

S H E L T O N G R O U P

Polar Ice Cap Is Gone, Kids Can't Go Outside, Nebraska is a Desert? Poll Finds That Still Wouldn't Convince Many Americans of Global Warming

KNOXVILLE, TN (Aug. 5) – A new national poll of green consumers found that belief in global warming is declining, and even the worst nightmare scenarios would not change people's minds or behaviors.

The poll, one of four annual surveys conducted by Shelton Group, surveyed 1,098 Americans who at least occasionally buy green products and found only about half believe climate change is occurring and caused by human beings.

Asked whether they agreed with the statement, "Global warming or climate change is occurring and it is primarily caused by human activity," 52% of green consumers agreed, compared to 49% of U.S. consumers overall. That's down significantly from a year ago when 58% of all U.S. consumers agreed.

Respondents who disagreed, or were undecided, were then asked, "Which of the following scenarios would convince you that climate change is a real and immediate threat and cause you to make dramatic changes in your lifestyle? You wake up one morning and find out that..." followed by a list of nightmare scenarios. These included: The polar ice cap has completely melted, kids can no longer play outside in the summer and Nebraska is turning into a desert.

The top two responses were: "None of these would convince me" at 27%; and "One or more of these would convince me but I would be unlikely to make changes" at 24%.

"That means over half of those who are unconvinced about global warming are either unlikely to change their mind or unlikely to change their ways, no matter what happens," said Suzanne Shelton, CEO of Shelton Group.

A small number of current doubters would respond if:

- The polar ice cap had completely melted – 15%
- Kids should no longer go outside to play during the spring and summer due to consistently dangerous ozone/pollution levels – 15%
- Shifting weather patterns/lack of rain was turning Nebraska into a desert – 3%
- There were only 20 polar bears estimated to be left living in the wild – 2%
- Residents of American Samoa were having to be relocated due to rising tides – 0.6%

"The good news is, Americans are still going green, whether they believe in global warming or not," Shelton said.

Last year, the annual survey found 77% of respondents were seeking green products and participating in at least some environmentally sustainable activities. This year, the survey found 84% of Americans are doing so.

"For consumers, green isn't about climate change—that's too esoteric and impersonal—it's about matters closer to home," Shelton said. "Many Americans aren't trying to save the Earth when they buy a green cleaning product, they're trying to save their children from dangerous chemicals."

S H E L T O N G R O U P

Among the survey's other findings:

- When asked if the recent West Virginia coal mine explosion and the Deep Water Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico have made them think more about the human and environmental costs of their energy consumption, 55% of green consumers agreed.
- Yet despite the disasters, interest in owning or renting green or energy-efficient homes has dampened. Last year, almost three-quarters of green consumers (72%) were interested in owning/renting an energy-efficient home. That number is down to 64%.
- Interest in green homes also declined. Only 43% of green consumers said they were interested in owning/renting a green home, compared to 47% last year.
- Asked what is the hardest thing to do to help save the environment, "Drive less" was chosen most often (16.1%), followed by "grow your own food" (15.5%) and "use public transportation if available in your area" (10.3%).

About Shelton Group

Shelton Group, founded in 1991 by Suzanne Shelton, is an advertising and research agency located in Knoxville, Tennessee, focused exclusively on motivating mainstream consumers to make sustainable choices. The agency conducts four proprietary consumer opinion studies annually: Eco Pulse™, Energy Pulse™, Utility Pulse™ and Green Living Pulse™.

Learn more at www.sheltongroupinc.com

Contacts

Mark Pankowski at 301-260-9250

Mittie Rooney at 301-229-1618