

**PPIC Statewide Survey:
Californians and Their Government**

Mark Baldassare
Senior Fellow and Survey Director

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**Public
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Preface

California is in the midst of tremendous growth and historic changes that will profoundly affect its future. To understand these changes and how they influence voters' choices at the ballot box, PPIC is conducting an ongoing series of comprehensive statewide surveys focusing on the theme of "Californians and Their Government."

The first surveys in this series were conducted during the 1998 election cycle, beginning in April 1998 and concluding in January 1999. A second set of surveys was conducted during the 2000 election cycle, beginning in September 1999 and concluding in October 2000. This report presents the results of the fourth survey in a new series that will continue through the 2002 election cycle.

Several of the surveys have been special editions, focusing on particular regions and themes (November 1999 and March 2001 on the Central Valley, June 2000 on the environment, and July 2000 on San Diego County). The current survey is the nineteenth PPIC Statewide Survey. Altogether, the surveys have generated a database that includes the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of over 38,000 Californians throughout the state.

The objective of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to provide policymakers, the media, and the general public with relevant, non-partisan, advocacy-free information on a wide range of issues:

- Californians' overall impressions and concerns about the economy, population growth, governance, and quality of life and about key issues such as education, welfare, and immigration.
- How Californians relate to their government – their perceptions about how government works and what it does, the role it plays in their lives, how well it performs in delivering services, how involved people are in government and politics, the extent to which they trust their political leaders to do what is right, and the place they prefer government to have in their lives.
- The public's interest in civic affairs and politics, their current and preferred information sources, their attention to state political news, and their ratings of their political leaders.
- How growing regions and groups – such as the Central Valley, suburban regions, Latinos, and independent voters – affect the state's elections and policy debates.
- The role of political, social, and economic attitudes in public support for citizens' initiatives and government reform proposals.

Copies of earlier survey reports or additional copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail (order@ppic.org) or phone (415-291-4400). The reports are also posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site (www.ppic.org).

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Press Release

CALIFORNIANS GALVANIZED BY ENERGY CRISIS Most Conserving, Willing to Ante Up to Protect Environment; President, State Leaders Lose Ground

SAN FRANCISCO, California, July 19, 2001 — Despite their concern about the state's energy crisis, Californians remain more dedicated than Americans as a whole to protecting environmental quality, and they are willing to make personal sacrifices – from paying higher prices to practicing conservation – to prove it, according to a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC). But the cost of this new-found empowerment may be high for state leaders in 2002: By a wide margin, residents also say that questions of how to address the electricity situation should be decided, not by the governor and legislature, but by voters through the initiative process.

Although the lights have stayed on so far this summer, Californians are more concerned than ever about the energy situation. Eighty-one percent say they are closely watching news reports about the electricity crisis, while 78 percent are closely following news about higher gasoline prices. When asked to name the most important issue facing the state today, 56 percent say electricity prices, supply, and demand – a sharp rise from 43 percent in May and 25 percent in January. Nearly all residents (94%) view electricity as a problem for the state, with 78 percent saying it is a “big problem.” It appears, however, that concern about the long-term consequences of the crisis has eased somewhat: 51 percent of state residents think that the electricity issue will hurt the California economy “a great deal” in the next few years, down from 62 percent in May.

In the short term, many Californians – especially residents with lower incomes – are feeling the pain of higher energy costs. Nearly four in 10 residents say that rising gasoline prices and higher electric bills have been major problems for them, while three in 10 describe rising gas utility bills as a major problem. Residents earning less than \$40,000 per year are more likely than those making over \$80,000 per year to have major problems with higher gasoline prices (47% to 26%), electric utility bills (49% to 24%), and natural gas utility bills (38% to 17%). Across the state and economic spectrum, most Californians say they have not had significant problems with blackouts or the threat of blackouts.

Earth First: Residents Say They'll Pay More to Protect Environment

The electricity crisis and its economic consequences have not shaken Californians' strong desire to maintain the quality of their environment. Sixty-eight percent of state residents – compared to 57 percent of Americans – agree with the statement that we must protect the environment, even if it means higher prices for gasoline and electricity. Despite efforts by the Bush administration to increase public support for their energy plan, the majority of Californians (54%) would prefer to have U.S. energy policy focus on conservation and regulation, rather than the development of new supply. Californians are less likely than the nation as a whole (37% to 44%) to say that expanding exploration, mining, and drilling, and new power plant construction should be the most important U.S. energy priority. Indeed, few Californians believe that higher gasoline prices and electricity shortages in recent months are a good reason to allow new exploration in federally-protected areas. Seventy-one percent of state residents – compared to 56 percent of the nation as a whole – would prefer to see the federal government consider other solutions to the crisis.

“Californians have lived at ‘ground zero’ for higher gasoline and electricity prices for the better part of this year,” said PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. “But rather than leading to panic, the crisis has sharpened their focus about the things that are most important for quality of life in the Golden State. They are willing to make personal sacrifices to see that their vision is implemented.”

Nuclear NIMBYs

When it comes to nuclear power, a majority of residents (55%) believe that the dangers of nuclear power are too great, even if increased numbers of nuclear power plants would help solve the nation’s energy problems. Compared to the nation as a whole, Californians are less likely to agree with the view that nuclear power is a necessary ingredient in an overall energy strategy (49% to 38%). A majority of Californians (57%) say they would oppose a proposal to build a nuclear power plant in their region. Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to believe that the dangers of nuclear power are too great (68% to 49%) and to oppose the development of a nuclear power plant in their region (64% to 52%).

Although a majority opposes the nuclear option, many Californians believe that the solution to the state’s electricity situation is to increase supply. Thirty-nine percent would like to see the problem solved by building more power plants, 26 percent prefer re-regulating the industry, 18 percent favor conservation, and 10 percent support federal price controls. What kinds of power do state residents prefer? Public support is highest for hydroelectric power (42%), followed by natural gas (25%), nuclear (17%), and coal (2%). However, looking beyond the more conventional choices, there is strong support for increasing renewable sources of energy. Two in three Californians say they would favor developing more solar and wind power, even if it meant higher electricity prices.

Californians appear to have sided with Governor Gray Davis on the issue of federal price controls, with 56 percent of residents favoring federal limits on the price of electricity. Although the majority of Republicans (52%) are opposed to federal price caps, a surprisingly large percentage (43%) favor the approach suggested by a Democratic governor and opposed by a Republican president.

Conservation: Californians Walk the Walk

Californians are conserving in large numbers, whether or not they report being affected by higher energy prices. Six in 10 residents say they have done “a lot” to reduce their use of electricity and appliances at home during peak hours (61%) and to lower their electric bill (58%). Four in 10 say they have done a lot to lower their natural gas bill. By contrast, only 21 percent have made substantial changes in their driving habits to save money on gas.

Latinos and Californians earning less than \$40,000 are more likely than non-Hispanic whites and residents earning over \$80,000 to say they are driving less and to report that they are making major efforts to use less electricity and natural gas. Indeed, more than seven in 10 of the residents for whom electricity price increases were a major problem say they are doing a lot to reduce their energy bill and peak consumption. But surprisingly, more than half of the residents who say that price increases are only a minor problem are also doing a lot to conserve energy.

Dissatisfied with Leadership, Residents Eye Municipal Power, Initiative Process

As the energy crisis lingers and residents begin to take more of an active role in creating solutions, approval ratings for President George W. Bush, Governor Gray Davis, and the state legislature are

sliding. President Bush's job approval rating has fallen to 47 percent from 57 percent in May. And despite his recent visit to the state to talk about energy issues, residents give him lower marks on his handling of the problem: Sixty-three percent say they disapprove, compared to 56 percent in May.

Governor Davis has also lost ground: As many residents now disapprove (45%) as approve (44%) of his performance as governor. In May, 46 percent said they approved and 41 percent disapproved. However, Davis has picked up some support for his efforts on energy. Thirty-nine percent of Californians say they approve of his handling of the electricity crisis, up from 29 percent in May. "Davis' overall approval ratings and his rating on electricity appear to be converging," says Baldassare. "In other words, how Californians view the governor on energy may well be how they see him overall. Like it or not, he's the 'Energy Governor' now, not the 'Education Governor'."

When asked to compare the president and the governor in terms of blame for and solutions to the state's electricity problems, residents deliver a split verdict. Governor Davis gets more blame than President Bush (26% to 12%), but also gets higher grades for providing solutions (34% to 8%). When asked what source is "most" to blame for the energy crisis, electric utility companies are named most often (23%), followed by the former governor and legislature (22%), the current governor and legislature (16%), power generators (10%), the Bush administration (9%), and California consumers (8%).

As a growing number of residents blame the current governor and state legislature for energy problems, approval ratings for the legislature have also dropped. More Californians approve (45%) than disapprove (37%) of their performance, but approval is down from 58 percent in January. When asked how much confidence they have in the legislature when it comes to making laws to solve the electricity crisis, 7 percent of residents say they have a great deal of confidence, 46 percent only some, and 45 percent little or none.

In the long run, the majority of Californians feel that it would be a bad idea (52%) rather than a good idea (43%) for the *state* government to take the place of private electric companies and become permanently involved in producing and distributing electricity. However, they are more positive about the notion of *local* governments forming municipal power authorities to take the place of private electric companies, with 62 percent supporting the idea. Ultimately, residents see a role for themselves in finding solutions to the energy crisis: By a two-to-one margin, they favor letting the voters decide on state ballot initiatives in 2002, rather than leaving the lawmaking to the governor and legislature.

Other Key Findings

- ***Schools: Room for Improvement*** (page 2)

Heightened anxiety about electricity has not diminished interest in California's public education system. The majority of residents (79%) continue to see public school quality as at least somewhat of a problem, with 49 percent saying it is a "big problem." In assessing progress over the past two years, as many believe that schools have improved (25%) as believe that schools have gotten worse (24%), but most say the quality of K-12 education has stayed the same (40%).

- ***Mood of the State*** (page 17)

Half of Californians expect bad economic times in the next year, while 41 percent expect good times. Consistent with this economic pessimism, more residents also say the state is headed in the wrong direction (47%) rather than the right direction (44%). The results are similar to the May survey.

- ***Stock Watch*** (page 20)

Fifty-nine percent of Californians say they are closely following news about the stock market and U.S. economy. Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (69%) are more likely to be tuning in, with 37 percent saying they are following economic reports “very closely.”

About the Survey

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. PPIC will conduct large-scale public opinion surveys on a regular basis leading up to the 2002 election cycle. Findings of the current survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,007 California adult residents interviewed from July 1 to July 10, 2001. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. For additional information on survey methodology, see page 21.

Dr. Mark Baldassare is a senior fellow and program director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder and director of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has conducted since 1998. Dr. Baldassare is the author of numerous books, including *California in the New Millennium: The Changing Social and Political Landscape* (University of California Press, 2000).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to objective, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect the lives of Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. This report will appear on PPIC's website (www.ppic.org) on July 19.

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California Policy Issues

Most Important Issue

Although the lights have stayed on so far this summer, Californians are more concerned than ever about the electricity situation. When asked "what is the most important issue facing California today," 56 percent named electricity prices, supply, and demand – a sharp increase from 43 percent in May and 25 percent in January. To put this concern in perspective: Prior to this year, electricity was never mentioned. Moreover, in the three-year history of the PPIC Statewide Survey, no single issue has ever been named by a majority of residents as the most important problem.

To sharpen the perspective even more, education ran a far distant second to electricity. Only nine percent rated schools and education most important, quite a comedown for the issue that was consistently considered the most important problem from the fall of 1998 through the fall of 2000. Besides electricity and schools, no other issue was named by more than five percent of the public.

Electricity is by far the leading state issue in every region, though it is mentioned more frequently outside of Los Angeles. More than half of all residents in every age, education, gender, income, and racial and ethnic group name electricity as the top state issue. The same is true for Democrats, Republicans, and independent voters.

"Thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Electricity prices, deregulation	56%	60%	55%	48%	62%	52%
Schools, education	9	7	9	13	8	11
Jobs, the economy, unemployment	5	5	6	6	3	7
Growth, population, overpopulation	4	4	7	4	3	1
Immigration, illegal immigration	4	4	2	4	4	6
Crime, gangs	3	3	1	6	2	5
Environment, pollution	2	1	4	2	2	1
Housing costs, housing availability	2	1	4	1	1	2
Poverty, the poor, the homeless, welfare	2	2	2	3	1	2
Drugs	1	1	0	1	1	2
Health care, HMO reform	1	1	1	1	1	1
State budget, spending the surplus	1	1	0	1	1	1
State government, governor, legislature	1	1	0	1	1	0
Taxes, cutting taxes	1	1	1	1	1	0
Traffic and transportation	1	1	2	1	1	1
Water	1	1	1	0	1	0
Other	2	2	2	3	3	2
Don't know	4	4	3	4	4	6

Public Schools: An Update

While electricity may have replaced education as the primary concern, Californians recognize that the problems facing the state's schools have not been solved. Eight in ten residents say that the quality of K-12 public schools is at least "somewhat of a problem," and almost half believe it is a "big problem." These perceptions of education problems have changed very little since we first asked in May 1998.

Perceptions of a "big problem" with education vary somewhat across demographic groups. A majority of those with at least some college education and of those with annual household incomes above \$40,000 believes the quality of education is a big problem. Among parents with children in public schools, 47 percent agree with that perception. Non-Hispanic whites (51%) are somewhat more likely than Latinos (42%) to say that the quality of education is a big problem. Most residents in all regions rate schools as a big problem, although more so in Los Angeles (56%) than in the rest of the state. There are no differences between Democrats, Republicans, and independent voters.

In assessing progress, as many believe the schools have improved as believe the schools have gotten worse over the past two years, but most think the quality of K-12 education has stayed about the same. Since this January, the percentage seeing improvements has declined. Compared to a year and a half ago, fewer residents believe the schools are getting worse, largely because more say the schools have stayed the same and more say they are not sure.

Among parents with public school children, 39 percent say the state's schools are the same, 36 percent believe they have improved, and 22 percent think they have gotten worse. Among those who see the quality of education as a big problem, 42 percent say the schools have stayed the same, only 16 percent believe they have improved, and 36 percent say that they have gotten worse. In every region, most people feel the schools have stayed the same, and about one in four see improvements. Non-Hispanic whites are less likely than Latinos to believe the schools have improved. Those with higher incomes and college education are less likely than others to say there have been improvements.

	<u>All Adults</u>			
	May 98	Jan 00	Jan 01	Jul 01
<i>How much of a problem is the quality of education in K-12 public schools in California today?</i>				
Big problem	46%	53%	52%	49%
Somewhat of a problem	33	30	32	30
Not much of a problem	14	13	10	12
Don't know	7	4	6	9
<i>In the past two years, do you think the quality of education in California's K-12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?</i>				
Improved	–	22%	31%	25%
Gotten worse	–	39	22	24
Stayed the same	–	34	39	40
Don't know	–	5	8	11

Electricity Problem: Seriousness

Returning to electricity, almost all Californians say it is a problem for the state, and nearly eight in 10 see it as a “big problem.” This perception has changed little since the beginning of the year: Electricity was rated a big problem by 74 percent in January and 82 percent in May.

The perception is shared across regions and demographic groups: Eight in 10 residents in every region see electricity as a big problem. There is little difference across age, education, gender, income, or racial and ethnic groups or between Democrats, Republicans, and independent voters.

It appears, however, that concern about the long-term consequences of the state’s electricity problems has eased somewhat. In this survey, 51 percent of the state’s residents said they thought that the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity would hurt the economy a great deal in the next few years. That is down from 62 percent in May and 56 percent in January. Still, most residents think that electricity problems will hurt the California economy at least somewhat.

Perceptions of the economic effect vary little across regions; across age, education, gender, income, or racial and ethnic groups; or between Democrats, Republicans, or independent voters.

"How much of a problem is the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Big problem	78%	79%	77%	79%	79%	76%
Somewhat of a problem	16	14	16	15	16	19
Not much of a problem	5	6	6	5	4	5
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	0

"In the next few years, do you think the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy or not?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes, a great deal	51%	53%	50%	49%	54%	52%
Yes, somewhat	29	26	31	33	26	31
No	16	17	16	14	16	14
Don't know	4	4	3	4	4	3

Electricity Problem: Causes

Californians are showing more of a willingness to spread the primary blame for the electricity crisis to a variety of sources, rather than pointing to one culprit. However, the current governor and legislature are being named more frequently over time.

Now, less than half of those surveyed place primary blame on the electric utility companies (23%) and the former governor and state legislature (22%). About one in six residents blames the current governor and legislature (16%), while fewer name the power generators (10%), the Bush administration (9%), and California consumers (8%).

In May, six in 10 residents named the electric utility companies (32%) and former governor and legislature (26%) as most to blame for the electricity problems. In January, although the answer categories were different, three in four residents placed primary blame on deregulation of the state's electricity industry by the former governor and legislature (47%) and the electric utility companies (25%).

Over time, the mention of the current governor and legislature as most to blame has increased from 9 percent in January, to 10 percent in May, to 16 percent in the current July survey.

Perceptions of who is most to blame differ significantly across the regions of the state. In the Central Valley, residents are equally likely to blame the current governor and legislature, the past governor and legislature, and the electric utility companies for today's electricity problems. In the San Francisco Bay area, residents are most likely to blame the former governor and legislature. In Los Angeles and the rest of Southern California, residents are most likely to name the electric utility companies as the primary cause of the current electricity problems.

There are also major differences across political groups: Republicans (29%) are more likely than either Democrats (8%) or other voters (13%) to blame the current governor and legislature for the problem. In fact, Republicans now blame the current governor and legislature more than any other single source. Democrats and independent voters are divided in blaming the electric utility companies and the former governor and legislature. Blaming the current governor and legislature tends to increase with age and income, and it is also more pronounced among non-Hispanic whites (18%) than Latinos (12%).

"Who do you think is most to blame for the current electricity situation in California?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Electric utility companies	23%	21%	20%	26%	27%	29%
Former governor and legislature	22	22	27	18	22	20
Current governor and legislature	16	21	12	16	15	12
Power generators	10	8	13	11	9	6
Bush administration and federal government	9	7	11	11	7	10
California consumers	8	7	6	8	9	14
Other	5	5	4	4	5	4
Don't know	7	9	7	6	6	5

Electricity Problem: Solutions

Most Californians continue to see the state’s electricity problem as a supply problem. Thirty-nine percent would prefer to see the problem solved by building more power plants, while 26 percent prefer re-regulation of the state’s electricity industry. Fewer favor encouraging consumers to conserve (18%) and federal price controls on power generators (10%). Even fewer mention other policy options, including raising electricity prices.

These numbers have changed little since May, but more since January. In May, a similar 43 percent said building more power plants was their most favored solution, 27 percent named re-regulating the electricity industry, 18 percent mentioned encouraging consumers to conserve, and 8 percent preferred federal price controls on power generators. In January, fewer favored building more power plants (32%), and more supported re-regulation of electricity (37%), while support for energy conservation (20%) was about the same as it is now.

In every region, people favor building power plants more than any other option, but this idea has the most favor outside of the urban coastal regions of Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay. Central Valley residents are the most likely to favor building new power plants and the least likely to support re-regulation of the state’s electricity industry.

Building more power plants is the top solution for all age, education, and income groups. Public support for conservation is strongest among younger, less educated, and lower-income residents. Latinos and non-Hispanic whites are equally likely to name building power plants as their most preferred solution, but Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to favor conservation as the solution to today’s electricity problems (25% to 16%).

As for partisan differences, Republicans (52%) are overwhelming in their support of building more power plants compared to Democrats (32%) and other voters (34%). Democrats and other voters show more support for government intervention such as re-regulation of the state’s electricity industry and federal price controls. There are no party differences in support for conservation.

"I'd like to ask you about some of the solutions people have talked about for the electricity situation in California. Which of the following solutions do you most prefer?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Build more power plants	39%	45%	36%	37%	41%	41%
Re-regulate the state's electricity industry	26	21	27	29	26	22
Encourage consumers to conserve energy	18	19	18	15	17	25
Place federal price controls on power generators	10	9	11	12	8	9
Raise electricity prices	1	0	1	2	1	1
Other	4	3	5	4	5	1
Don't know	2	3	2	1	2	1

Electricity Problem: Municipal Power and State Government

In thinking about how to provide electric power in the future, most residents are much more positive about having their local governments create municipal power authorities than about seeing the state government remain in the electricity business.

Nearly two in three Californians think it is a good thing for local governments to form municipal power authorities that would take the place of private electric companies. Fewer than one in four residents think it is a bad thing. At least six in 10 residents in all major regions respond favorably to the idea of local governments forming municipal power authorities.

The majority of Democrats (67%), Republicans (55%), and other voters (63%) think that local governments forming municipal power authorities would be a good thing. Support is strong among non-Hispanic whites (60%) and Latinos (69%) and across all age, education, and income groups.

When asked if it would be a good or bad idea for the *state* government to stay involved in the electricity business, Californians are more negative: 43 percent think it is a good idea, but 52 percent think it is a bad one. In Los Angeles, more think it would be a good idea than a bad idea by a narrow margin. Elsewhere in the state, the majority of residents thinks it would be a bad idea.

Democrats (50%) narrowly believe it would be a good idea for the state government to become permanently involved in providing electricity, while most Republicans (65%) and other voters (57%) think it would be a bad idea. Latinos (55%) think it would be a good idea for their state government to provide this service, while most non-Hispanic whites (57%) see it as a bad idea. The belief that a permanent role for state government in the electricity business is a bad idea increases with age, education, and income.

"Some say that local governments should form municipal power authorities that would take the place of private electric companies. There are now municipal power authorities in places such as Los Angeles and Sacramento. In general, do you think that municipal power authorities are a good thing or a bad thing?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Good thing	62%	60%	63%	67%	61%	69%
Bad thing	22	23	21	19	23	21
Don't know	16	17	16	14	16	10

"Some say that the state government should take the place of private electric companies and become permanently involved in producing and distributing electricity, and buying and selling electric power. Do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for the state to be permanently involved in the electricity business?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Good idea	43%	37%	41%	50%	41%	55%
Bad idea	52	57	52	46	52	40
Don't know	5	6	7	4	7	5

Energy Policy

Environment and Energy

Recent experiences with electricity problems and higher energy prices in California have not shaken the state's residents' strong desire to maintain the quality of the environment. More than two in three Californians agree with the statement that we must protect the environment, even if it means higher prices for gasoline and electricity. Californians are even more likely than Americans as a whole to say that they would accept higher energy prices to protect the environment.

Preferences differ across political groups: Half of the state's Republicans are willing to pay higher prices for the sake of the environment, compared to about three in four Democrats and other voters.

San Francisco Bay area residents (76%) are more likely than those living in Los Angeles (69%), the rest of Southern California (65%), and the Central Valley (62%) to support environmental protection, even in light of the financial consequences of doing so. There are no significant variations between non-Hispanic whites (67%) and Latinos (71%) on this issue. The strongest feelings about the need to protect the environment are found among younger adults (under age 35), the college educated, and higher-income adults. There are no differences between men and women.

"Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: We must protect the environment, even if it means paying higher prices for gasoline and electricity because of it?"

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Agree	57%	68%
Disagree	36	27
Don't know	7	5

* Source: *New York Times* / CBS poll, June 2001

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Agree	68%	76%	50%	71%	74%	71%
Disagree	27	20	42	26	22	27
Don't know	5	4	8	3	4	2

Energy Exploration and Conservation

Having lived at “ground zero” for both higher gasoline prices and electricity problems for most of this year, Californians are still not inclined to emphasize the “supply side” of energy. The majority of Californians (54%) would prefer to have U.S. energy policy focus on conservation and regulation, while fewer than four in 10 want the priority to be expanding the energy supply. In fact, Californians are even less likely than Americans as a whole to say that expanding exploration, mining, and drilling, and new power plant construction should be the most important U.S. priority.

Once again, there is a partisan divide: Republicans (54%) want the focus to be on increasing the energy supply, while Democrats (63%) and other voters (59%) favor conservation and regulation.

San Francisco Bay area residents (60%) express the strongest support for conservation and regulation, followed by residents of Los Angeles (55%), the rest of Southern California (50%), and the Central Valley (51%). Latinos (63%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (49%) to favor conservation and regulation. Younger and college-educated adults also think that conservation and regulation should receive higher priority than expanding the energy supply through mining, drilling, and the construction of new power plants. There are no differences across income groups.

"Which one of the following do you think should be the more important priority for U.S. energy policy?"

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and the construction of new power plants	44%	37%
More conservation and regulation on energy use and prices	49	54
Other / Don't know	7	9

* Source: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, May 2001

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and the construction of new power plants	37%	29%	54%	31%	31%	33%
More conservation and regulation on energy use and prices	54	63	36	59	61	63
Other/ Don't know	9	8	10	10	8	4

Energy Exploration in Federally-Protected Areas

Few Californians believe that higher gasoline prices and electricity shortages in the recent months have offered sufficient reason to allow oil exploration in federally-protected lands. Seven in 10 state residents believe that the federal government should consider other solutions and continue to keep these areas off-limits.

In fact, Californians (24%) are much less likely than the nation as a whole (37%) to want to open up federally-protected lands.

There are also striking differences across political groups: Republicans (44%) are much more likely than Democrats (15%) and other voters (21%) to say they want to expand oil exploration into protected areas such as the Alaskan wilderness. Still, a majority across all political groups wants the U.S. government to keep these areas off-limits.

Residents in the San Francisco Bay area (78%) and Los Angeles (77%) are more likely than those living in the rest of Southern California (66%) and the Central Valley (64%) to say that the federal government should consider other solutions to energy problems and preserve protected areas.

Most Latinos (77%) and non-Hispanic whites (68%) do not think that higher energy prices and electricity shortages justify oil exploration in federally-protected areas, although this preference is somewhat stronger among Latinos. The belief that oil exploration should not be expanded into protected areas is most evident among adults under age 35 and college-educated residents. There are no differences across income groups.

"Do you think that the higher prices for electricity, gasoline, and other sources of energy during the past year are a good reason to allow new oil exploration in some federally-protected areas such as the Alaskan wilderness, or should the federal government keep these areas off-limits and consider other solutions?"

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Good reason for new exploration	37%	24%
Consider other solutions	56	71
Other/ Don't know	7	5

* Source: NBC / Wall Street Journal, March 2001

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Good reason for new exploration	24%	15%	44%	21%	18%	19%
Consider other solutions	71	82	51	75	76	77
Other/ Don't know	5	3	5	4	6	4

Federal Price Controls on Electricity

For much of this year, Californians have been lectured about the “pros” of federal price controls on out-of-state power generators by the Davis Administration, and the “cons” of setting price caps by the Bush Administration. Right now, most residents are siding with Governor Davis on this issue.

The majority of Californians (56%) believe that the federal government should set limits on the cost of electricity to prevent high prices by suppliers, while four in 10 residents feel that setting price caps would not solve the energy problems and may discourage development of new supplies. The same preference for federal price controls was found in a national survey with similar wording.

This regulatory issue draws a predictable partisan response: Most Republicans (52%) are opposed to the federal government setting limits on the price of electricity, while most Democrats (64%) and other voters (56%) are in favor of the federal government setting limits. Still, a surprisingly large percentage of Republicans (43%) favor the approach suggested by a Democratic governor and opposed by a Republican president.

In every region, a majority of residents supports federal price controls: San Francisco Bay area residents (62%) are the most supportive, followed by those living in Los Angeles (56%), the rest of Southern California (55%), and the Central Valley (54%).

Latinos (63%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (54%) to favor federal price controls but, again, a majority in each group expresses support for government intervention. Younger adults are more in favor of price controls than older adults, although price caps are favored in all age groups. There is little variation by income and education.

"Some people think the federal government should set limits on the prices of electricity to prevent high prices by suppliers. Others say price caps would not solve energy problems and may discourage development of new supplies. What's your opinion – do you favor or oppose federal limits on the price of electricity?"

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Favor	56%	56%
Oppose	40	37
Other/ Don't know	4	7

* Source: *Washington Post / ABC*, June 2001, with slightly different wording.

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Favor	56%	64%	43%	56%	60%	63%
Oppose	37	29	52	38	35	32
Other/ Don't know	7	7	5	6	5	5

Nuclear Power Plants

When it comes to expressing their views about the need for more nuclear power plants, less than four in 10 Californians agree with the perspective that nuclear energy is necessary to help solve the nation's energy problems. A majority of residents (55%) believes that the dangers of nuclear power are too great, even if it would help solve the country's energy problems. Compared to the nation as a whole, Californians are less likely to agree with the view that nuclear power is a necessary ingredient in an overall energy strategy. Americans were divided on this issue in a recent survey.

Most Republicans (55%) say that nuclear power is necessary, while most Democrats (62%) and other voters (54%) believe that the dangers of nuclear power are too great.

A majority of the residents living in Los Angeles (61%), the San Francisco Bay area (56%), and the Central Valley (56%) believes that nuclear power is too dangerous, while those living in the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles are evenly divided on this issue. Latinos (68%) overwhelmingly believe that nuclear power should not play a role in resolving the country's energy problems, while 49 percent of non-Hispanic whites are of this opinion. The belief that nuclear power is necessary increases with age, education, and income. However, less than half of those in the highest age, education, and income groups agree that nuclear power is necessary.

Most Californians (57%) also say that they would oppose a proposal to build a nuclear power plant in their region. Residents in the Southern California area outside of Los Angeles are the least likely to reject such a proposal. Latinos (64%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (52%) to oppose a nuclear power plant in their region. Public support does increase with age, education, and income; however, it does not exceed 50 percent in any age, education, or income group. A narrow majority of Republicans (54%) would favor such a proposal, while most Democrats (65%) and other voters (53%) would oppose construction of a nuclear power plant in their region.

"Which comes closer to your view about increasing the number of nuclear power plants in the country – nuclear power is necessary to help solve the country's current energy problems, or the dangers of nuclear power are too great, even if it would help solve the country's current energy problems?"

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Nuclear power is necessary	49%	38%
Nuclear power is too dangerous	46	55
Don't know	5	7

Source: CNN / Gallup / USA Today, June 2001

"What if a nuclear power plant was proposed for your region of California? Would you favor or oppose it?"

	All Adults	<u>Region</u>				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Favor	39%	37%	35%	37%	45%	32%
Oppose	57	58	60	59	50	64
Don't know	4	5	5	4	5	4

Electric Power Sources for California

Many Californians have indicated that building more power plants is the solution they most prefer for the state’s electricity problems. What kind of power plants would they prefer? Most (42%) say hydroelectric. The next closest choice is natural gas powered plants (25%). Only one in six residents says that nuclear powered plants are the best way to go.

Public support for hydroelectric power is highest in the San Francisco Bay area, while natural gas powered plants are favored the most in Los Angeles. Nuclear power plants find their most support in the rest of Southern California. The preference for hydroelectric power is found across all age, education, income, and racial and ethnic groups, although support for nuclear power increases with age, education, and income. Four in 10 non-Hispanic whites and Latinos prefer hydroelectric power; however, whites are more likely than Latinos to favor nuclear powered plants (20% to 11%). Hydroelectric power is the top choice across political parties, although Republicans are more likely than others to prefer nuclear power.

Looking beyond the more conventional choices, there is strong support for increasing the energy supply from renewable sources. Two in three Californians say they would favor developing more solar and wind power in the state, even if it meant higher electricity prices. Public support for alternative energy sources is highest in the San Francisco Bay area. Non-Hispanic whites (65%) favor the idea of renewable energy more than do Latinos (54%). Support for solar and wind power increases with income and education. Younger residents are more supportive of this idea than older adults. A majority of Democrats (64%), Republicans (56%), and other voters (67%) favor increasing the supply of solar and wind power.

"If new electric power plants were built in California, which of the following would you most prefer?"

	All Adults	Region					Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California		
Hydroelectric	42%	41%	46%	40%	42%	38%	
Natural gas powered	25	24	23	30	24	32	
Nuclear	17	15	15	16	20	11	
Coal powered	2	3	2	2	2	4	
Other	3	3	3	1	3	1	
Don't know	11	14	11	11	9	14	

"To address California’s electricity needs, would you favor or oppose developing more solar and wind power, even if it meant higher electricity prices?"

	All Adults	Region					Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California		
Favor	62%	58%	71%	59%	59%	54%	
Oppose	33	36	26	36	35	40	
Don't know	5	6	3	5	6	6	

Political Trends

Governor's Job Approval Ratings

Gray Davis is getting mixed reviews today for his performance as governor: As many approve (44%) as disapprove (45%) of his performance. This approval rating is slightly below what he received in May (46%) and well below the approval ratings he had in January 2001 (63%), October 2000 (60%), and September 2000 (66%).

These ratings are strongly tied to political party affiliation: Approval is 56 percent among Democrats, 27 percent among Republicans, and 42 percent among other voters. Governor Davis gets slightly higher approval ratings from residents of Democratic-leaning Los Angeles (48%) and the San Francisco Bay area (46%) than from those living elsewhere in Southern California (42%) and the Central Valley (38%). Latinos (52%) are much more approving than non-Hispanic whites (39%) of the governor's performance.

Most Californians are still unhappy with the way Davis has handled the electricity problem: 39 percent approve and 51 percent disapprove of his performance. Nonetheless, this is an improvement over the governor's ratings in both May and January, when three in 10 residents approved and six in 10 residents disapproved of his handling of the state's electricity problems.

This improvement comes largely from the Democrats and other voters, while Republicans remain mostly negative of the governor's handling of the electricity problem. In this survey, half of the Democrats and four in 10 independent voters approve of his handling of the electricity issue, while seven in 10 Republicans disapprove of it. In prior surveys, Democrats and independents voters were more negative in these specific ratings. Latinos (44%) are more positive than non-Hispanic whites (36%) with Davis' performance on this issue.

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?</i>						
Approve	44%	56%	27%	42%	48%	52%
Disapprove	45	34	66	46	34	36
Don't know	11	10	7	12	18	12
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?</i>						
Approve	39%	51%	21%	39%	41%	44%
Disapprove	51	41	72	50	43	46
Don't know	10	8	7	11	16	10

President's Job Approval Ratings

While the governor's approval rating has fallen, President Bush's job rating has fallen even more, and Californians give him lower ratings than he gets nationally. His California approval rating is 47 percent (down from 57 percent in May), and the disapproval rate is 43 percent. In a Gallup/CNN/USA Today national survey that concluded on July 1, 52 percent approved and 34 percent disapproved of the president's job performance.

The President's approval ratings differ among Republicans, Democrats, and voters outside the major parties, but all of the ratings have dropped since May. Approval of the president's overall performance is 80 percent among Republicans (versus 88 percent in May), 25 percent among Democrats (versus 37 percent in May), and 42 percent among other voters (versus 54 percent in May). Latinos (50%) and non-Hispanic whites (48%) give the president similar ratings. Only 32 percent of San Francisco Bay Area residents approve of Bush, making them much less supportive than residents in other regions of the state. There are no significant differences by age, education, income, or gender.

In recent months, Gray Davis has been charging that the Bush Administration is at least partly responsible for the electricity crisis because it refused to cap wholesale prices. That effort may be paying off: Californians now disapprove more of Bush (63%) than of Davis (51%) on the handling of the electricity problem. Since May, the proportion of Californians who disapprove of Bush's handling of electricity has increased from 56 percent to 63 percent. A bare majority (51%) of Republicans approve of Bush's handling of this issue, while most Democrats (81%) and voters outside of the major parties (68%) disapprove. Since May, disapproval of the president's performance on energy has increased among voters across party lines.

Latinos' disapproval of the president on this issue is as about the same as it was in May (60% vs. 59%). Non-Hispanic whites, in contrast, have grown more discontent: 63 percent disapprove now, compared to 53 percent in May. As with overall performance, San Francisco Bay Area residents are the least likely to favor Bush's handling of electricity: 77 percent disapprove, compared to 62 percent in Los Angeles, 61 percent in the rest of Southern California, and 56 percent in the Central Valley.

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president?</i>						
Approve	47%	25%	80%	42%	44%	50%
Disapprove	43	66	15	46	36	36
Don't know	10	9	5	12	20	14
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?</i>						
Approve	28%	14%	51%	20%	28%	32%
Disapprove	63	81	39	68	60	60
Don't know	9	5	10	12	12	8

Attitudes Toward the State Legislature

Approval of the state legislature has also declined. More Californians approve (45%) than disapprove (37%) of the legislature's performance, but approval is down from 58 percent in January this year and 56 percent in September 2000. Democrats (51%) are more likely than other voters to approve of the Democratic-controlled legislature's performance. And the legislature gets higher approval ratings among Latinos (53%) than among non-Hispanic whites (40%).

When asked how they rate the legislature's effectiveness in passing new laws to solve the electricity problem, 7 percent of Californians say they have a great deal of confidence, 46 percent say they have only some, and 45 percent say they have very little or no confidence. Democrats (60%) are more likely than Republicans (47%) and independent voters (50%) to have at least some confidence.

Californians have more faith in themselves than in state government in handling the electricity situation: By a two-to-one margin, they favor letting the voters decide on state ballot initiatives in 2002, rather than having the governor and legislature decide what to do and pass state laws. At least six of 10 in all political groups favor the initiative route.

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the job the California state legislature is doing at this time?</i>						
Approve	45%	51%	36%	43%	47%	53%
Disapprove	37	32	50	40	28	30
Don't know	18	17	14	17	25	17
<i>How much confidence do you have in the California legislature when it comes to passing new state laws to solve the state's electricity problems?</i>						
A great deal	7%	8%	5%	6%	10%	11%
Only some	46	52	42	44	41	44
Very little	30	27	31	31	32	31
No confidence	15	10	20	18	13	11
Don't know	2	3	2	1	4	3
<i>What do you think is the best way to address the electricity situation facing California today?</i>						
The governor and legislature should decide what to do and pass state laws	30%	34%	29%	30%	21%	21%
The voters should decide what to do by voting on initiatives on the statewide ballot in 2002	65	62	67	66	75	76
Don't know	5	4	4	4	4	3

Governor Davis and President Bush

When asked to compare the governor and the president in terms of blame for and solutions to the state's electricity problems, residents delivered a split verdict. Governor Davis gets more blame but also gets higher grades for providing solutions.

Twenty-six percent blame Davis more than Bush for the state's electricity problems, while just 12 percent say that Bush is more to blame than Davis. However, six in ten residents blame both equally (24%) or neither (35%) for the problem. Democrats are only a little more likely to blame Bush than Davis (20% to 15%) for the state's problems, while Republicans (46% to 5%) and independent voters (23% to 10%) are much more likely to blame Davis than Bush. Still, many voters across party lines do not assign more blame to one leader than the other.

While Californians may be inclined to blame Davis more than Bush for the electricity problem, more are inclined to give Davis (34%) rather than Bush (8%) credit for providing better solutions. Still, more than half of Californians say neither (42%) or both (11%) have better solutions to the problem.

Once again, there are partisan differences: Half of the Democrats think Davis has offered better solutions than Bush. Only 14 percent of Republicans think that Bush has offered better solutions than Davis, while half say that neither offers better solutions (52%). One third of independent voters believe that Davis has offered the best solutions, while half think that neither has the best solution.

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Who do you think is more to blame when it comes to California's electricity problems?</i>						
Governor Davis	26%	15%	46%	23%	18%	19%
President Bush	12	20	5	10	12	11
Both equally	24	26	13	26	34	35
Neither	35	36	34	38	31	31
Don't know	3	3	2	3	5	4
<i>Who do you think is providing better solutions for California's electricity problems?</i>						
Governor Davis	34%	50%	18%	34%	28%	29%
President Bush	8	4	14	5	9	10
Both equally	11	9	10	9	19	20
Neither	42	34	52	47	37	35
Don't know	5	3	6	5	7	6

Social and Economic Trends

Overall Mood

The pessimistic mood of Californians found in the May survey remains largely unchanged today: Residents are more likely to say they expect economic bad times (50%) than good times (41%) and to say that California is headed in the wrong direction (47%) rather than the right direction (44%).

Resident of the San Francisco Bay area (34%) and Central Valley (37%) are less likely to expect good times than those living in Los Angeles (46%) or the rest of Southern California (44%). Central Valley residents (39%) are less likely than those living in the San Francisco Bay area (43%), Los Angeles (47%), and the rest of Southern California (44%) to say that the state is headed in the right direction.

Latinos (48%) are a little more likely than non-Hispanic whites (42%) to say that the state is headed in the right direction. However, Latinos (48%) are just as likely as non-Hispanic whites (49%) to predict bad economic times for their state. In May, Latinos (60%) were more negative than non-Hispanic whites (54%) about the near-term future of the state's economy.

Californians making less than \$40,000 per year (41%) are less likely than those making between \$40,000 and \$80,000 (45%) and those making more than \$80,000 (47%) to say the state is headed in the right direction. There is little difference across income categories in terms of expectation of the future economy: About half of Californians in every income range fear that bad economic times lie ahead.

"Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?"

<u>All Adults</u>							
	Sep 99	Dec 99	Feb 00	Aug 00	Jan 01	May 01	Jul 01
Good times	72%	76%	78%	72%	51%	38%	41%
Bad times	23	19	15	21	38	56	50
Don't know	5	5	7	7	11	6	9

"Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?"

<u>All Adults</u>											
	May 98	Sep 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Feb 00	Aug 00	Oct 00	Jan 01	May 01	Jul 01
Right direction	56%	57%	63%	61%	62%	65%	62%	59%	62%	44%	44%
Wrong direction	34	34	28	34	31	27	30	32	29	48	47
Don't know	10	9	9	5	7	8	8	9	9	8	9

Energy Disruptions

Almost four in 10 residents say that rising gasoline prices and higher electric bills have been major problems for them, while three in 10 describe rising gas utility bills as major problems. By contrast, only one in eight residents says that rolling blackouts or the threat of them have been a major problem.

Central Valley residents are the most likely to view increasing electric and natural gas bills and higher gasoline prices as major problems. Los Angeles residents are the most likely to say that blackouts or the threat of blackouts have not been a problem.

Residents earning less than \$40,000 per year are more likely than those making more than \$80,000 per year to have major problems with higher gasoline prices (47% to 26%), electric utility bills (49% to 24%), and natural gas utility bills (38% to 17%). Across the economic spectrum, most Californians say they have not had any problems with blackouts or the threat of blackouts.

Latinos are much more likely than non-Hispanic whites to say that higher gasoline prices (50% to 31%), electricity prices (49% to 31%), and natural gas prices (37% to 23%) have been big problems. In both groups, most say that rolling blackouts or the threat of blackouts have not been a problem.

"Have the following been major problems, minor problems, or not a problem for you?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Increasing prices at the gasoline pump						
Major problem	37%	40%	33%	37%	38%	50%
Minor problem	43	41	45	44	44	38
Not a problem	20	19	22	19	18	12
Increasing electric utility bills						
Major problem	37%	45%	36%	35%	37%	49%
Minor problem	40	35	40	40	43	35
Not a problem	23	20	24	25	20	16
Increasing natural gas utility bills						
Major problem	28%	38%	29%	27%	25%	37%
Minor problem	40	36	40	41	42	39
Not a problem	32	26	31	32	33	24
Rolling blackouts or the threat of rolling blackouts						
Major problem	13%	12%	13%	14%	13%	16%
Minor problem	31	37	39	24	31	27
Not a problem	56	51	48	62	56	57

Energy Sacrifices

Six in 10 residents say they have done “a lot” to lower their electric bill and to reduce their use of electricity and appliances at home during times of peak energy demand. Four in 10 say they have done “a lot” to lower their natural gas bill. By contrast, only two in 10 have made substantial changes in their driving habits to save money on gas.

Los Angeles residents are the least likely to make major efforts to curb electricity use, while San Francisco Bay area residents are the least likely to say they are driving a lot less.

Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to say they have been driving a lot less (29% to 19%) and to say they have taken major steps to lower natural gas bills (45% to 37%), electricity bills (63% to 56%), and peak demand-time use of appliances and electricity (66% to 60%). Californians earning less than \$40,000 per year are more likely than those earning \$80,000 or more to say that they are driving a lot less (31% to 12%) and to report that they are making major efforts to use less natural gas (44% to 35%) and electricity (60% to 53%) and less electricity during peak hours (63% to 57%).

“I’m going to read to you a few steps that people have taken lately in response to higher energy costs and electricity shortages. Not everyone will have done these”

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>Have you been reducing your use of electricity and appliances at home during the daytime peak hours?</i>						
Yes, a lot	61%	64%	64%	55%	64%	66%
Yes, somewhat	27	27	25	29	25	26
No	12	9	11	16	11	8
<i>Have you been adjusting the temperature or making other efforts at home to lower your electric bill?</i>						
Yes, a lot	58%	61%	61%	50%	63%	63%
Yes, somewhat	30	31	31	33	27	26
No	12	8	8	17	10	11
<i>Have you been adjusting the temperature or making other efforts to lower your natural gas bill?</i>						
Yes, a lot	40%	45%	46%	34%	39%	45%
Yes, somewhat	29	28	31	32	27	32
No	31	27	23	34	34	23
<i>Have you been driving less to save money on gas?</i>						
Yes, a lot	21%	23%	15%	21%	24%	29%
Yes, somewhat	31	30	34	30	28	34
No	48	47	51	49	48	37

News Attentiveness

Californians' attention is highly focused on news about the energy crisis: 81 percent say they very or fairly closely follow news about the electricity problem, while 78 percent are very or fairly closely following news about the high price of gasoline. By contrast, 59 percent say they are closely following news about the stock market and U.S. economy, and 49 percent are closely following news about the effects of global warming on the Sierras and the state's water. The public is continuing to follow news stories about the electricity situation as closely as it was in May (82%) and January (84%).

There are no major differences in attentiveness to news about electricity across regional, age, education, income, or racial and ethnic groups. San Francisco Bay Area residents (69%) are more likely than others to say they are closely following news about the stock market and U.S. economy.

"Tell me if you followed these news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely . . ."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>News about the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California</i>						
Very closely	39%	37%	42%	39%	41%	42%
Fairly closely	42	40	40	44	40	37
Not too closely	13	17	13	11	11	15
Not at all closely	6	6	5	6	8	6
<i>News about the high price of gasoline</i>						
Very closely	41%	39%	34%	43%	42%	53%
Fairly closely	37	36	41	38	37	29
Not too closely	14	14	17	12	13	11
Not at all closely	8	11	8	7	8	7
<i>News about the stock market and U.S. economy</i>						
Very closely	29%	17%	37%	28%	28%	20%
Fairly closely	30	26	32	32	29	23
Not too closely	20	28	15	21	20	27
Not at all closely	21	29	16	19	23	30
<i>News about the effects of global warming on the Sierras and the state's water</i>						
Very closely	20%	18%	22%	21%	19%	21%
Fairly closely	29	26	30	31	25	22
Not too closely	27	29	30	23	30	31
Not at all closely	24	27	18	25	26	26

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research assistance from Eric McGhee and Mina Yaroslavsky. The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,007 California adult residents interviewed from July 1 to July 10, 2001. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to five times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Maria Tello translated the survey into Spanish.

We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,007 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,595 registered voters is +/- 2.5%. Sampling error is just one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “SF Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, and “Other Southern California” includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley and “Other Southern California” regions have given them increasing political significance.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 24 percent of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with “other” or “independent” registered voters. This third category includes those who are registered to vote as “decline to state” as well as a fewer number who say they are members of other political parties.

In some cases, we compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted by NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* in March 2001; the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press in May 2001; *New York Times*/CBS News and *Washington Post*/ABC News in June 2001; and CNN/Gallup/*USA Today* in June and July 2001. We used 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

JULY 1-10, 2001

2,007 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH

MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

1. First, I'd like to ask you some questions about your elected officials. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

47% approve
43 disapprove
10 don't know

2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?

44% approve
45 disapprove
11 don't know

3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job the California legislature is doing at this time?

45% approve
37 disapprove
18 don't know

4. Thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing California today? (*code, don't read*)

56% electricity prices, electricity deregulation, energy prices
9 schools, education
5 jobs, the economy, unemployment
4 growth, population, overpopulation
4 immigration, illegal immigration
3 crime, gangs
2 environment, pollution
2 housing costs, housing availability
2 poverty, the poor, the homeless, welfare
1 drugs
1 health care, HMO reform
1 state budget, spending the surplus
1 state government, governor, legislature
1 taxes, cutting taxes
1 traffic and transportation
1 water
2 other (*specify*)
4 don't know

5. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

44% right direction
47 wrong direction
9 don't know

6. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

41% good times
50 bad times
9 don't know

7. On another topic, how much of a problem is the quality of education in kindergarten through 12th grade public schools in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

49% big problem
30 somewhat of a problem
12 not much of a problem
9 don't know

8. In the past two years, do you think the quality of education in California's K through 12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?

25% improved
24 gotten worse
40 stayed the same
11 don't know

9. On another topic, how much of a problem is the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

78% big problem
16 somewhat of a problem
5 not much of a problem
1 don't know

10. In the next few years, do you think the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy or not? (*if yes: Do you think it will hurt the California economy a great deal or only somewhat?*)

51% yes, a great deal
29 yes, only somewhat
16 no
4 don't know

11. Who do you think is most to blame for the current electricity situation in California? (*rotate*)

- 23% electric utility companies
- 22 former governor and legislature
- 16 current governor and legislature
- 10 power generators
- 9 Bush Administration and federal government
- 8 California consumers
- 5 more than one, other answer (*specify*)
- 7 don't know

12. I'd like to ask you about some of the solutions people have talked about for the electricity situation in California. Which of the following solutions do you most prefer? (*rotate*)

- 39% build more power plants
- 26 re-regulate the state's electricity industry
- 18 encourage consumers to conserve energy
- 10 place federal price controls on power generators
- 1 raise electricity prices
- 4 more than one, other answer (*specify*)
- 2 don't know

13. If new electric power plants were built in California, which of the following would you most prefer?

- 42% hydroelectric power plants
- 25 natural gas-powered plants
- 17 nuclear power plants
- 2 coal-powered plants
- 3 other
- 11 don't know

14. To address California's electricity needs, would you favor or oppose developing more solar and wind power, even if it meant higher electricity prices?

- 62% favor
- 33 oppose
- 5 don't know

15. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?

- 39% approve
- 51 disapprove
- 10 don't know

16. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?

- 28% approve
- 63 disapprove
- 9 don't know

17. Who do you think is more to blame when it comes to California's electricity problems – Governor Davis, President Bush, both equally, or neither?

- 26% Governor Davis
- 12 President Bush
- 24 both
- 35 neither
- 3 don't know

18. Who do you think is providing better solutions for California's electricity problems – Governor Davis, President Bush, both equally, or neither?

- 34% Governor Davis
- 8 President Bush
- 11 both
- 42 neither
- 5 don't know

19. How much confidence do you have in the California legislature when it comes to passing new state laws to solve the state's electricity problems – a great deal, only some, very little, or no confidence?

- 7% a great deal
- 46 only some
- 30 very little
- 15 no confidence
- 2 don't know

20. What do you think is the best way to address the electricity situation facing California today? (a) The governor and legislature should decide what to do and pass state laws. (b) The voters should decide what to do by voting on initiatives on the statewide ballot in 2002. (*rotate a and b*)

- 30% governor and legislature
- 65 ballot initiatives
- 5 don't know

21. Some say that local governments should form municipal power authorities that would take the place of private electric companies. There are now municipal power authorities in places such as Los Angeles and Sacramento. In general, do you think that municipal power authorities are a good idea or a bad idea?

- 62% good idea
- 22 bad idea
- 16 don't know

22. Some say that the state government should take the place of private electric companies and become permanently involved in producing and distributing electricity and in buying and selling electric power. Do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for the state to be permanently involved in the electricity business?

- 43% good idea
- 52 bad idea
- 5 don't know

23. Turning to the nation as a whole, which of the following do you think should be the more important priority for U.S. energy policy right now? (a) Expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and the construction of new power plants. (b) More conservation and regulation on energy use and prices. (*rotate a and b*)

- 37% expanding exploration; constructing new power plants
- 54 more conservation and regulation
- 6 both (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

24. Do you think that the higher prices for electricity, gasoline, and other sources of energy during the past year are a good reason to allow new oil exploration in some federally-protected areas such as the Alaskan wilderness, or should the federal government keep these areas off-limits and consider other solutions?

- 24% allow new exploration
- 71 consider other solutions
- 1 both (*volunteered*)
- 4 don't know

25. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: We must protect the environment, even if it means paying higher prices for gasoline and electricity because of it?

- 68% agree
- 27 disagree
- 5 don't know

26. Some people think the federal government should set limits on the cost of electricity to prevent high prices by suppliers. Others say price caps would not solve energy problems and may discourage development of new supplies. What's your opinion – do you favor or oppose federal limits on the price of electricity?

- 56% favor
- 37 oppose
- 7 don't know

27. Which comes closer to your view about increasing the number of nuclear power plants in the country – nuclear power is necessary to help solve the country's current energy problems, or the dangers of nuclear power are too great, even if it would help solve the country's current energy problems?

- 38% nuclear power is necessary
- 55 nuclear power is too dangerous
- 7 don't know

28. What if a new nuclear power plant was proposed for your region of California? Would you favor or oppose it?

- 39% favor
- 57 oppose
- 4 don't know

Now I'd like to ask you about your own experience with energy prices and shortages in California this year.

29. As you know, the price of gasoline at the pump has increased. Has this been a major problem or a minor problem, or is this not a problem for you?

- 37% major problem
- 43 minor problem
- 20 not a problem

30. Also, electric utility bills have increased for many Californians. Has this been a major problem or a minor problem, or is this not a problem for you?

- 37% major problem
- 40 minor problem
- 23 not a problem

31. And natural gas utility bills have increased for many Californians. Has this been a major problem or a minor problem, or is this not a problem for you?

- 28% major problem
- 40 minor problem
- 32 not a problem

32. Some areas have had rolling blackouts or the threat of rolling blackouts. Has this been a major problem or a minor problem, or is this not a problem for you?

- 13% major problem
- 31 minor problem
- 56 not a problem

I'm going to read to you a few steps that people have taken lately in response to higher energy costs and electricity shortages. Not everyone will have done these.

33. Have you been driving less to save money on gas? (*if yes: a lot or only somewhat?*)

- 21% yes, a lot
- 31 yes, only somewhat
- 48 no

34. Have you been adjusting the temperature or making other efforts at home to lower your monthly electric utility bill? (*if yes: a lot or only somewhat?*)

- 58% yes, a lot
- 30 yes, only somewhat
- 12 no

35. Have you been adjusting the temperature or making other efforts at home to lower your monthly natural gas utility bill? (*if yes: a lot or only somewhat?*)

- 40% yes, a lot
- 29 yes, only somewhat
- 31 no

36. Have you been reducing your use of electricity and appliances at home during the daytime peak hours of energy demand? (if yes: a lot or only somewhat?)

61% yes, a lot
27 yes, somewhat
12 no

I will read to you a list of some recent news stories covered by news organizations. As I read each one, tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (rotate questions 37-40)

37. News about the effects of global warming on the Sierras and the state's water.

20% very closely
29 fairly closely
27 not too closely
24 not at all closely

38. News about the stock market and U.S. economy.

29% very closely
30 fairly closely
20 not too closely
21 not at all closely

39. News about the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California.

39% very closely
42 fairly closely
13 not too closely
6 not at all closely

40. News about the high price of gasoline these days.

41% very closely
37 fairly closely
14 not too closely
8 not at all closely

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