



behavior research center's

Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE
RMP 2003-I-07

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AIR POLLUTION AFFECTS 49 PERCENT OF PUBLIC – BREATHING PROBLEMS INCREASE

Phoenix, Arizona, January 23, 2003. Between 1993 and 2003, the proportion of Arizonans who report adverse impacts on themselves or family members that they attribute to air pollution rose from 39 to 49 percent. In some of the intervening years, most notably 2000, the reading reached a stunning 59 percent of families reporting some adverse impacts on members of their household. The following year, however, marked a decline in the reading to 47 percent which, although still very high, seemed to signal that some gains may have been made in reducing pollution in the state. The most recent readings in January 2003, however, finds the proportion experiencing problems with the air has risen again – this time to 49 percent. In addition, the sharpest rise is among people who say they are having more problems with air pollution as it affects their breathing – 41 percent today compared to 35 percent in 2001. Air pollution problems affecting vision rose to 37 from 35 percent in the same period.

Complaints about air pollution have remained at around 50 percent of households in Maricopa County for the past three years, but had attained 60 percent or higher levels at the close of the century. Pollution health problems in the rural areas have risen steadily over the past decade, but seemed to have eased off over the past several years. It is in Pima County that there seems to be the greatest volatility in the proportion of consumers complaining about pollution. Today, the rate spiked sharply to 46 percent from 34 percent in 2002, a level now much closer to the all-time high of 52 percent registered in 2000.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 675 adults across Arizona conducted between January 3 and January 7, 2003, by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona as part of the Center's independent and non-partisan Rocky Mountain Poll series. The public is welcome to visit www.brcpolls.com to read this and other recent polls.

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STATISTICAL DATA

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For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2003-I-07) is based on 675 interviews with adults across Arizona conducted from January 3rd through January 7th, 2003. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, and race were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one may say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.8 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

ENCLOSED: Statistical data for reference.

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"In the past several years, air pollution in some areas of Arizona reached the alert level. During the past several months, did you or other members of your household experience any of the following kinds of problems which you felt were directly the result of the air pollution?"

STATEWIDE

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH
ONE OR MORE PERSONS EXPERIENCING
ADVERSE REACTION TO AIR POLLUTION

	2003	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993
<u>VISION</u>										
Minor eye irritations	34%	33%	44%	37%	37%	32%	38%	26%	29%	24%
Major eye irritations (Any vision problems)	15 (37%)	16 (35%)	25 (46%)	22 (40%)	22 (41%)	18 (35%)	7 (39%)	6 (27%)	7 (30%)	6 (26%)
<u>RESPIRATORY</u>										
Minor breathing difficulty	25	22	35	27	32	27	33	21	24	22
Sore or irritated throat not attributed to a cold or other illness	27	23	35	29	30	28	33	25	24	21
Aggravation of an existing lung disease such as asthma or emphysema	17	14	24	21	21	17	19	14	13	15
Major breathing difficulty (Any respiratory prob lems)	14 (41%)	11 (35%)	20 (50%)	17 (42%)	19 (45%)	16 (40%)	11 (44%)	8 (34%)	10 (34%)	10 (35%)
<u>(ANY VISION OR RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS)</u>	(49%)	(47%)	(59%)	(51%)	(53%)	(48%)	(54%)	(39%)	(41%)	(39%)

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ANY RESPIRATORY OR VISION PROBLEMS

	STATE TOTAL	MARICOPA	PIMA	RURAL
1993	39%	48%	36%	22%
1994	41	48	30	32
1995	39	47	34	23
1996	54	64	52	32
1997	48	60	37	28
1998	53	60	49	40
1999	51	58	47	37
2000	59	66	52	47
2001	47	53	34	38
2003	46	49	46	38

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**ANY RESPIRATORY  
OR VISION PROBLEM**

