



PRESS RELEASE | Niagara Region

Methodology:

Results are based on a mixed-mode (online and telephone) survey conducted from March 28 to April 4, 2026, among 963 adults in the Niagara Region. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age and gender in the Niagara Region. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.2 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

In other places, the cost paid by consumers has increased when water has been owned or run by business corporations. Niagara region already has some of the highest water rates in the province. Do you support or oppose the provincial government using its new water corporations law (Bill 60) to change how water is provided in Niagara Region?

Support – 28%
Oppose – 60%
Not sure – 12%

Niagara Region Residents Want to Keep Control of Water Services

Three-in-five residents oppose the provincial government relying on Bill 60 to change how water is provided.

St. Catharines, ON [April 21, 2026] – The notion of privatizing water and wastewater services is not particularly popular with residents of the 12 cities, towns and townships that form the Niagara Region, a new Research Co. poll conducted for [CUPE Ontario](#) has found.

In the mixed mode survey of a representative regional sample, more than three-in-five Niagara Region residents (62%) say they are “very happy” or “somewhat happy” with the quality of the water and wastewater systems in their municipality.

In November 2025, the Ontario provincial government headed by Premier Doug Ford passed a law that gives it the power to force cities and towns to transfer publicly owned and operated water and wastewater services—including the water and sewage pipes and filtration plants that municipalities currently own—to business corporations.

Only 17% of Niagara Region residents think their local elected officials should accept this new provincial directive if the Ford government tries to use it. A sizeable majority (61%) want their local mayors, councillors and regional councillors to resist this course of action.

Currently, water and sewage is a service provided for the residents of Niagara's 12 cities and towns by the Niagara Regional government. It is fully owned by residents through their government and provided on a not-for-profit basis.

Almost three-in-four Niagara Region residents (74%) think it is important for democratically elected representatives to keep control of water services.

Three-in-five Niagara Region residents (60%) oppose the provincial government using its new water corporations law (Bill 60) to change how water is provided in Niagara Region.

The Ontario government introduced amendments to Bill 60 while this survey was being conducted. Those amendments, contained in Bill 98, do not to change the power of the Minister of Municipal Affairs to compel any Ontario municipality to transfer its water infrastructure to a business corporation.



Water infrastructure—including pipes, sewers and filtration plants—in Niagara requires some repairs and updates. Also, for more housing to be built, more water infrastructure needs to be added. Updating current and building more water infrastructure will cost millions of dollars.

Respondents to this survey were asked their opinion about four different ways to deal with this situation.

Almost three-in-four Niagara Region residents (74%) think it would be a “very good” or “good” idea for the provincial government to pay the full cost needed to upgrade water infrastructure at the municipal level in Ontario, even if that means increasing taxes paid by corporations and bringing in a new wealth tax on millionaires and billionaires.

Just over seven-in-ten respondents (71%) favour the provincial government borrowing the money that is required to repair and build the new water infrastructure that Niagara needs, even if that means increasing taxes paid by corporations and any individual whose income is \$250,000 or more.

Almost two thirds of Niagara Region residents (65%) think it would be a “very good” or “good” idea for the Ford government to borrow the money that is required to repair current water infrastructure, even if that means increasing taxes paid by corporations and individuals earning \$250,000 or more, and letting municipal governments charge fees that real estate developers must pay to recover some of the cost of building new water infrastructure because developers make good profits selling new housing.

Only 22% of respondents side with the notion of the provincial government making municipal governments transfer current water infrastructure to a business corporation that can borrow the money required to repair and build.

==30==

About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.





PRESS RELEASE | Niagara Region

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

==30==

Media contact:

Mario Canseco, President, Research Co.

[c] 778.929.0490

[e] mario.canseco@researchco.ca

==30==



mario.canseco@researchco.ca



[mario_canseco](https://twitter.com/mario_canseco)



778.929.0490



Mario Canseco