

DRAFT TOPLINE DATA

This summary presents draft response frequency distributions for the survey of 400 Snohomish County residents with septic systems. Telephone interviews were completed between December 11 - 14, 2008.

The overall maximum margin of sampling error is $\pm 5\%$. That means, in theory, there is a 95% probability that the results of this survey are within $\pm 5\%$ of the results that would have been obtained by interviewing all qualified adults.

The data are presented here in the same order the questions were asked in the interview. The figures in bold type are percentages of respondents who gave each answer. The percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

FROM SAMPLE: AREA: RURAL...33 CONTROL...33 TRANSITIONAL...33
SEX: MALE...51 FEMALE...49

Hello. I'm calling from Elway Research, an independent public opinion research firm in Washington state. My name is ____. We are conducting a public opinion survey about household waste disposal. This is not a sales call. You are one of 400 persons who has been chosen at random to be interviewed in Snohomish County.

S1> Most of our questions have to do with county septic systems. Do you have a septic system on this property?

S2> I would like to speak with the person at this house who is most familiar with the septic system or who would be most responsible for its maintenance. Would that be you?

1. As I said, these questions are about your septic system. When we speak of the septic system, we mean the sewage treatment and disposal system on your property, including the septic tank and the drain field. What type of septic system do you have? Is it... .

All gravity distribution (with no pump)...**45**

Low pressure distribution (LPD)... **15**

Sandfilter (with LPD or drip disposal)... **12**

Aerobic treatment (with LPD or drip disposal).... **2**

Pump (added by respondents)..... **3**

Not Sure / Don't Know...**22**

2. How long have you lived with a septic system, in total?

LESS THAN 2 YEARS...**3**

2 - 4 YEARS...**12**

5 - 9 YEARS...**14**

10 - 19 YEARS...**29**

20 YEARS OR MORE...**42**

3. How old is your current system?

LESS THAN 2 YEARS...**2**
 2 – 4 YEARS...**9**
 5 – 9 YEARS...**11**
 10 – 19 YEARS...**26**
 20 YEARS OR MORE...**48**
 DK/NA...**4**

4. We would like to know how people are taking care of their septic systems. Use a scale of zero to 10 where 10 means you are doing an excellent job and zero means a Poor job of taking care of your system. Overall, how would you rate the job your household does at taking care of your septic system?

POOR _____ EXLNT. [DK]
0... 0... 0... 1... 0... 4... 3... 7... 14... 11... 54... [6]

5. I am going to read a list things people sometimes do to their septic system. Using the same scale of zero to ten, rate the job your household does with each. The first one is...

ROTATE

POOR _____ EXLNT [DK]

a. .Pumping the tank regularly**5... 1... 1... 2... 2... 7... 3... 4... 9... 7... 56..... [3]**

b. .Being careful of what goes down the sink

drain.....**0... 0... 0... 0... 0... 0... 4... 8... 8... 77..... [0]**

c. .Making sure that too much water doesn't go down at once, by regulating water use in

the house.....**2... 0... 2... 1... 2... 9... 4... 9... 10... 7... 51..... [2]**

d. .Keeping the land on top of the drain field clear of structures and cars

0... 0... 0... 0... 0... 1... 0... 2... 4... 5... 87..... [0]

6. If you had a problem somewhere in your septic system, how do you think you would become aware of it?

DRAINS BACK UP...**40**
 HAVE ALARM...**30**
 SMELL ON DRAIN FIELD...**12**
 GROUND /DRAIN FIELD WET...**9**
 OTHER...**3**
 DK/NA...**6**

7. How often do you have trouble with your system, such as over-flowing, smelling, drains backing up or wet spots in the drain field? Would you say...

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

More than once a year...2

Once a year...3

Less than once a year...3

Once or twice ever...19

Never...73

[DK/NA...1]

8. How often do you usually end up getting your septic tank pumped?

Every 2 to 3 years...35

Every 4 to 5 years...19

5+ years...20

Never have...22

Other...2

SKIP TO Q9 ← Tank doesn't need pumping...2

[DK/NA...1]

- 8.1. Do you get the tanked pumped....

On a regular schedule...44

Or, when it seems to be needed?... 36

Have never pumped...17

Other...1

[DK/NA...2]

9. Thinking now about just your septic drain field, which of the following things do you have on the land on top of your drain field...

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY

Lawn...76

Trees and shrubs...14

Dirt/Nothing/Porous Material (bark chips, gravel, etc)... 5

Pasture for animals....5

A structure, such as a deck, a garage, outbuilding, etc....2

Play equipment, or a kids' play area....1

Parking area....1

Other....1

[DK/NA...1]

10. Do you have a reserve area for your drain field– that is, an alternate area that could serve as a drain field should your current drain field stop working properly?

YES...**70**
 NO...**22**
 DK/NA...**7**

10.1. IF YES: Which of the following things do you have on the land on top of your drain field reserve area...

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY

Lawn...**50**
 Play equipment, or a kids’ play area...**30**
 Trees and shrubs...**10**
 Pasture for animals....**6**
 Dirt/Nothing/Porous Material (bark chips, gravel, etc)...**5**
 A structure, such as a deck, a garage, outbuilding, etc...**1**
 Parking area....**0**
 [DK/NA.....**1**]
 No reserve area...**29**

11. If you had a problem with your septic system, whom would you be most likely to call first? Would you call ...

A pumper or commercial septic system maintenance company...**67**
 A friend, neighbor or relative for advice....**9**
 The designer or installer....**8**
 Would you look on the internet....**3**
 The Snohomish Health District....**2**
 Other... **7**
 [DK/NA....**4**]

12. If you just had a question about proper care and maintenance, how likely would you be to call [INSERT LIST]? Would you be Certain to call them? Very Likely? Not Likely? or Certain Not to call them?

CERTAIN VERY NOT DEF NOT DK

a. A pumper or commercial septic system maintenance company	55 23 8 10 3
b. The company who designed or installed your system.....	21 14 17 41 6
c. A friend, neighbor or relative	12 16 31 38 3
d. The Snohomish Health District	7 15 25 48 5

12.1. Why would you [CALL / NOT CALL] to contact the Snohomish Health District?

Why call (n=89)	Why not call (n=295)
35% They're knowledgeable/experienced	23% Not the right source/Not their job
20% Would call if serious enough	15% Don't know them/how to reach
6% Would call if health issue	13% Only if that serious
6% Would call to get a referral	10% Would handle by self
1% They're honest/impartial	15% Would call commercial/plumber
2% Other	13% Would call other
16% Don't know	6% Don't like government
	3% Fear of reprisal
	2% Just wouldn't
	1% The information is elsewhere
	12% Don't know

13. For the next few statements, please tell me if you Agree, Agree Strongly, Disagree or Disagree Strongly as I read each one. The first one is...

ROTATE	AGREE	AGSTR	DISAG	DISSTRG	DK
a) Failing septic systems can spread disease among humans.....	54	38	2	2	4
b) Failing septic systems can harm aquatic life.....	52	39	3	3	3
c) The condition of the septic system on my own property does not really impact local streams and lakes.....	44	28	15	9	4
d) Concerns about harm that can be caused by septic systems are just scare tactics.....	18	6	28	43	5

14. Next I am going to read a list of materials that sometimes go down the drain or toilet. As I read each one, tell me whether – as you understand it – that is OK to let down the drain or toilet...OK in moderation...or not OK to let go into the septic system at all – . The first one is...

ROTATE	OK	MOD	NOT OK	DK/NA
a. Toilet paper.....	84	16	0	0
b. Household bleach, such as Clorox.....	10	40	49	2
c. Small vegetable and fruit scraps.....	10	22	68	0
d. Drain de-cloggers, like Draino.....	8	27	61	4
e. Coffee grounds.....	5	7	84	3
f. Old medications.....	2	4	89	4
g. Cooking oil or grease.....	1	6	93	0

15. Do you use additives such as enzymes or yeast advertised to help the septic system work better?

YES...**34**
 NO...**57**
 DK/NA...**9**

16. I am going to read through a short list of reasons for caring for and maintaining your septic system. Tell me how important each reason is to you personally. We'll use a scale of ten to zero, where ten means critically important, and zero means not important at all. The first one is...

ROTATE

NOT _____ CRIT.

- a. Making sure that the toilets and drains in the house work fine..... **0... 0... 0... 0... 0... 1 ... 0 ... 2 .. 4... 5.. 87..... [1]**
- b. Keeping the yard or fields dry and clean **0... 0... 0... 0... 1 ... 4 ... 1 ... 4 . 11.. 9.. 69..... [1]**
- c. Making sure that the neighbors don't complain..... **3... 2... 1 ... 2... 1 ... 6 ... 3 ... 3 .. 6... 8.. 63..... [3]**
- d. Protecting local streams **1... 0... 0... 1 ... 1 ... 1 ... 1 ... 3 .. 5... 6.. 81..... [0]**
- e. Keeping kids, family and pets safe **0... 0... 0... 0... 0... 1 ... 0 ... 1 .. 3... 4.. 91..... [1]**
- f. Avoiding the cost and hassle of repairs **1 .. 0... 0... 0... 0 ... 1 ... 2 ... 1 .. 5... 5.. 84..... [1]**
- g. Not having any trouble with the County or Health District..... **2... 0... 0... 0... 0 ... 2 ... 1 ... 3 .. 4... 4.. 83..... [1]**

17. Which of the reasons we have just talked about is the single most important one to you? [READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Keeping Kids, Family And Pets Safe...**39**
 Making Sure That The Toilets And Drains In The House Work Fine...**30**
 Avoiding The Cost And Hassle Of Repairs...**13**
 Protecting Local Streams...**8**
 Not Having Any Trouble With The County or Health District...**6**
 Keeping The Yard Or Fields Dry And Clean...**1**
 Making Sure That The Neighbors Don't Complain...**0**
 [DK/NA...**2**]

18. I have just a few last questions for our statistical analysis. How old are you?

18-35... **4**
 36-50... **22**
 51-64... **40**
 65+...**32**
 [NO ANSWER].....**2**

19. How many people in total live in this household at this time?

1=**11**.....2=**49**.....3=**17**.....4 =**15**..... 5+ =**6**.....[2=DK/NA]

20. What is the last year of schooling you completed?

HIGH SCHOOL... **21**
BUSINESS/VOCATIONAL SCHOOL... **7**
SOME COLLEGE... **30**
COLLEGE DEGREE... **26**
GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL... **14**
[NO ANSWER].....**2**

21. Which of these the following best describes you at this time? Are you. . .

Employed In The Public Sector, Like A Governmental Agency... **12**
Employed in an Educational Institution... **5**
Employed In Private Business... **35**
Not Working Right Now... **7**
Retired... **41**
[NO ANSWER].....**1**

22. Finally, which of these categories best describes your approximate household income - before taxes - for last year:

\$25,000 OR LESS... **7**
\$25 TO 50,000... **20**
\$50 TO 75,000... **19**
OVER \$75,000... **24**
[NO ANSWER]...**30**

Thank you very much. You have been very helpful. **RECORD GENDER ON PAGE 1**