

# Reducing Toxic Threats: Statewide Household Survey

**Presentation prepared for the  
Department of Ecology  
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APPLIED RESEARCH NORTHWEST





# Introduction

## Reducing Toxic Threats Initiative





# Introduction

## Reducing Toxic Threats Initiative

- Create a baseline





# Introduction

## Reducing Toxic Threats Initiative



- Create a baseline
- Identify issues and barriers



# Introduction

## Reducing Toxic Threats Initiative



- Create a baseline
- Identify issues and barriers
- Sources of information



# Introduction

## Reducing Toxic Threats Initiative



- Create a baseline
- Identify issues and barriers
- Sources of information
- Policy preferences



# Research Methods

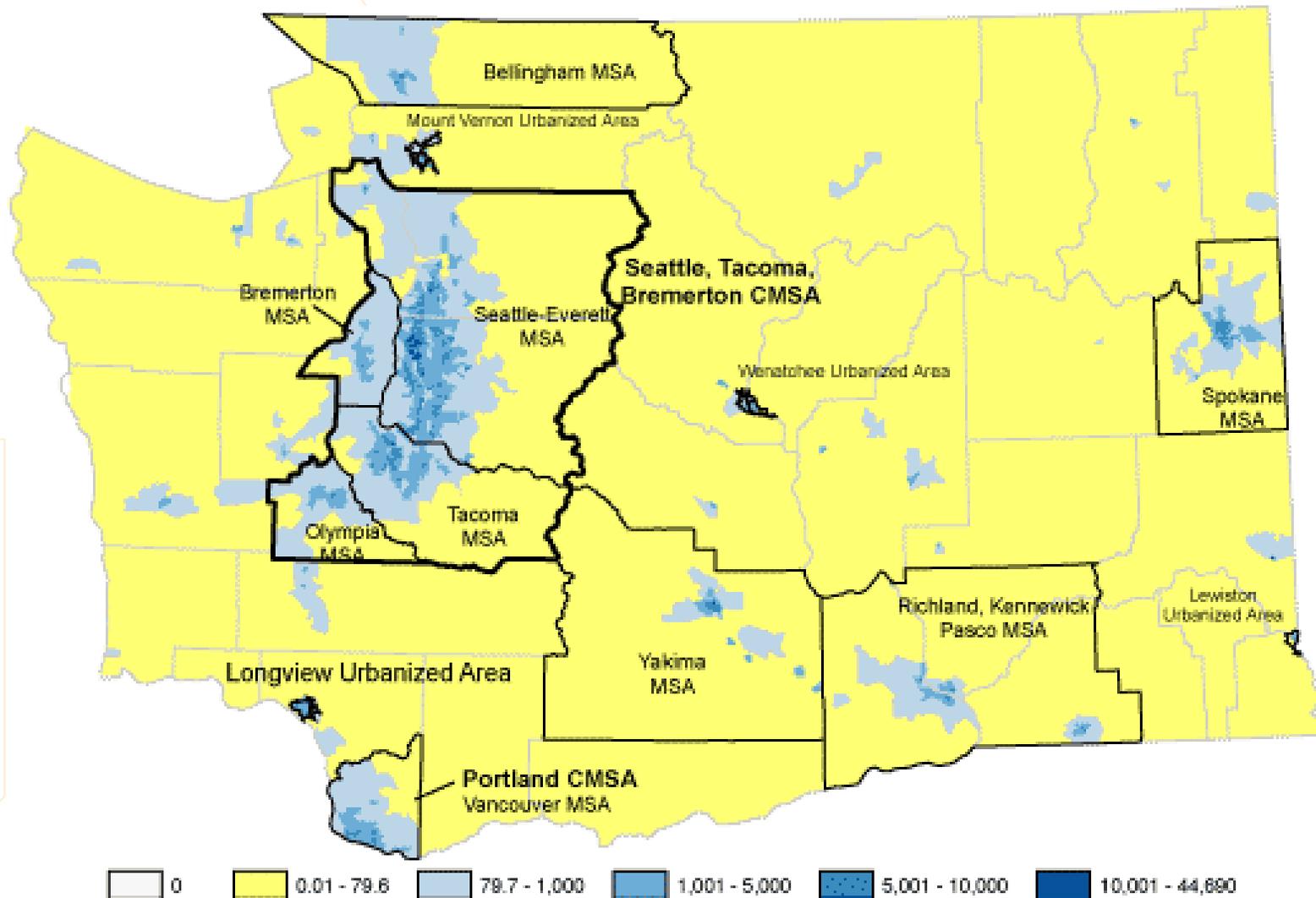
## Telephone Survey Research



# Research Methods

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- List-assisted random-digit sample (N=601)





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# Research Methods

## Telephone Survey Research

- List-assisted random-digit sample (N=601).
- Over-sampled rural and eastern Washington residents.
- Translated into Spanish for non-English speaking households
- Refusal survey



Table A2. Demographics of Sample  
(weighted)

	<u>%</u>
Females	65
Own Their Home	77
Children under age 6 present	18
<i>Age</i>	
18 - 34	15
35 - 49	31
50 - 65	35
older than 65	19





<i>Education</i>	
8th grade or less	3
Some high school, not graduated	2
High school graduate or GED	19
Some College or 2 year degree	37
4 year degree	23
More than a 4 year degree	16
<i>2006 Household income</i>	
Under \$20,000	14
\$20,000 to \$49,000	29
\$50,000 to \$74,000	22
\$75,000 to \$99,000	14
\$100,000 or more	21



# Findings

Questions to consider



# Findings

## Questions to consider

- What trends do you notice?



# Findings

## Questions to consider

- ▣ What trends do you notice?
- ▣ Are there any surprises in the findings?  
Information you didn't expect?



# Findings

## Questions to consider

- What trends do you notice?
- Are there any surprises in the findings?  
Information you didn't expect?
- Do some findings contradict other findings? If so, how can we resolve that?



# Findings

## Questions to consider

- What trends do you notice?
- Are there any surprises in the findings?  
Information you didn't expect?
- Do some findings contradict other findings? If so, how can we resolve that?
- Action steps: What next steps are suggested by the findings?



## Concerns

When you hear the word “toxic” or “hazardous substance,” what kinds of things – that you have in your home, your garage or your basement – come to mind?



# Concerns

What do you think of when you hear the word “toxic?”

45% said “Cleaners”





# Concerns

What do you think of when you hear the word "toxic?"



27% mentioned bleach





# Concerns

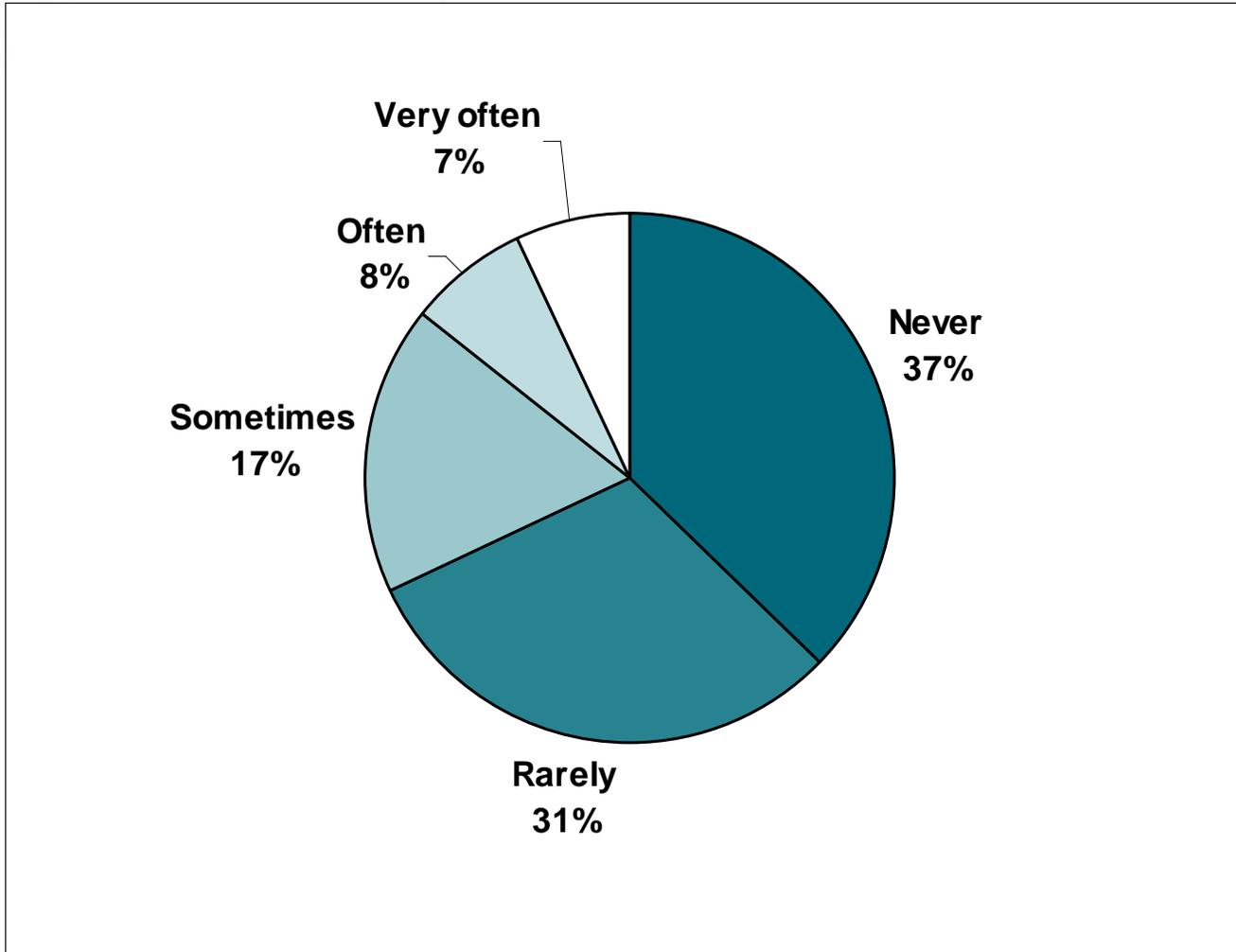
What do you think of when you hear the word "toxic?"



27% mentioned paint



# Figure 1. How often concerned about toxic products in the home





# Concerns

What types of concerns?



21% mentioned pets' safety



# Concerns

What types of concerns?

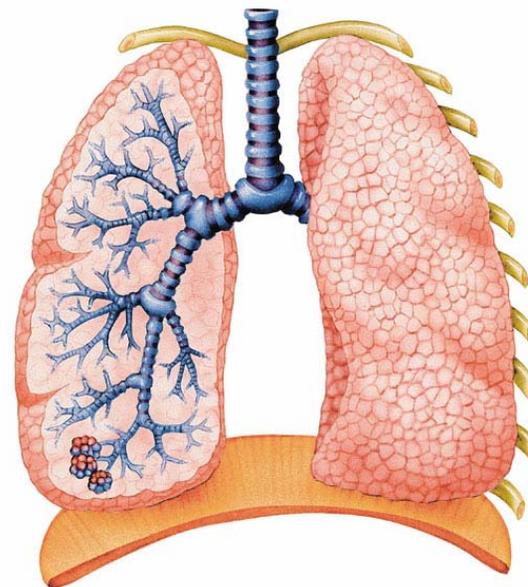


18% mentioned kids' safety



# Concerns

What types of concerns?



15% mentioned respiratory health



# Concerns

## Response to Concerns



# Concerns

## Response to Concerns

- Finding a replacement (27%)



# Concerns

## Response to Concerns

- Finding a replacement (27%)
- Removing the product (21%)



# Concerns

## Response to Concerns

- Finding a replacement (27%)
- Removing the product (21%)
- Find out about safer alternatives (21%)



# Concerns

## Response to Concerns

- Finding a replacement (27%)
- Removing the product (21%)
- Find out about safer alternatives (21%)
- Find out about the toxic ingredient (20%)

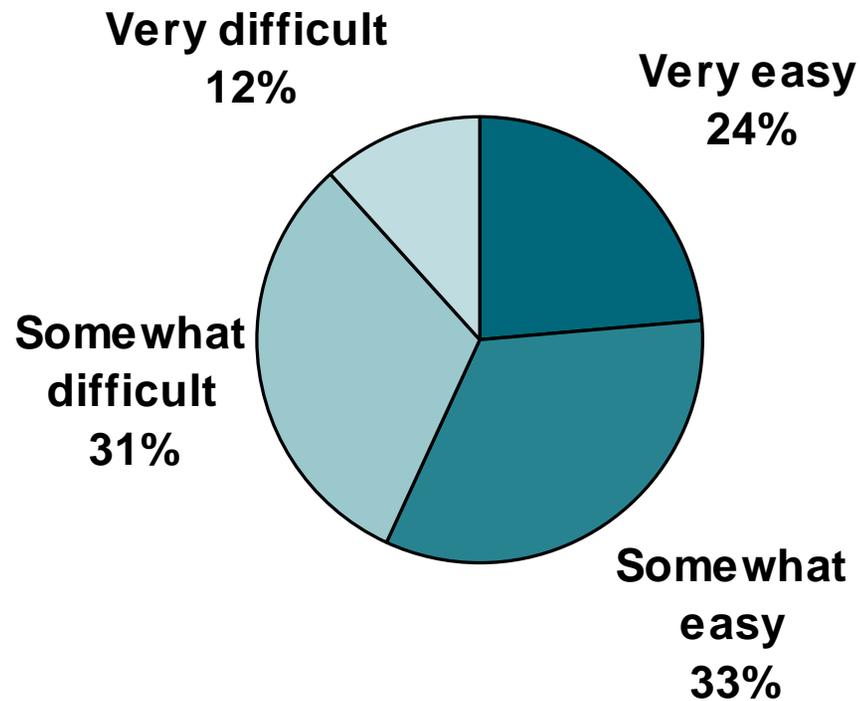


# Concerns

## Response to Concerns

- Finding a replacement (27%)
- Removing the product (21%)
- Find out about safer alternatives (21%)
- Find out about the toxic ingredient (20%)
- Stop using the product (20%)

## Figure 2. Ease or difficulty of finding a replacement





# Concerns

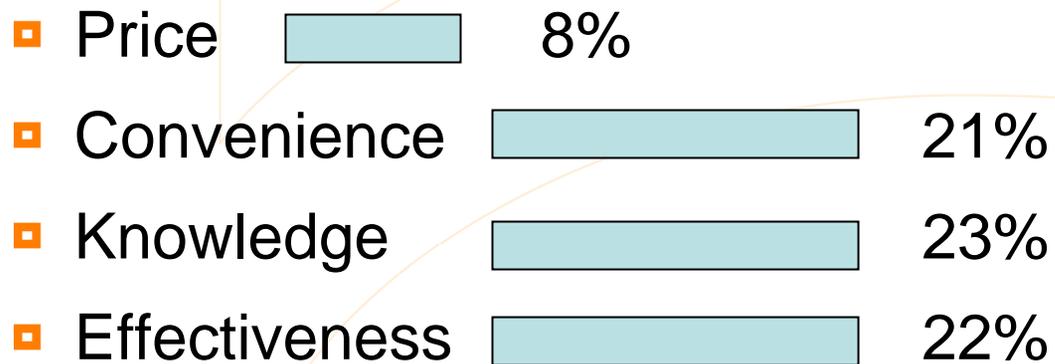
## What made it difficult?

- ▣ Price
- ▣ Convenience
- ▣ Knowledge
- ▣ Effectiveness



# Concerns

## What made it difficult?





# Concerns

## Where do you go for information?

- About toxic ingredients



# Concerns

## Where do you go for information?

- About toxic ingredients
- About safer, non-toxic products



# Concerns



## Where do you go for information?

- About toxic ingredients
- About safer, non-toxic products



Internet



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# Concerns

## Where do you go for information?

- About toxic ingredients
- About safer, non-toxic products

Internet  
Labels





# Concerns

## Where do you go for information?

- About toxic ingredients
- About safer, non-toxic ingredients



Internet  
Labels  
Store clerks/other people



# Concerns

## Where do you go for information?

- About toxic ingredients
- About safer, non-toxic ingredients

Internet  
Labels  
Store clerks  
Books





# Concerns

Differences?



# Concerns

## Differences?

- None



# Labels

Baseline behaviors and opinions.





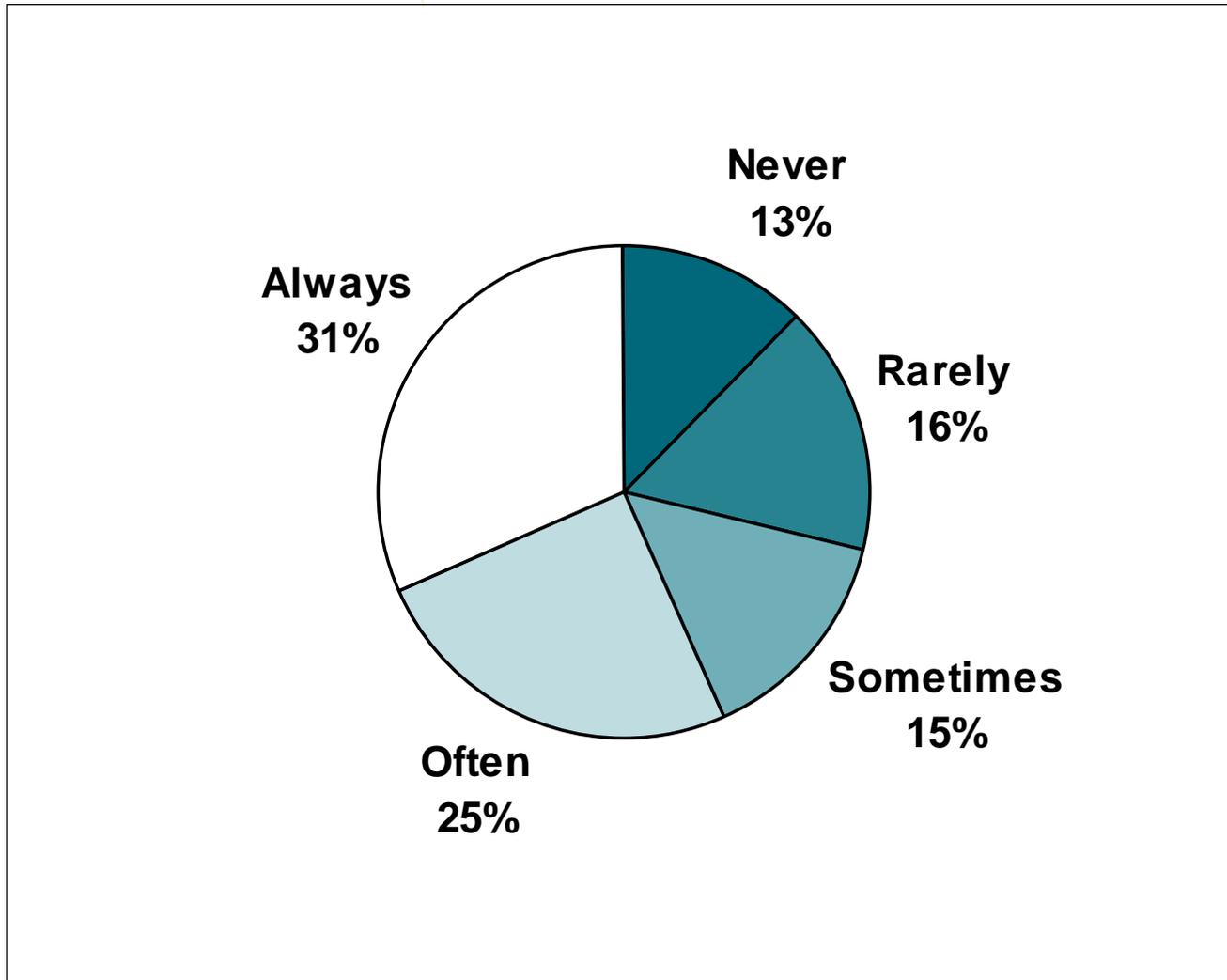
# Labels

## Baseline behaviors and opinions.

- How often do you look for the ingredients or warning labels on non-food products you consider buying?



**Figure 3. Frequency of looking for labels on non-food products**





# Labels

## Differences?



# Labels

## Differences?

- 59% of W. WA and 47% of E. WA said *always or often*



# Labels

## Differences?

- 59% of W. WA and 47% of E. WA said *always or often*
- 35% of renters and 26% of homeowners said *rarely or never*



# Labels

## Differences?

- 59% of W. WA and 47% of E. WA said *always or often*
- 35% of renters and 26% of homeowners said *rarely or never*
- 19% of respondents with children and 11% of respondents without children said *never*



# Labels

## Differences?

- Age effects in looking for labels





# Labels

## Differences?

- Age effects in looking for labels
  - Under age 50 - <50% *always or often*





# Labels

## Differences?

- Age effects in looking for labels
  - Under age 50 - <50% *always or often*
  - Age 50-65 – 60% *always or often*





# Labels

## Differences?



- Age effects in looking for labels
  - Under age 50 - <50% *always or often*
  - Age 50-65 – 60% *always or often*
  - Over age 65 – 74% *always or often*



# Labels

## Baseline behaviors and opinions.

- How often do you look for the ingredients or warning labels on non-food products you consider buying?
- How helpful would it be to have a label similar to “certified organic” or “Energy Star” to show that a product has met a certain standard for being non-toxic?



# Labels

## Baseline behaviors and opinions.

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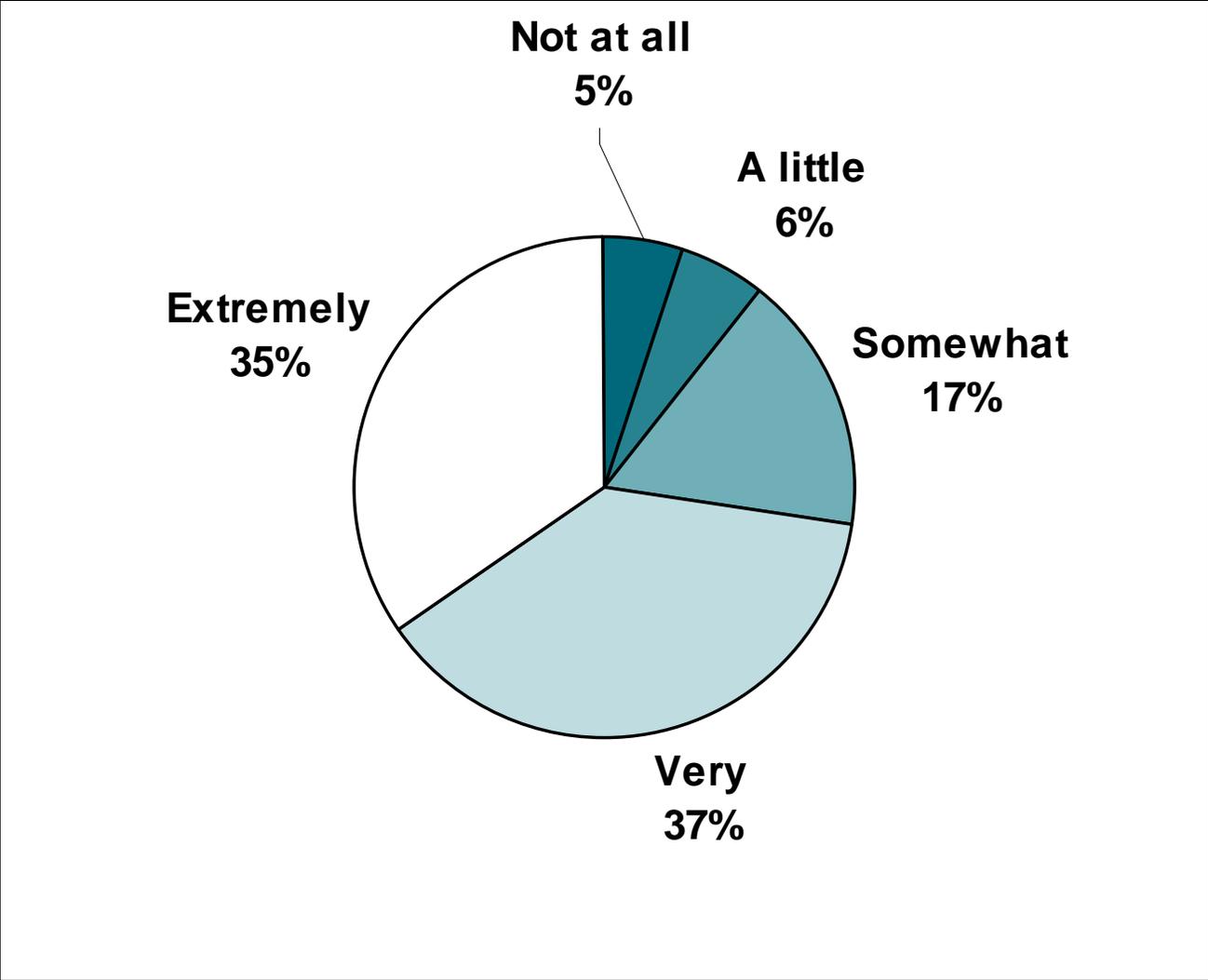
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## Baseline behaviors and opinions.

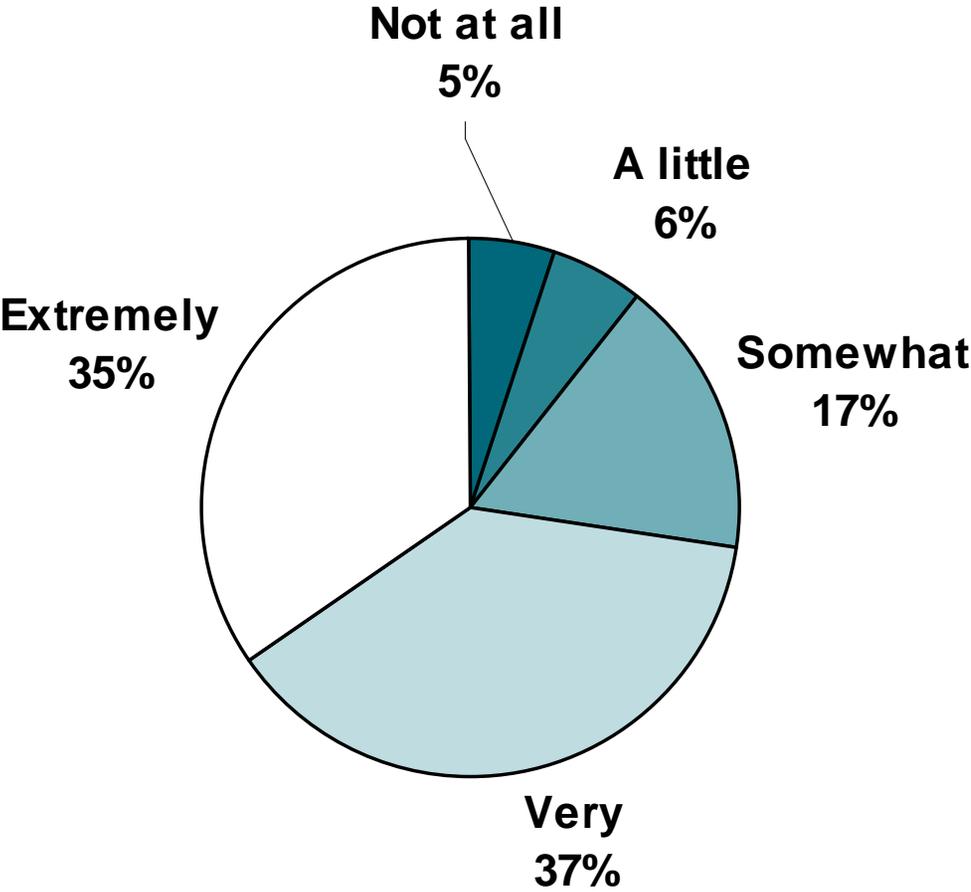
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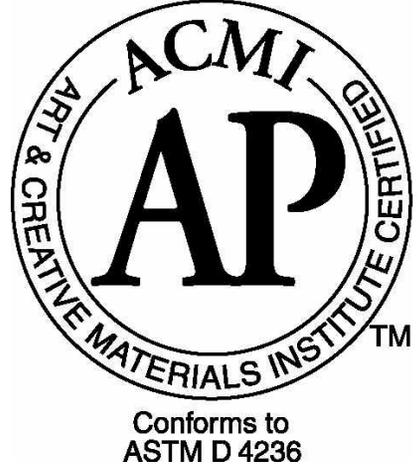
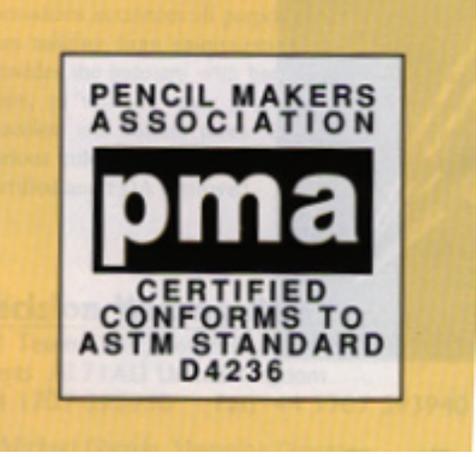
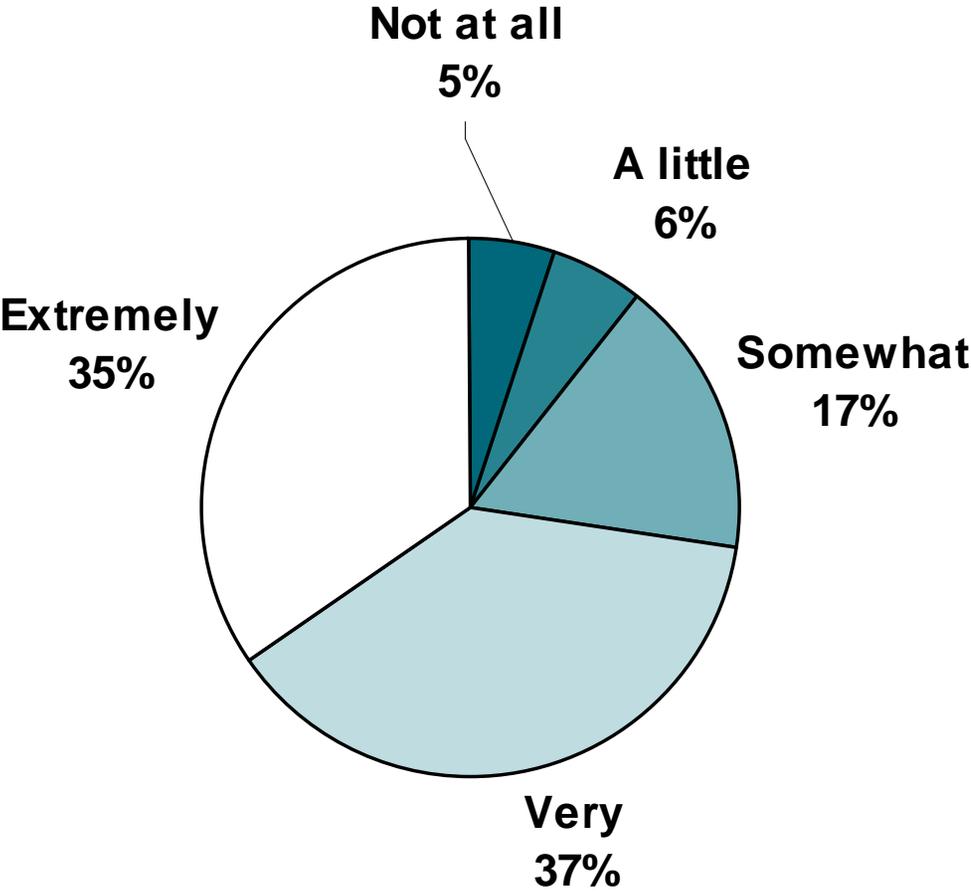
# Figure 4. Support for a certified non-toxic label



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# Figure 4. Support for a certified non-toxic label





# Labels

## Differences?





# Labels

## Differences?

- 74% of W. WA and 65% of E. WA said *very or extremely* helpful



# Labels

## Differences?

- 74% of W. WA and 65% of E. WA said *very or extremely* helpful
- 84% of renters and 70% of homeowners said *very or extremely* helpful





# Labels

## Differences?

- 74% of W. WA and 65% of E. WA said *very or extremely* helpful.
- 84% of renters and 70% of homeowners said *very or extremely* helpful.
- 78% of Women and 61% of men said *very or extremely*.





# PBDE Recognition

Have you ever heard of  
polybrominated diphenyl ethers?



# PBDE Recognition

Have you ever heard of  
polybrominated diphenyl ethers?

- ▣ 69% said “no.”



# PBDE Recognition

**Have you ever heard of polybrominated diphenyl ethers?**

- ▣ 69% said “no.”
- ▣ 25% said “yes” but gave an incomplete description.



# PBDE Recognition

Have you ever heard of polybrominated diphenyl ethers?

- 69% said “no.”
- 25% said “yes” but gave an incomplete description.
- 1% said “yes” and knew they were fire retardants.



# PBDE Recognition

Differences?



# PBDE Recognition

## Differences?

- 81% of households with children said “no” compared to 67% of others.



# PBDE Recognition

## Differences?

- 81% of households with children said “no” compared to 67% of others.
- Of those who said “yes” parents were more likely to ID them as fire retardants.



# PBDE Recognition

## Differences?

- 81% of households with children said “no” compared to 67% of others.
- Of those who said “yes” parents were more likely to ID them as fire retardants.
- Better educated more likely to have heard of and ID them as fire retardants.



# PBDE Recognition

## Differences?

- 81% of households with children said “no” compared to 67% of others.
- Of those who said “yes” parents were more likely to ID them as fire retardants.
- Better educated more likely to have heard of and ID them as fire retardants.
- Homeowners heard of them, but no more able to ID them as fire retardants as renters.



# Lead Awareness

Awareness of lead content in items



# Lead Awareness

## Awareness of lead content in items

- Modeled after the 2002 Mercury Awareness Survey

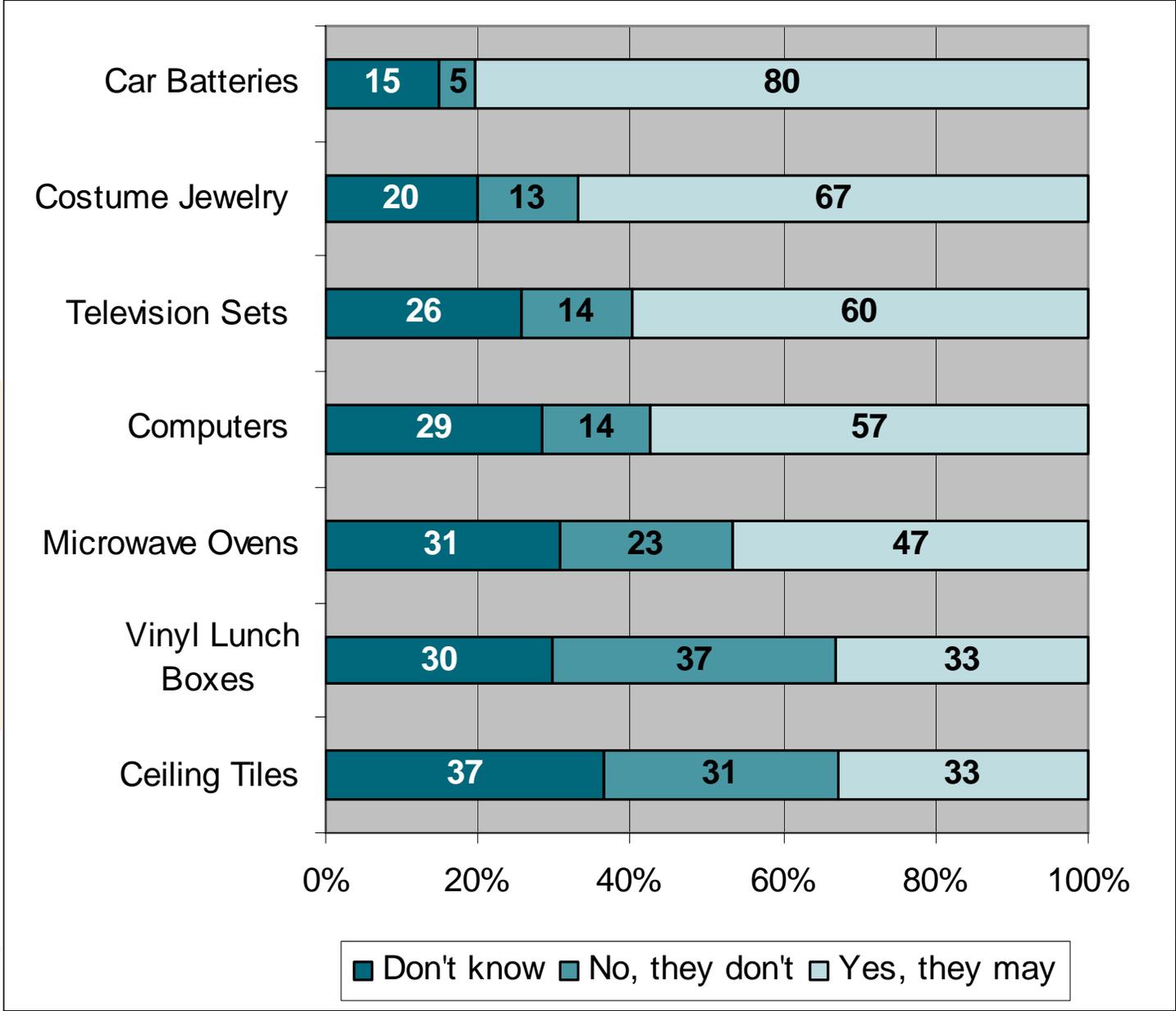


# Lead Awareness

## Awareness of lead content in items

- Modeled after the 2002 Mercury Awareness Survey
- Some items that do contain lead, and others that don't.

**Figure 6. Awareness of lead content for various household items.**

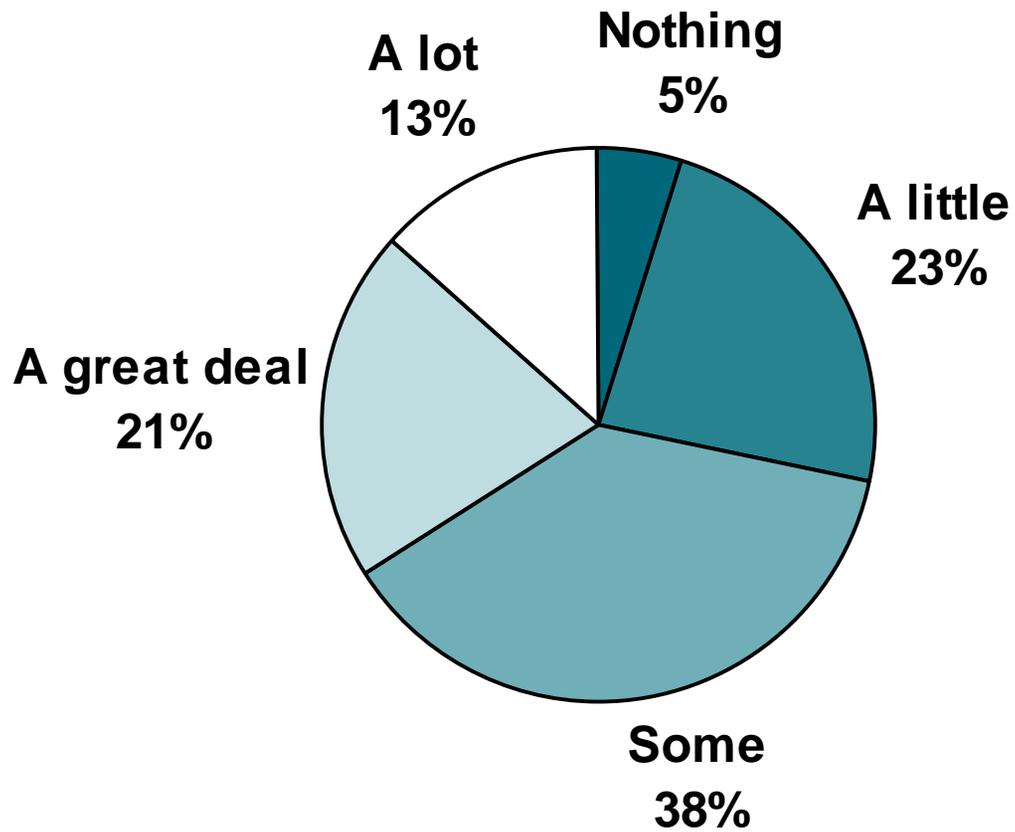




# Lead Awareness

**How much have you heard or read about lead and its effects on people's health?**

# Figure 7. Awareness of health effects of lead





# Lead Awareness

Old homes and existing paint



# Lead Awareness

## Old homes and existing paint

- 58% of respondents lived in homes built prior to 1980.



# Lead Awareness

## Old homes and existing paint

- 58% of respondents lived in homes built prior to 1980.
- Of those, 55% said they had heard *a lot* or *a great deal* about the use of lead paint in older homes.



# Lead Awareness

## Old homes and existing paint

- Where would you go for information about protecting yourself from lead if you were to undertake a home painting project?



# Lead Awareness

## Old homes and existing paint

- Where would you go for information about protecting yourself from lead if you were to undertake a home painting project?
  - 49% Store Clerk





# Lead Awareness

## Old homes and existing paint

- Where would you go for information about protecting yourself from lead if you were to undertake a home painting project?
  - 49% Store Clerk
  - 30% Internet





# Lead Awareness

## Old homes and existing paint

- Where would you go for information about protecting yourself from lead if you were to undertake a home painting project?
  - 49% Store Clerk
  - 30% Internet
  - 10% Do nothing



# Lead Awareness

Differences?



# Lead Awareness

## Differences?

- ▣ Awareness increased with education



# Lead Awareness

## Differences?

- Awareness increased with education
- Methods for getting information differed by age, education, income and ethnicity



# Lead Awareness

## Differences?

- Awareness increased with education
- Methods for getting information differed by education, income and ethnicity
- Men were less likely to seek out information



# Lead Awareness

## Differences?

- ▣ Awareness increased with education
- ▣ Methods for getting information differed by education, income and ethnicity
- ▣ Men were less likely to seek out information
- ▣ Spanish speaking and Latino respondents had heard less about lead's health effects than others.



# Lead Awareness

## Differences?

- Other age effects





# Lead Awareness

## Differences?

- Other age effects
  - Those over 65 were most knowledgeable





# Lead Awareness

## Differences?



- Other age effects
  - Those over 65 were most knowledgeable
  - Those 18-34 were least likely to be aware of health issues relating to lead or the tie between older homes and lead paint.



# Lead Awareness

## Differences?



- Other age effects
  - Those over 65 were most knowledgeable
  - Those 18-34 were least likely to be aware of health issues relating to lead or the tie between older homes and lead paint.
  - Older and younger respondents used different tools for getting information (paint can labels vs. internet)



# Opinions and Myths

Agree or Disagree



# Opinions and Myths

## Agree or Disagree

- Companies rather than the government have the responsibility to inform me about the hazards of their products.



# Opinions and Myths

## Agree or Disagree

- Companies rather than the government have the responsibility to inform me about the hazards of their products.
- Regulation of toxic products will strengthen Washington State's economy in the long run.



# Opinions and Myths

## Agree or Disagree

- Companies rather than the government have the responsibility to inform me about the hazards of their products.
- Regulation of toxic products will strengthen Washington State's economy in the long run.
- I trust that the goods I find in the store are safe for me and my family.

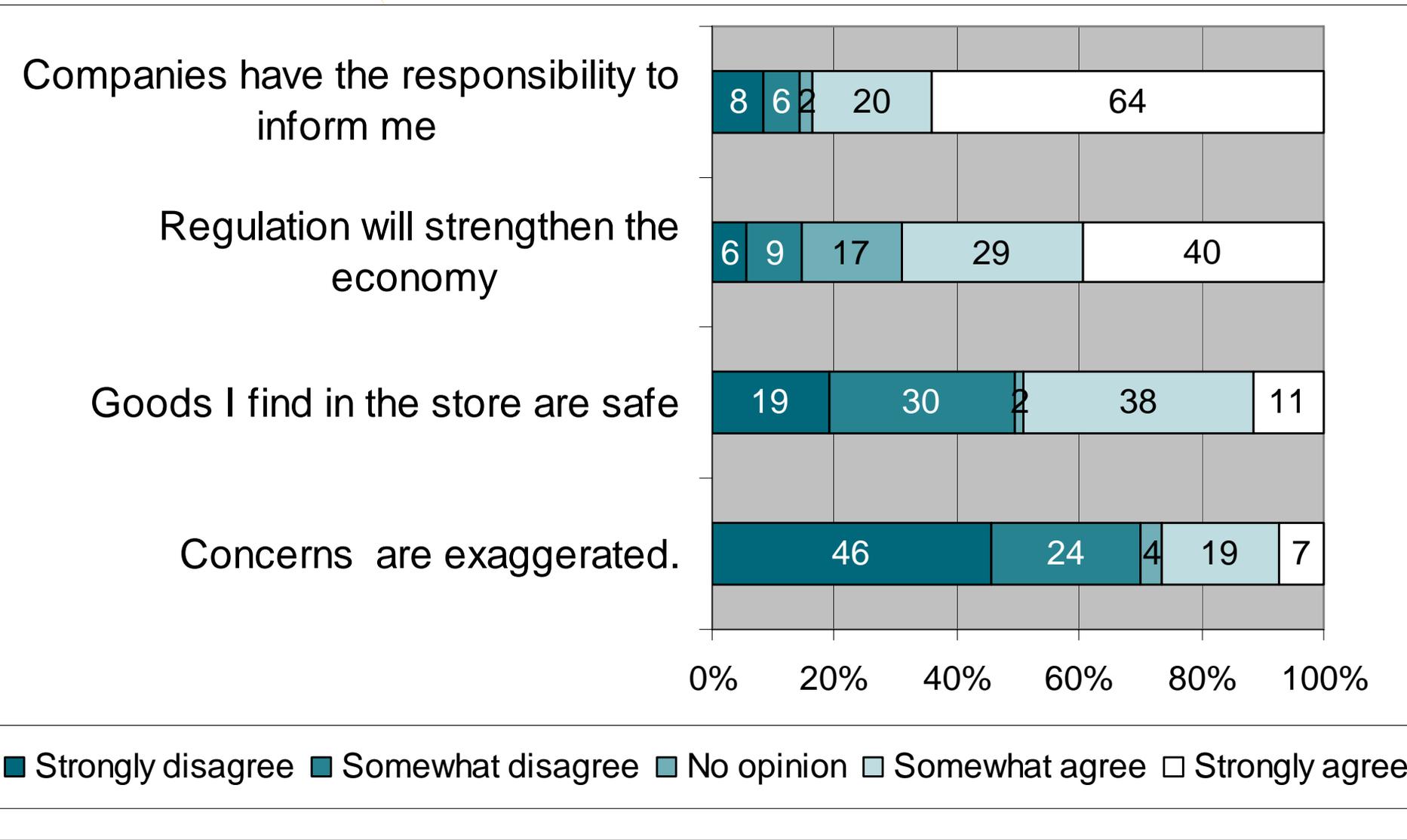


# Opinions and Myths

## Agree or Disagree

- Companies rather than the government have the responsibility to inform me about the hazards of their products.
- Regulation of toxic products will strengthen Washington State's economy in the long run.
- I trust that the goods I find in the store are safe for me and my family.
- Concerns about the dangers of toxic products are exaggerated

**Figure 9. Opinions of toxic products, business & government**





# Opinions and Myths

## Differences?

- 53% of western WA *disagreed* that goods in the store are safe compared to 37% of eastern WA.



# Opinions and Myths

## Differences?

- 53% of western WA *disagreed* that goods in the store are safe compared to 37% of eastern WA.
- No differences by urban density



# Opinions and Myths

## Differences?

- 53% of western WA *disagreed* that goods in the store are safe compared to 37% of eastern WA.
- No differences by urban density
- “Dangers are exaggerated” varied by education, income, sex and ethnicity.



# Opinions and Myths

## Differences?

- 53% of western WA *disagreed* that goods in the store are safe compared to 37% of eastern WA.
- No differences by urban density
- “Dangers are exaggerated” varied by education, income, sex and ethnicity.
- “Companies have the responsibility” varied by education, and language.



# Opinions and Myths

## Importance of Government Action





# Opinions and Myths

## Importance of Government Action

- Require manufacturers to label products with all ingredients





# Opinions and Myths

## Importance of Government Action

- Require manufacturers to label products with all ingredients
- Provide education on toxic products and safer alternatives





# Opinions and Myths

## Importance of Government Action

- Require manufacturers to label products with all ingredients
- Provide education on toxic products and safer alternatives
- Ban specific chemicals with known health risks





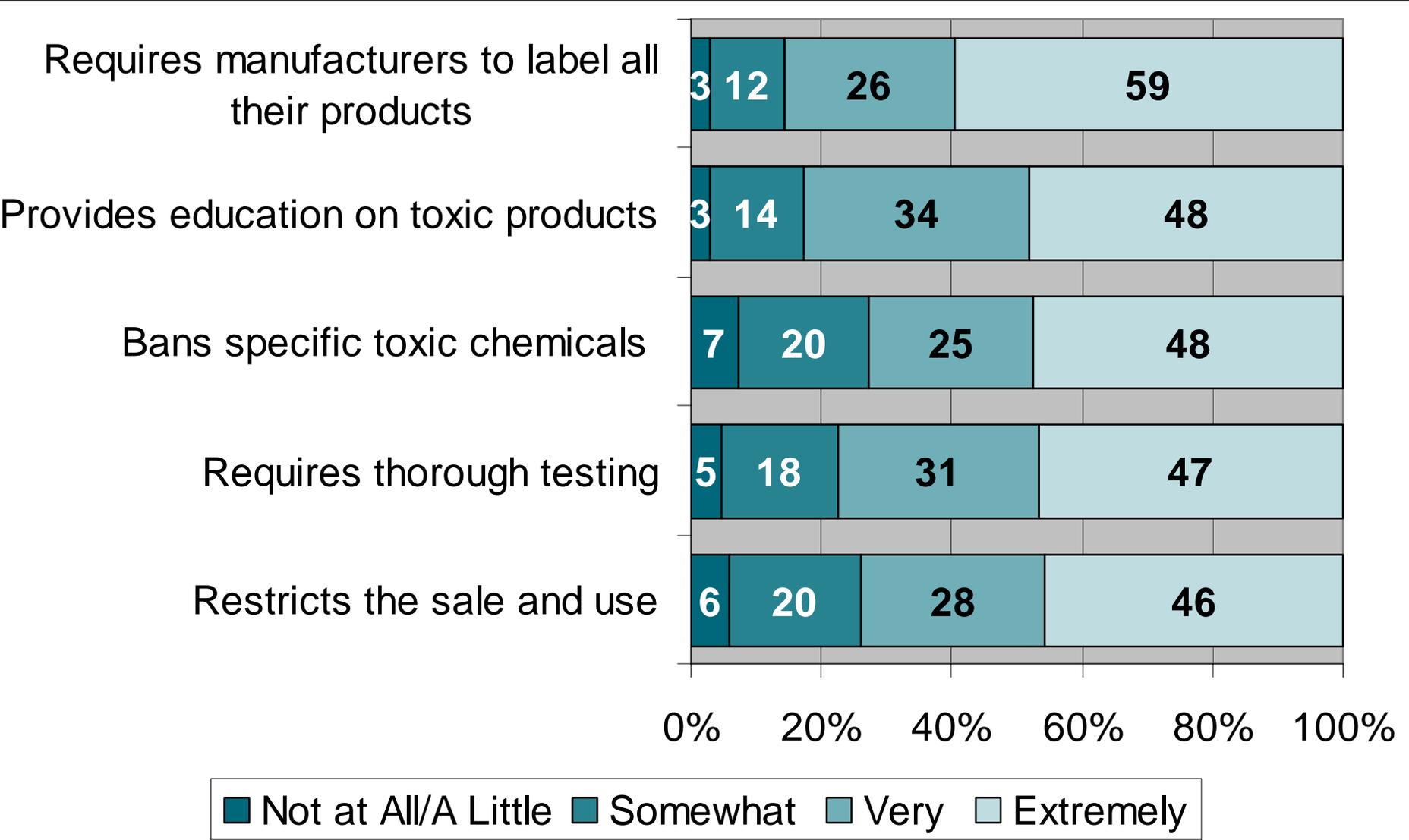
# Opinions and Myths

## Importance of Government Action

- Require manufacturers to label products with all ingredients
- Provide education on toxic products and safer alternatives
- Ban specific chemicals with known health risks
- Restrict the sale of product containing chemicals with known health risks



# Figure 10. Support for government actions





# Information seeking & trust



# Information seeking & trust

When you need information, who would you go to first?



# Information seeking & trust

When you need information, who would you go to first?

- ▣ Business



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# Information seeking & trust

When you need information, who would you go to first?

- ▣ Business
- ▣ Government





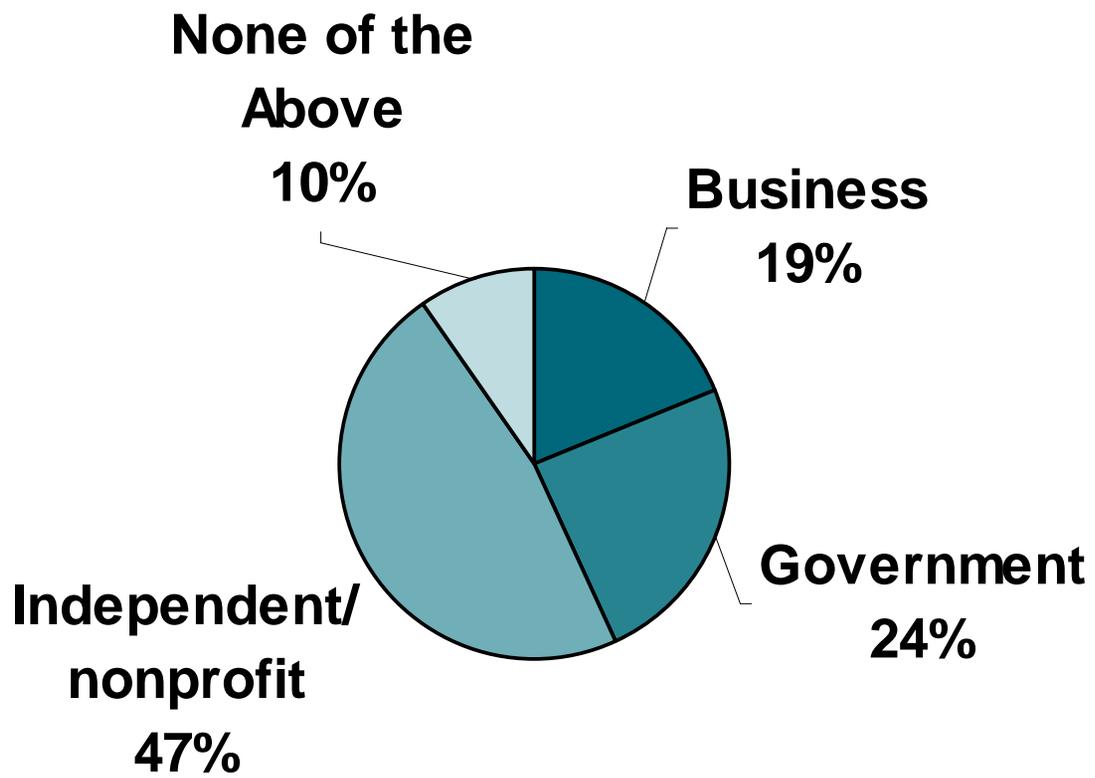
# Information seeking & trust

When you need information, who would you go to first?

- ▣ Business
- ▣ Government
- ▣ Independent agency or non-profit



**Figure 11. Who would you go to first for information?**





# Information seeking and trust

Differences?



# Information seeking and trust

## Differences?

- Education only



# Awareness of HSEIO



# Awareness of HSEIO

**82% had not heard of HSEIO**



# Awareness of HSEIO

**82% had not heard of HSEIO**

- May need a follow up next go-around, as with PBDE question



# End of Survey

Now What?



# Recommendations

**Actions to consider**



# Recommendations

## Actions to consider

- Non-toxic labels



# Recommendations

## Actions to consider

- Non-toxic labels
- Government actions are supported



# Recommendations

## Actions to consider

- Non-toxic labels
- Government actions are supported
- East/west continuity eases actions



# Recommendations

Getting people informed



# Recommendations

## Getting people informed

- Appeal to varied learning styles



# Recommendations

## Getting people informed

- Appeal to varied learning styles
- Leverage relationships with NGOs



# Recommendations

## Getting people informed

- Appeal to varied learning styles
- Leverage relationships with NGOs
- Create partnerships with retailers



# Recommendations

## Getting people informed

- Appeal to varied learning styles
- Leverage relationships with NGOs
- Create partnerships with retailers
- Employ narrow, targeted campaigns



# Recommendations

## Getting people informed

- Appeal to varied learning styles
- Leverage relationships with NGOs
- Create partnerships with retailers
- Employ narrow, targeted campaigns
- Look to health, kids and pets for messaging

# THE END

**Report copies:**

**[ww.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0704013.html](http://ww.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0704013.html)**

**presentation copies: Cedar Bouta**



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Department of Ecology



# Recommendations

## Future Research

- Repeat every 2 years
- Repeat core questions
- Consider additional questions on alternating years