

**To: Ruth Berlin, LCSW-C, Executive Director
Maryland Pesticide Network**

**From: Steve Raabe, President
OpinionWorks, LLC**

Date: January 2, 2015

Subject: New Maryland Poll: Strong Voter Concern about Pesticides

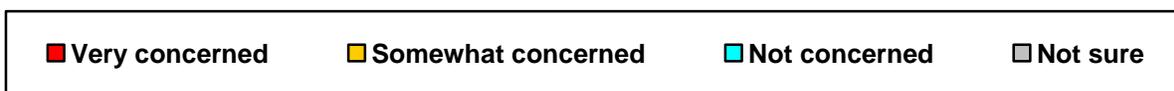
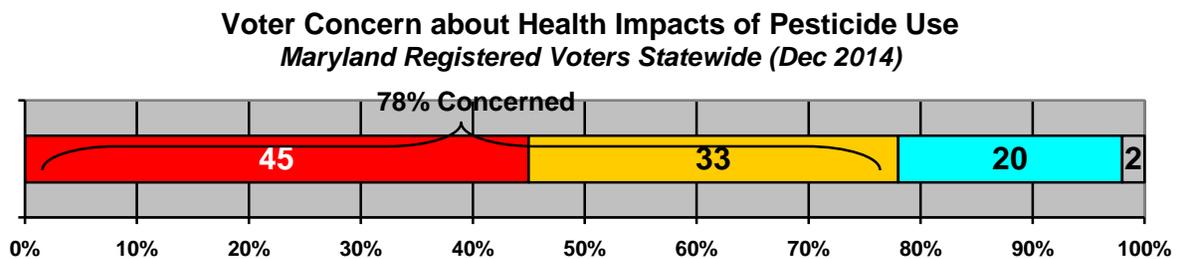
The Maryland Pesticide Network commissioned this statewide Maryland voter poll to measure public attitudes about pesticide use and to test support for two public policy proposals. The survey found enormous voter concern about risks posed by pesticides, and overwhelming support for two public policy proposals regarding pesticide use.

This telephone poll of 562 randomly-selected Maryland registered voters was conducted by telephone December 11-13, 2014, using trained and supervised live interviewers. The findings have a potential sampling error of no more than ± 4.1 percent at the 95% confidence level. A more detailed methodology statement is found at the end of this summary.

Findings

Profound Concern about the Impact of Pesticides on Health

Maryland voters are extremely concerned about the possible impact of pesticides on their health. More than three-quarters (78%) of Maryland voters are concerned about “the risk that pesticides pose to your own and your family’s health.” More than four voters in ten (45%) are **very** concerned about that.



*“How concerned are you about the risk that pesticides pose to your own and your family’s health?
Very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not concerned?”*

New Maryland Poll: Strong Voter Concern about Pesticides

January 2, 2015

Page 2

This level of concern has held steady from our January 2014 poll. If anything, voter concern about pesticides has only increased in Maryland. In that previous OpinionWorks statewide voter poll, 42% were very concerned (compared to 45% today) and 36% somewhat concerned for the same overall total of 78%.

This concern about the health impacts of pesticide use is widespread, with concern reaching or exceeding two-thirds of the public in every segment we tested. Democrats (84% concerned), Republicans (66%), and Independent voters (76%) all express high levels of concern about pesticides.

Concern is *particularly* acute among women (83%) and among African-Americans (91%). The table below summarizes the level of concern in various segments of the public:

Concern about Pesticides by Subgroup

Voter Group	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Total
All Voters	45%	33%	78%
Women	53%	29%	83%
Men	37%	36%	74%
Whites	37%	38%	74%
African-Americans	66%	25%	91%
All Others	57%	21%	78%
Baltimore City	61%	22%	83%
Baltimore County	41%	37%	78%
Montgomery County	39%	40%	79%
Prince George's County	61%	29%	90%
Greater Baltimore (Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll, Harford, Howard)	43%	31%	74%
Greater Washington (Charles, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's)	48%	33%	81%
Eastern Shore	33%	39%	72%
Southern Maryland	40%	42%	82%
Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett, Washington)	50%	25%	75%
Democrats	51%	34%	84%
Republicans	37%	29%	66%
Unaffiliated Voters/Third Parties	41%	35%	76%

Numbers may not always appear to add correctly due to rounding.

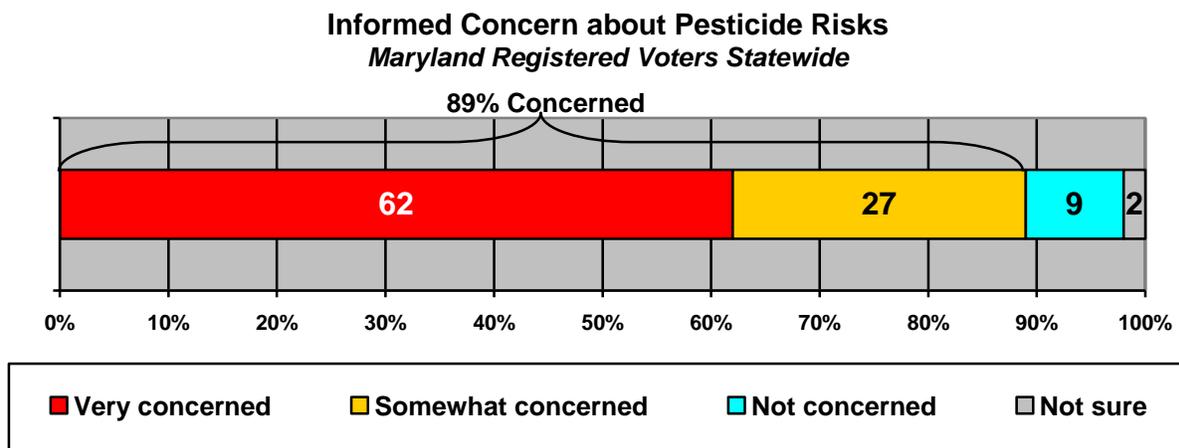
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Concern Skyrockets with Information about Pesticide Impacts

When voters learn about some of the specific risks that have been linked to pesticide use, almost nine out of ten express concern, and more than six in ten are **very concerned** about the risks associated with pesticides.

Voter concern reaches 89% when they hear about links to “chronic illnesses including asthma, autism, and cancer, as well birth defects and fertility problems,” and environmental risks to Maryland’s rivers and the Bay, as well as “bee hive deaths and mutations in fish and fish kills.” Compared to the initial, general question about pesticide concern, the effect of this information is a 17-point increase in the number of voters who are *very concerned*, for a total of 62% of voters who are *very concerned*.

Such profound public concern about a substance so widely and commonly used is extraordinary.



“If you knew that pesticides have been linked to many chronic illnesses including asthma, autism, and cancer, as well as to birth defects and fertility problems; and that pesticides contaminate Maryland’s rivers and the Bay and have been linked to bee hive deaths and mutations in fish and fish kills, how concerned would you be about the risk that pesticides pose to your own and your family’s health? Very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not concerned?”

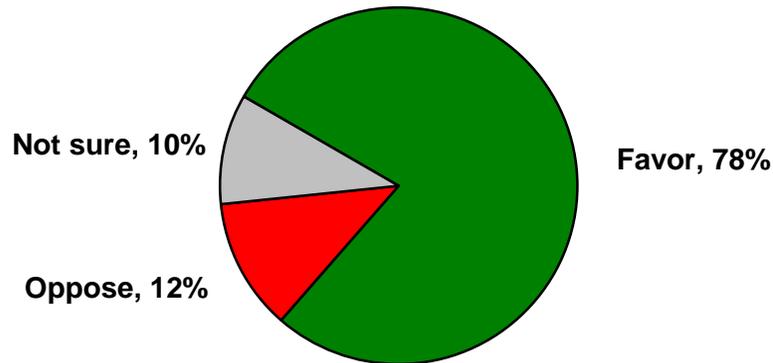
This Deep Concern about Pesticide Safety Creates Strong Support for Policy Changes

Voters’ deep concerns about the safety of pesticides translates into overwhelming support for two specific public policy proposals regarding their use – with about four out of five voters supporting each proposal.

The first proposal would restrict the consumer use of a certain type of pesticides – neonicotinoids – which have been shown to kill honey bees and other wildlife and which may affect human health. By an overwhelming margin of 78% to 12%, Maryland voters favor restricting consumer use of this type of pesticides.

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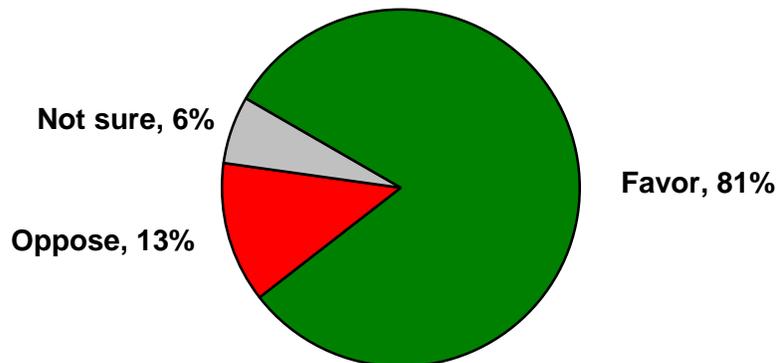
Voter Support for Restricting Consumer Use of a Type of Pesticide
Maryland Registered Voters Statewide



“Studies show that a certain type of pesticides currently used in the United States kills honey bees and other wildlife like birds and may affect human health. Other countries have banned these pesticides but they remain legal here. Would you favor or oppose legislation that would restrict the consumer use of these types of pesticides in Maryland?”

A second proposal would label plants sold in nurseries to let consumers know whether or not plants had been treated with these pesticides. Voters resoundingly support the proposal to label plants treated with this type of pesticides by an 81% to 13% margin.

Voter Support for Labeling Plants Treated with These Pesticides
Maryland Registered Voters Statewide



“Would you favor or oppose legislation that would label plants sold in nurseries to let consumers know whether or not plants had been treated with these pesticides known to kill bees and other wildlife?”

Support for each of these proposals is very broad-based, as reflected in the table on the following page. Geographically, there are no major jurisdictions or regions of the state where support for either of these proposals falls below 70%. Politically, support crosses party lines, with no fewer than two-thirds of any party group supporting these proposals.

Support for Public Policy Proposals among Subgroups

Voter Group	Restricting Use	Labeling Plants
All Voters	78%	81%
Women	79%	86%
Men	77%	77%
Whites	77%	80%
African-Americans	83%	88%
All Others	82%	84%
Baltimore City	72%	71%
Baltimore County	75%	87%
Montgomery County	77%	79%
Prince George's County	87%	91%
Greater Baltimore (Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll, Harford, Howard)	75%	78%
Greater Washington (Charles, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's)	81%	83%
Eastern Shore	70%	76%
Southern Maryland	77%	83%
Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett, Washington)	76%	83%
Democrats	84%	85%
Republicans	66%	75%
Unaffiliated Voters/Third Parties	77%	80%

How This Poll Was Conducted

OpinionWorks interviewed 562 randomly-selected registered voters across Maryland by telephone December 11–130, 2014. The interviews were conducted by trained and supervised live interviewers who are skilled in opinion research best practices.

The poll has a potential sampling error of no more than $\pm 4.1\%$ at a 95% confidence level, meaning that at least 95% of the time the survey results would differ by no more than that margin if every registered voter in Maryland had been interviewed.

Interviewees were drawn randomly from the database of registered voters, supplied by the State Board of Elections and matched with landline and cellular telephone numbers by a commercial vendor. The sample was balanced geographically and by political party during interviewing, and respondents were screened to ensure that only registered voters were interviewed. Weights were applied to bring the voter sample into compliance with the demographic breakdown of the registered voter population.

Brief Background on OpinionWorks

OpinionWorks conducts frequent opinion studies in Maryland and the surrounding states. We have been the polling organization for *The Baltimore Sun* since 2007, and have polled for numerous other media throughout the region. We work for state and local agencies throughout the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, and Mountain West, and for a variety of non-profit and for-profit entities within the region and nationally.