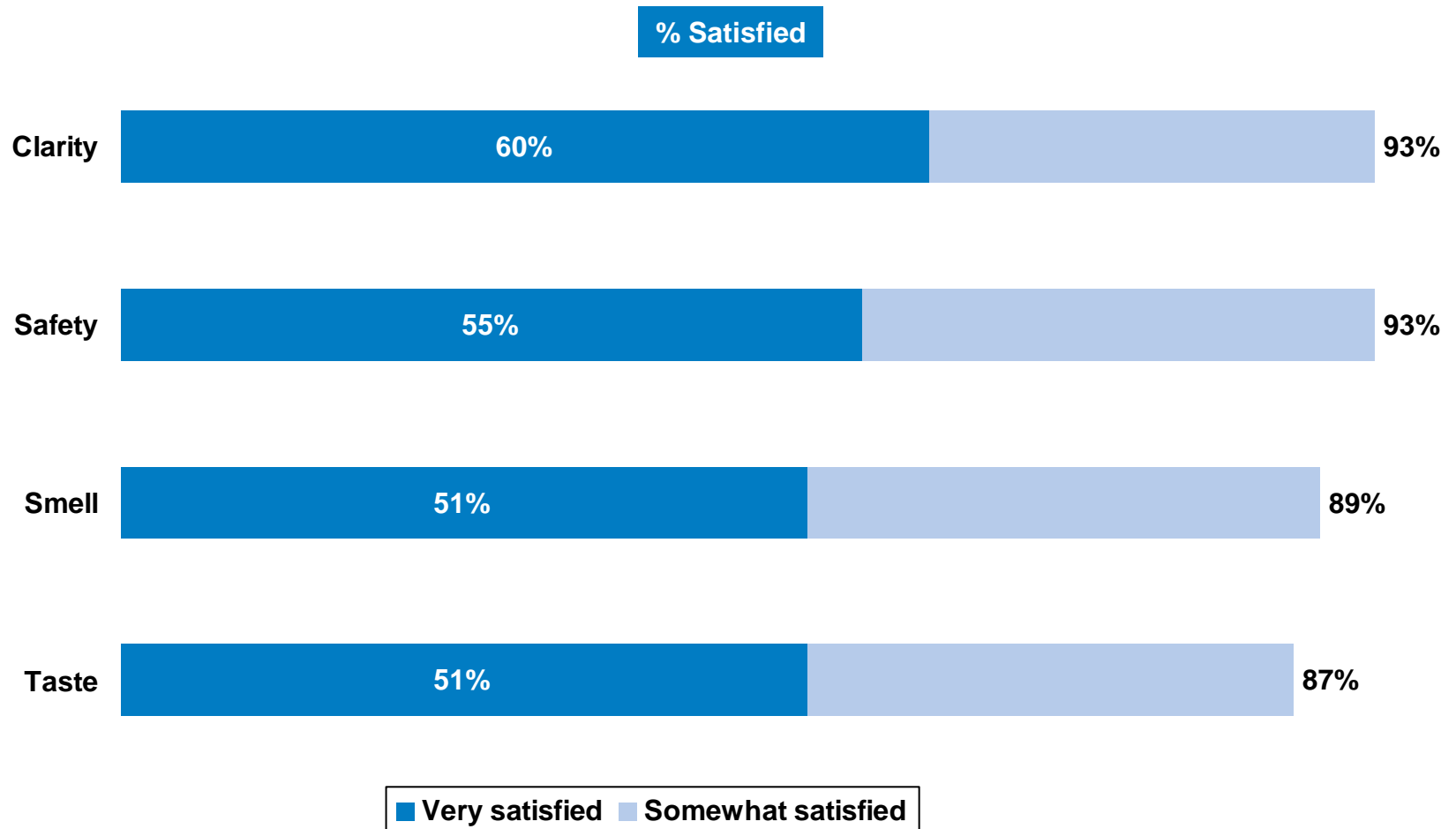
Q15. How would you rate the overall quality of Metro Vancouver's tap water? Would you say ...?

	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Excellent	44%	52%	20%
Good	38%	38%	35%
Fair	12%	6%	29%
Poor	4%	2%	8%
Very poor	1%	0%	2%
Don't know/not stated	2%	1%	6%
Excellent/Good	82%	91%	55%
Very poor/Poor	4%	2%	10%

 = Significant difference

Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Metro Vancouver's Tap Water

Q17. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of Metro Vancouver's tap water?



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Metro Vancouver's Tap Water

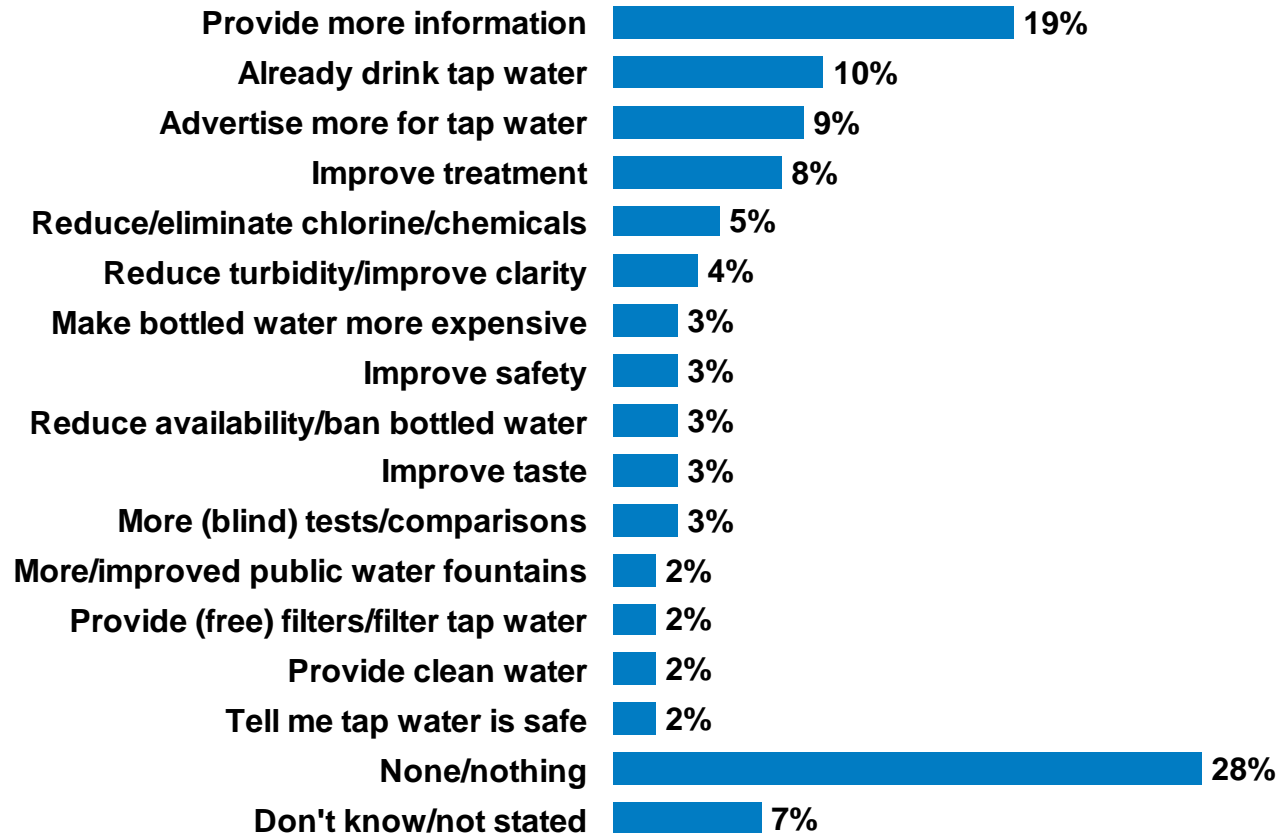
Q17. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of Metro Vancouver's tap water?

	% Satisfied		
	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Clarity	93%	97%	77%
Safety	93%	96%	81%
Smell	89%	94%	70%
Taste	87%	96%	57%

 = Significant difference

Suggestions for Encouraging Residents to Drink More Tap Water

Q18. What, if anything, could Metro Vancouver do to encourage you to drink more tap water instead of bottled water? Anything else?



Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 2% or more are shown.

Base: All respondents (n=800)

Suggestions for Encouraging Residents to Drink More Tap Water

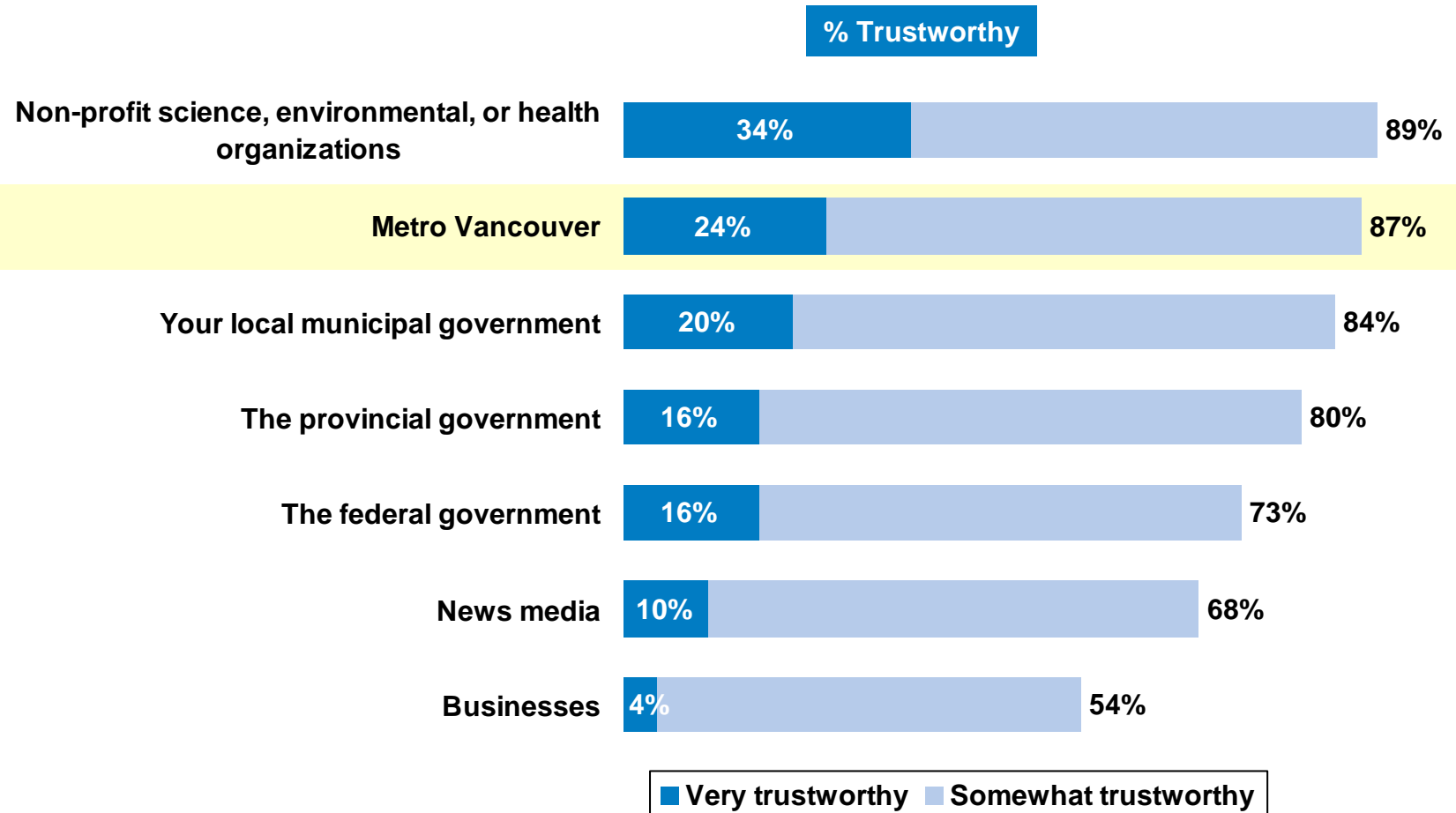
Q18. What, if anything, could Metro Vancouver do to encourage you to drink more tap water instead of bottled water? Anything else?

	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Provide more information	19%	20%	14%
Already drink tap water	10%	13%	2%
Advertise more for tap water	9%	11%	5%
Improve treatment	8%	5%	17%
Reduce/eliminate chlorine/chemicals	5%	3%	9%
Reduce turbidity/improve clarity	4%	3%	9%
Make bottled water more expensive	3%	4%	1%
Improve safety	3%	2%	6%
Reduce availability/ban bottled water	3%	3%	2%
Improve taste	3%	1%	9%
More (blind) tests/comparisons	3%	3%	2%
More/improved public water fountains	2%	2%	2%
Provide (free) filters/filter tap water	2%	2%	2%
Provide clean water	2%	1%	5%
Tell me tap water is safe	2%	2%	3%
None/nothing	28%	30%	23%
Don't know/not stated	7%	6%	10%

 = Significant difference

Trustworthy Information Sources

Q19. I'm going to read a list of different sources of information about drinking water, including both tap water and bottled water. For each one, please tell me if you consider this to be a trustworthy or untrustworthy source of information.



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Trustworthy Information Sources

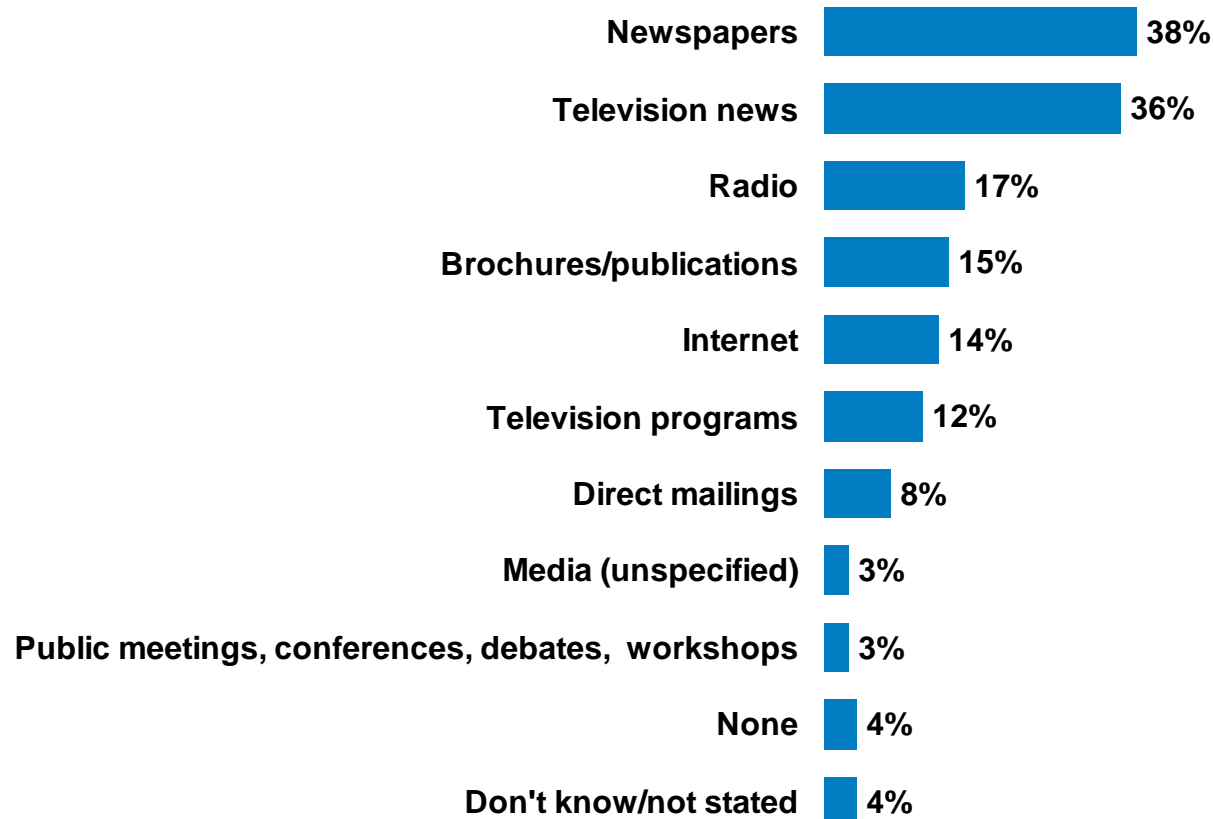
Q19. I'm going to read a list of different sources of information about drinking water, including both tap water and bottled water. For each one, please tell me if you consider this to be a trustworthy or untrustworthy source of information.

	% Trustworthy		
	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Non-profit science, environmental, or health organizations	89%	90%	86%
Metro Vancouver	87%	90%	80%
Your local municipal government	84%	88%	71%
The provincial government	80%	82%	73%
The federal government	73%	75%	69%
News media	68%	71%	60%
Businesses	54%	53%	58%

 = Significant difference

Preferred Communication Channels

Q21. What is the best way for Metro Vancouver to communicate with you about the region's drinking water supply? Any others?



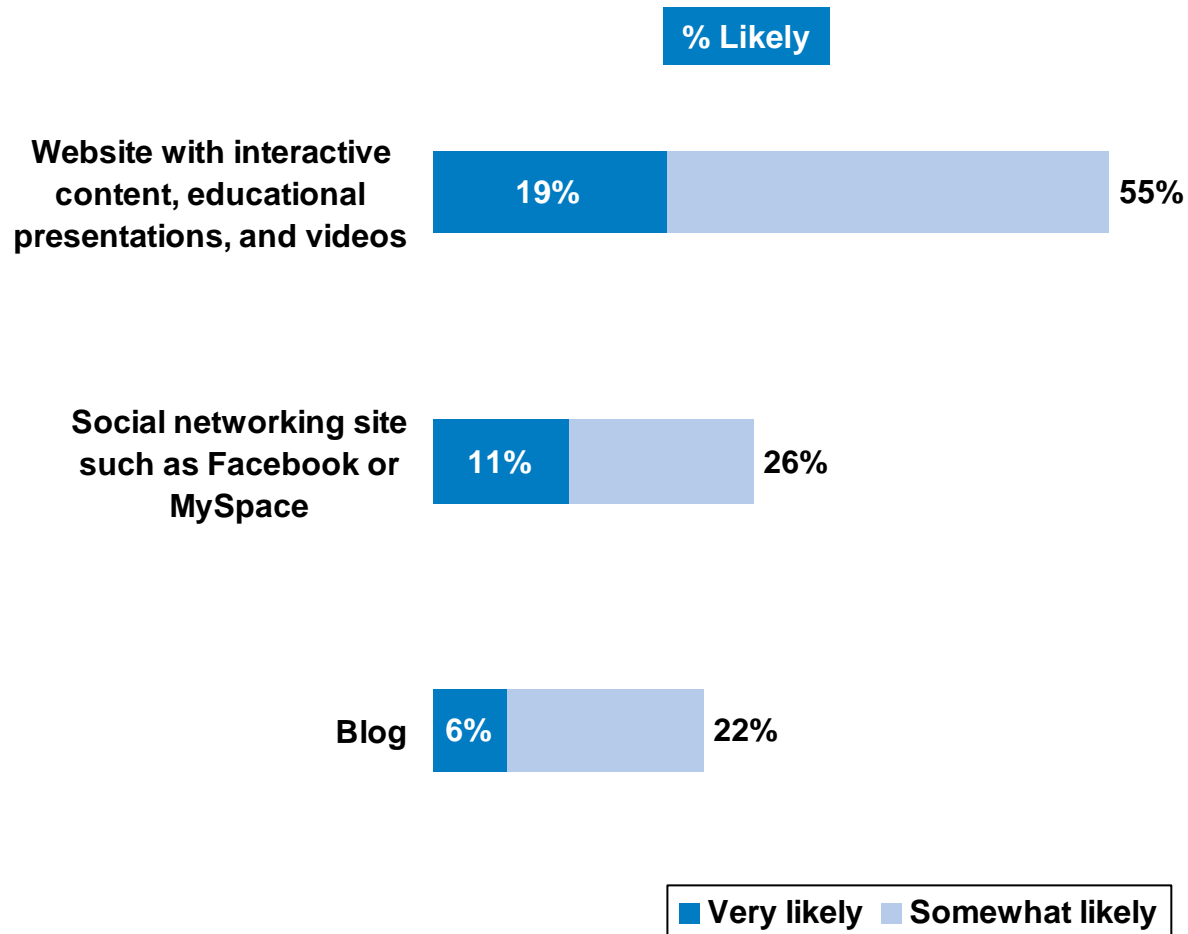
Multiple mentions accepted.

Only mentions of 3% or more are shown.

Base: All respondents (n=800)

Likelihood of Visiting Various Online Information Sources

Q22. How likely would you be to visit a ... to learn more about Metro Vancouver's drinking water supply?



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Likelihood of Visiting Various Online Information Sources

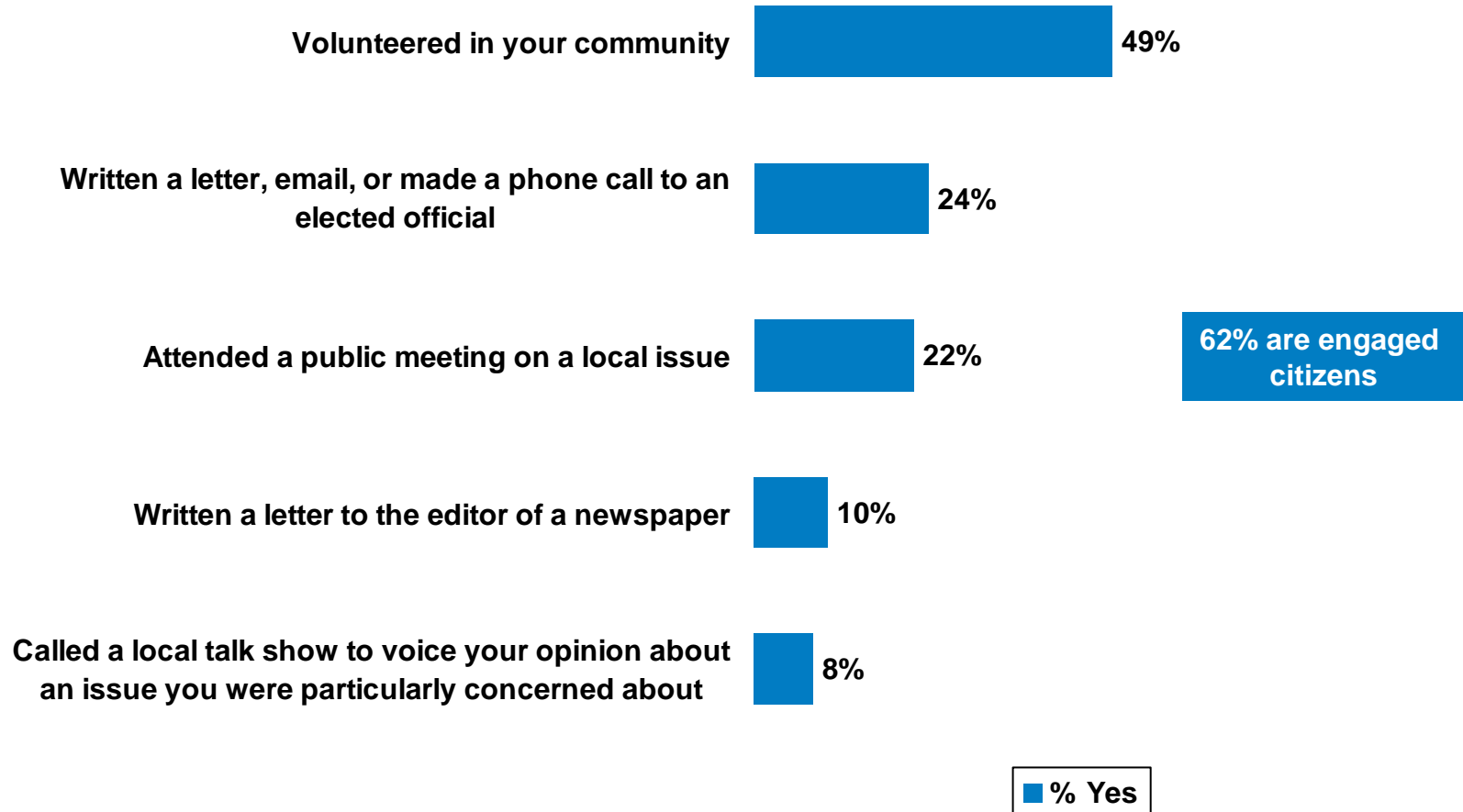
Q22. How likely would you be to visit a ... to learn more about Metro Vancouver's drinking water supply?

	% Likely		
	Total (n=800)	Tap Water Drinkers (n=607)	Bottled Water Drinkers (n=162)
Website with interactive content, educational presentations, and videos	55%	55%	55%
Social networking site such as Facebook or MySpace	26%	22%	40%
Blog	22%	22%	16%

 = Significant difference

Citizen Engagement

Q25. In the past twelve months, have you ...?



Base: All respondents (n=800)

Demographics

	All Respondents (n=800)
Gender:	
Male	48%
Female	52%
Age:	
18 to 24	9%
25 to 34	20%
35 to 44	20%
45 to 54	21%
55 to 64	14%
65 or older	15%
<i>Mean</i>	46 years
Education:	
High school or less	20%
Postsecondary	34%
University degree	45%
Household Income:	
Under \$60,000	34%
\$60,000 to just under \$120,000	37%
\$120,000 or more	13%

Demographics (cont'd)

	All Respondents (n=800)
Community:	
Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster	42%
North Shore	8%
Northeast	13%
South of Fraser	37%
Number of Years Residing in Metro Vancouver:	
0 to 20	43%
21 to 40	37%
41 or more	20%
<i>Mean</i>	<i>27 years</i>
Birth Place:	
Born in Canada	65%
Moved here from someplace else	35%
Language First Spoken:	
English	69%
Other	31%

Top court to consider FOI issue

Seven provinces, Ottawa argue that government information should be Charter-protected

By Janice Tibbetts December 10, 2008

Should access to government information be elevated to a constitutional right?

The Supreme Court of Canada, in a massive challenge Thursday drawing more than a dozen interveners, will consider whether access-to-information laws, which let the public see documents the state seeks to keep secret, are so restrictive that they violate freedom of expression.

The Ontario government will try to keep the door closed, urging the court to consider that restricted access to government information "is part of our history and our constitutional tradition" and "the Canadian Charter was not intended to turn this state of affairs on its head."

The appeal reaches the court at a time when governments face growing criticism for their inner workings being shrouded in secrecy amid toothless access laws, which are under fire for containing so many exemptions that they effectively block the release of information.

"While everyone has a protected right to speak to government, including a right to request information, there is no correlative Charter right to an answer from government," says Ontario's brief.

Six provinces and Ottawa are siding with Ontario, urging the judges to show restraint when deciding whether the public has a constitutional entitlement to open government as part of the Charter of Rights guarantee to freedom of expression.

Lawyers on the other side of the courtroom, including civil libertarians, journalists, and access-to-information commissioners, will counter the "right to know" is now recognized in the constitutions of dozens of countries and that Canada would be out of sync with international norms were the Supreme Court to rule otherwise.

"Government's denial of access to information of public interest concerning the administration of our democratic institutions deprives the public of the building blocks of political expression," says Ontario's assistant information and privacy commissioner, Tom Mitchinson.

The Criminal Lawyers Association, representing the Ontario defence bar, will defend its win in the Ontario Court of Appeal, which broadened access-to-information legislation by ruling the public interest should be considered before denying a request.

The court ordered the release of a police report on a botched murder investigation into the 1983 death of reputed underworld gangster Dominic Racco. First-degree murder charges against Racco's alleged assailants were stayed in 1997 by a judge who chastised police and prosecutors for their abusive conduct. The Ontario Provincial Police, which was asked to review the conduct of investigators, issued a terse press release nine months later clearing the officers in question of obstruction of justice.

The CLA sought access to the police records in the conduct probe, but was denied under Ontario's access-to-information law, which contains an exemption on law-enforcement information. Other provinces, including B.C., Alberta and Nova Scotia, permit the release of police documents if the public interest outweighs the need for secrecy.

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association, an intervener in the case, will argue that open government is as important as open courts. The group says it is not necessary for the court to pronounce on the full scope of access rights, but at the least the bench should at least declare that the public interest must be weighed in each case before denying information.

A ruling on the case is not expected for months.

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Polluting firms can be forced to pay damages: top court

Companies liable even if emissions rules followed

Janice Tibbetts

Canwest News Service

Friday, November 21, 2008

Industrial polluters can be forced to pay damages if they excessively annoy nearby residents, even if companies comply with regulations governing emissions, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled yesterday in a decision that stresses environmental protection.

The unanimous judgment ends a long-standing battle between St. Lawrence Cement and people who lived near the plant in Beauport, Que., until it shut down in 1997.

The residents launched a class-action suit against the plant in 1993, complaining that its operation spewed residue on their homes, land, and cars, along with an ensuing odour and noise that devalued their properties.

The key issue in the Supreme Court ruling was whether companies in Quebec can be found civilly liable, even if they are not strictly at fault for the inflicted damage because they followed regulatory standards on maintaining equipment.

Although the case was confined to interpretation of the Quebec Civil Code, the court noted that no-fault liability is also found in common law that is used in all other provinces.

"What is more, such a scheme is consistent with general policy considerations, such as the objective of environmental protection and the application of the polluter-pay principle," justices Marie Deschamps and Louis LeBel wrote in the 6-0 decision. The court said the test for civil fault is whether the pollution violates a standard of conduct of a reasonable person.

Environmental groups hailed the decision as a "massive victory" that will empower citizens to challenge environmental annoyances.

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Drinking and walking can also be dangerous: study

Written by **Caroline Zentner**

Wednesday, 26 November 2008

The dangers of drinking and driving have been driven home for years but student researchers at the University of Lethbridge are now advocating for a campaign to warn people about the dangers of drinking and walking.

Two groups of nursing students, as part of their clinical rotation in the community this semester, worked with Lethbridge police on pedestrian safety projects. One focused on pedestrian collisions and the other on seniors as pedestrians.

Wednesday they presented their results to the Lethbridge police commission.

"We were asked to look through the collision data and create a project to see how we could improve pedestrian safety," said Nicole Martin, a third-year U of L nursing student who worked on the research project that targeted pedestrian collisions.

The students analyzed more than 57,000 entries from 2003 to 2007 to sort out collisions that involved pedestrians and find common factors. Every year, roughly 50 pedestrians are involved in collisions in Lethbridge.

"Eighteen per cent of pedestrian collisions happened when the pedestrian had been drinking or was impaired by alcohol," Martin said.

Among those collisions, the researchers found nearly three-quarters of the pedestrians were males between the ages of 18 and 38. The majority of collisions occurred in the area of 1 Avenue South just east of Stafford Drive between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. The collisions also clustered around certain times of year, specifically January, April and September, coinciding with times when academic stress among post-secondary students is at a minimum. The researchers also found local statistics weren't significantly different from provincial numbers.

While the collision data didn't specify if the pedestrian involved in the collision was a student or not, the researchers focused on post-secondary students because of the age range and time-of-year factors.

The nursing students also came up with some interventions that could reduce the number of collisions with pedestrians.

They suggest increasing police presence and making more taxis and public transit available in the problem areas during the problem times. In addition, the students suggested education programs be offered at the Grade 12 level and for first-year post-secondary students as part of their orientation package.

"We've looked at the possibility of a safe rides program," Martin said.

The proposal would involve an optional fee collected with tuition fees that would allow students to call a cab and have the costs covered out of already-collected fees.

The message "don't drink and drive" is still a top priority, said Lethbridge regional police Sgt. Craig Deimuth with the traffic response unit, but sometimes finding an appropriate and safe way home isn't all that easy.

"We just don't have a lot of accessible alternatives for transportation to get us from wherever we're at to home.

Unfortunately, sometimes people may become impatient and instead of waiting that half an hour or 45 minutes for a cab to be able to come by or for their designated driver to show up, they're going to be walking on home," Deimuth said. "We continue to ask people to don't drink and drive and by all means, if you're walking home and you're intoxicated try and do it in the safest manner possible. Try and obey all the rules of the road."

He added the suggestions will be used to re-evaluate policing and he hopes cab companies and city transit will consider improving service.

Nursing students who focused on seniors as pedestrians suggested increased signage, brighter crosswalk markings, audible pedestrian alerts at walk signals, no parking zones near pedestrian intersections, allowing more time to cross the street and education campaigns for seniors and drivers on pedestrian safety.

Read More Local News

[Drinking and walking can also be dangerous: study](#)

The dangers of drinking and driving have been driven home for years but student researchers at the University of Lethbridge are now advocating for a campaign to warn people about the dangers of drinking and walking.

[County seeks input into municipal development plan](#)

The County of Lethbridge is getting ready to release a municipal development plan, but wants to know what the public thinks of it first.

[Health-care change welcomed, as long as it's not private: Friends of Medicare](#)

Lethbridge residents had a chance Wednesday night to air their grievances with the Alberta health-care system and talk about possible solutions, and many took advantage of the opportunity.

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Reprint **Island Tides**

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Reprint from Volume 20 Number 15

August 21, 2008

UBCM wins protection from the TILMA for municipalities

Municipal Land Use Bylaws will be exempted from the provisions of the BC/Alberta 'Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement.' This means that property rights will continue to be subject to local bylaws, and bylaws and other measures cannot be challenged because they may be 'obstacles' to investment under TILMA.

Details of the terms won from the provincial government were set out in a Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) letter to its membership. The land use provisions were the major agreement arising from negotiations between the provincial government and UBCM since TILMA was signed by both provinces in 2006. The Alberta Government and Alberta municipal associations had also been included in discussions.

Failure to exclude land use measures from the agreement could have opened the door to TILMA challenges to any zoning changes which reduced the claimed value of property, similar to court actions in the US which relied on the prohibition of 'takings' under the Fifth Amendment to the US Constitution.

The new exemption is also consistent with the exclusion of property rights from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The only TILMA restriction that remains is that local measures should not discriminate between BC and Alberta residents.

The Chill is Gone

TILMA included a provision that municipalities could not introduce or change any measures which would conflict with TILMA during the period between the signing of the Agreement and the time when it started to apply to municipalities (April 1, 2009). This had the effect of making TILMA retroactive to cover the period when these negotiations were taking place, and a possible 'chilling' effect on measures contemplated by municipalities during that time.

Procurement Thresholds

TILMA had sought to require that contracts above certain levels (\$10,000 for goods, \$75,000 for services, and \$100,000 for construction) be open to competition from both provinces. UBCM pointed out that this would not only burden municipal

purchasing departments, but would also prevent municipalities from expressing local preferences on relatively small contracts. The new negotiated municipal limits are \$75,000 for goods, \$75,000 for services, and \$200,000 for construction. The province feels that this will provide ample opportunity for local preference on smaller contracts (often for perfectly legitimate reasons).

Regulatory Harmonization

TILMA had required that standards and regulations be 'reconciled' between BC and Alberta, and that this would apply to municipalities and, in addition, to municipal business licences. Negotiations resulted in this requirement being watered down: 'Parties and their municipal governments shall consider options to provide for the reconciliation of municipal business licences. Until such time as the matter is resolved, Article 11(a) will not apply to municipal business licences.'

Other Municipal Powers

The Province took the position that the regulatory areas in Section 8(3) of the Community Charter are either not captured within the scope of TILMA (since it applies only to measures related to Trade, Investment, or Labour Mobility) or that these powers come under other TILMA exceptions. Section 8(3) of the Community Charter includes such areas as municipal services, public places, trees, fireworks, bows and arrows and some other weapons, cemeteries, protection of persons and property, nuisances and disturbances, public health, environmental protection, animals, buildings and other structures, and soil removal.

UBCM 'does not concur' with the Provincial position, noting that trade, investment, and labour mobility may intersect with many of these topics.

Additionally, UBCM notes that the 'legitimate objective' exceptions are still subject to the requirements in Article 6 that 'the measure is not more restrictive to trade, investment, or labour mobility than necessary to achieve that legitimate objective, and... the measure is not a disguised restriction to trade, etc.' This discussion appears to remain unresolved.

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'This article was published (August 21, 2008) in 'Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 17,500 print copies in throughout the Gulf Islands and the Canadian Strait of Georgia from Tsawwassen to Campbell River, BC.'

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Dispute Resolution

The Province has confirmed that if fines are to be paid as a result of a TILMA challenge to municipal measures, it is the provincial government and not the municipality who will pay them. A separate Consultation Agreement will also be negotiated between UBCM and the Province covering co-operation between the Province and an affected municipal government in the event of a TILMA challenge. ✍

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