



CLIMATE EMERGENCY UNIT

Gas in Buildings

BC Survey Results

November 2023

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted with 1,002 BC adults from November 22 to 28, 2023. A random sample of panelists were invited to complete the survey from a set of partner panels based on the Lucid exchange platform. These partners are typically double opt-in survey panels, blended to manage out potential skews in the data from a single source.

The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

The data was weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched British Columbia's population. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.



KEY FINDINGS

- Just under half of BC residents support requiring all new homes and buildings to heat and cook using electricity by the end of next year. Including those who can accept the policy the total rises to 68% of BC residents. Only 23% oppose.
- Personal preference for heat pumps among BC residents is strong: 47% would prefer a heat pump compared to just 22% who would prefer natural gas. And among those who own their home 57% are would consider replacing their gas or furnace / boiler with a heat pump (though 45% say they'd only make the switch if the costs were equal).
- There is majority support for strengthening regulation and oversight for Fortis BC including: requiring information about electrification and heat pumps with monthly bills (57%), requiring the company to shift from gas towards renewable energy (56%) and prohibiting the company from using customer payments for lobbying and advertising to expand gas use (55%).
- 55% of BC residents say given the escalating climate crisis the provincial government should be pushing harder to transition homes and building from gas to electricity.

- It is important to note these findings are in the context of poor knowledge among BC residents when it comes to climate change and fossil fuels. Notably, only 49% correctly understand that the largest cause of climate change is the burning of fossil fuels. Even fewer (29%) understand that the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in most cities is the burning of methane gas in homes and buildings.

At the onset of the question set, respondents were provided with the following background:

[PREAMBLE] In the face of the escalating climate crisis, and given that about 12% of British Columbia's greenhouse gas emissions come from burning gas in homes and buildings, and given the health risks posed by indoor air pollution from gas, what follows is a series of questions, most of which concern the use of gas in newly-constructed homes and buildings.

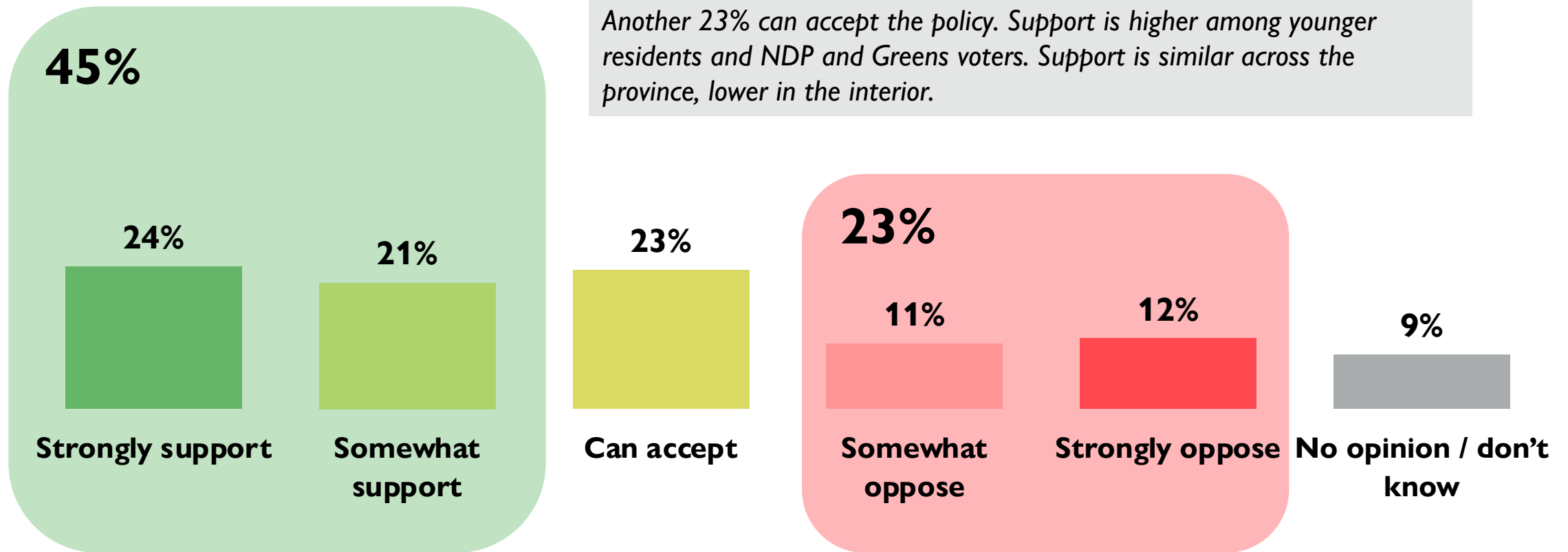
The most common alternative to heating homes with gas is a heat pump system; a highly-efficient system powered by electricity that both heats on cold days and cools on hot days.



Do you support or oppose the following policy in BC? “By the end of next year, all new homes and buildings should be required to heat and cook using electricity, and not with gas or other fossil fuels.”

JUST UNDER HALF OF BC RESIDENTS SUPPORT REQUIRING ALL NEW HOMES AND BUILDINGS TO HEAT AND COOK USING ELECTRICITY BY THE END OF NEXT YEAR

Another 23% can accept the policy. Support is higher among younger residents and NDP and Greens voters. Support is similar across the province, lower in the interior.

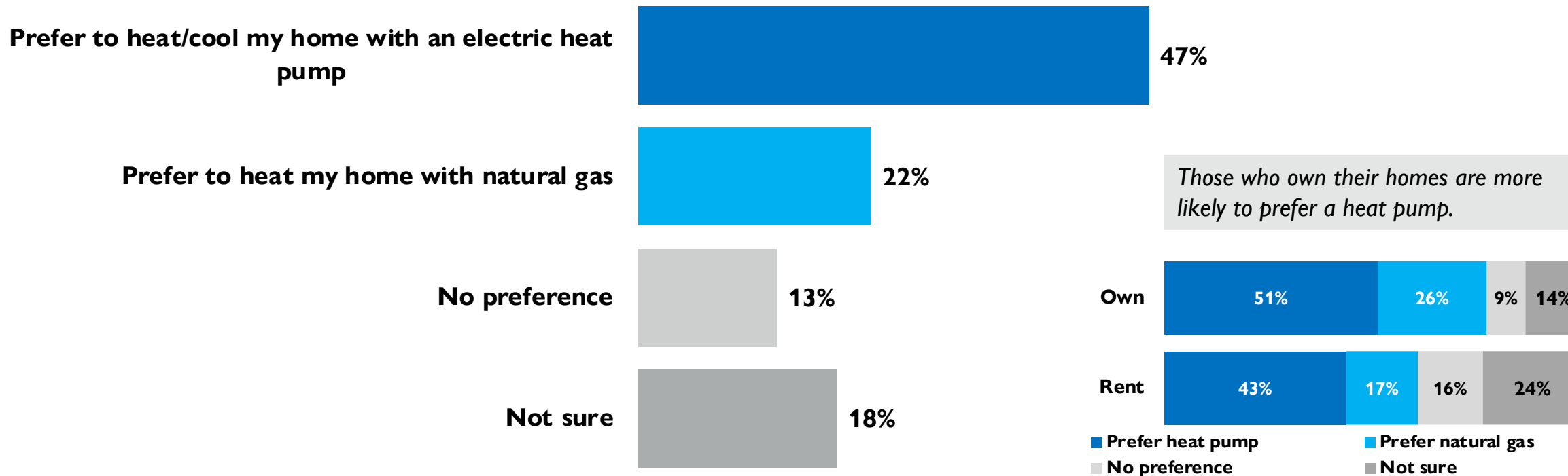


[TOTAL SAMPLE n=1,002]



If given the choice, and presuming the costs were equal, would you...

MORE THAN DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF BC RESIDENTS WOULD PREFER THEIR HOME USES A HEAT PUMP VS. NATURAL GAS



[TOTAL SAMPLE n=1,002]



Which of the following do you agree with most?

MOST HOMEOWNERS ARE INTERESTED, BUT COST IS A KEY FACTOR IN MAKING THE SWITCH

I would replace my gas furnace or boiler with an electric heat pump even if the costs were greater than buying a new gas furnace/boiler



I would only replace my gas furnace or boiler with an electric heat pump if the total costs of the electric heat pump were the same or lower than buying a new gas furnace/boiler



I am not interested in replacing my gas furnace or boiler with an electric heat pump



My home never used gas or I have already switched from gas to an electric heat pump



Cost is a factor across income levels.

[HOMEOWNERS n=521]



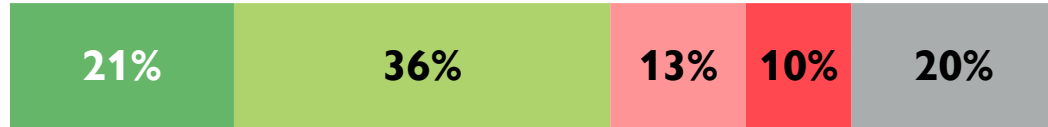


Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR MORE REGULATION AND RULES FOR FORTIS BC

% Agree

FortisBC should be required to include information with each monthly bill about the benefits of electrification and heat pumps, and customer information about how to transition off gas



57%

As the regulator of FortisBC, the BC government should strengthen its oversight of FortisBC and require the company to shift away from gas and towards renewable energy



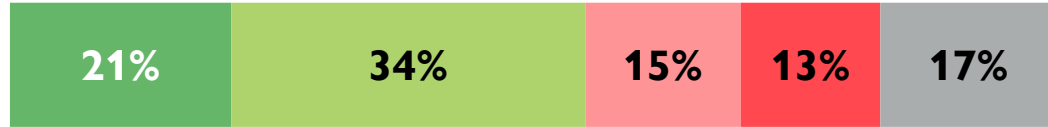
56%

As the regulator of FortisBC, the BC government should prohibit the company from spending payments from customers on lobbying and advertisements for expanded gas use



55%

Given the escalating climate crisis and extreme weather events, the provincial government should be investing more and pushing harder to transition our homes and buildings from gas to electricity



55%

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ No opinion

[TOTAL SAMPLE n=1,002]

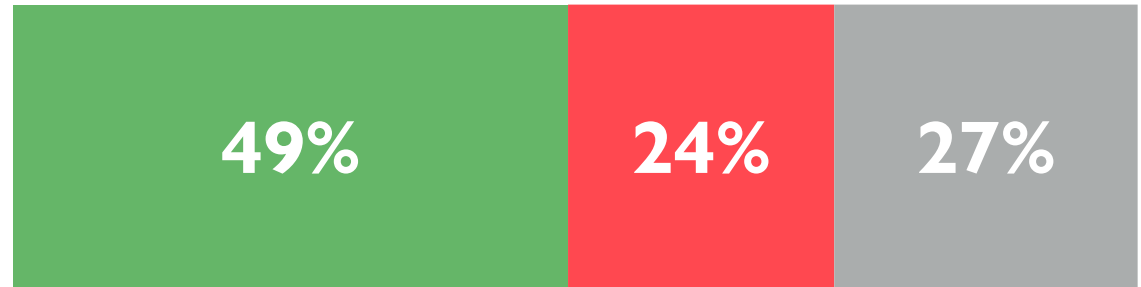




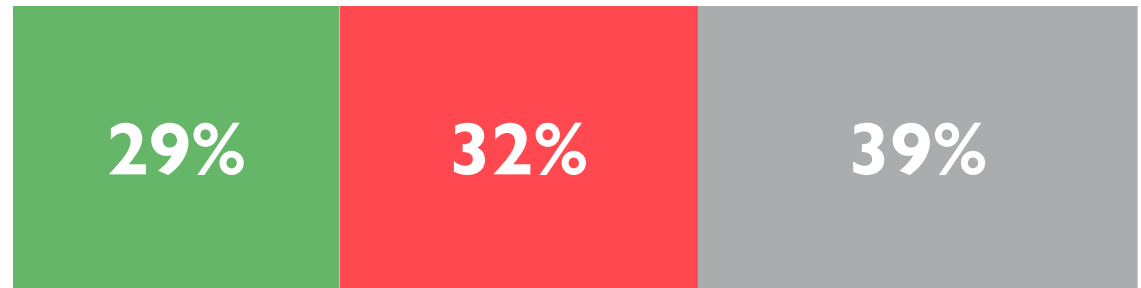
Are the following statements true or false

UNDERSTANDING OF CLIMATE CHANGE REALITIES IS LIMITED, SUPPORT FOR HEAT PUMPS IS IN THE CONTEXT OF LIMITED PERCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM

The largest cause of climate change is the burning of fossil fuels, such as the gas we use to heat our homes and buildings, and the gas or diesel we use in our cars and other vehicles



The largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in most cities is the burning of methane gas in homes and buildings



■ True ■ False ■ Not sure

[TOTAL SAMPLE n=1,002]



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Thank You