

Households and the Environment Survey, 2021

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, December 12, 2022

Purchases made to feed or shelter birds

Just over one in four Canadian households (26%) reported making purchases to feed or shelter birds on their property in 2021. Households in the Maritime provinces (36% to 37%) were more likely to have done so compared with the rest of the provinces (22% to 29%). Households in large urban areas were less likely to have made such purchases compared with those not in large urban areas (22% compared with 37%).

Among the large urban areas, households in Belleville were most likely to have made purchases to feed or shelter birds on their property with more than half (53%) reporting this in 2021. Conversely, households in Toronto were the least likely (14%) to have made purchases to feed or shelter birds.

Purchases made to observe birds

In 2021, 9% of Canadian households made purchases to watch birds or travelled for the purpose of bird watching, up from 7% in 2019. There was little variation between the provinces, with 6% of households in Saskatchewan having made such purchases at the low end to 11% of households in New Brunswick at the high end. Households in large urban areas were significantly less likely to have made such purchases compared with those not in large urban areas (8% compared with 11%).

Households in Victoria were most likely to have made purchases to watch birds or travelled for the purpose of bird watching, with 17% doing so in 2021, up from about 12% in 2019.

Use of energy-saving lights

Just over 8 in 10 Canadian households (81%) used at least one type of energy-saving light in 2021, down slightly from 86% in 2019. Light emitting diode (LED) lights, which are very energy efficient, were used by 53% of households. Compact fluorescent lights were used by 37% of Canadian households, continuing the decline in use from their peak reported in 2011 of 76% of households.

Overall, 16% of all households had dead or unwanted compact fluorescent lights to dispose of in 2021. Of these households, 45% took or sent them to a depot or drop-off centre, and 6% returned them to the supplier or retailer. Just over one-third of households (37%) that had some to dispose of put them in the garbage.

Sustainable Development Goals

On January 1, 2016, the world officially began implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)—the United Nations' transformative plan of action that addresses urgent global challenges over the next 15 years. The plan is based on 17 specific sustainable development goals.

The Households and the Environment Survey is an example of how Statistics Canada supports the reporting on the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. This release will help to measure the following goals:





Note to readers

The Households and the Environment Survey (HES) asks Canadian households about their activities and behaviours with respect to the environment. It covers a wide variety of topics including water and energy consumption and conservation, hazardous products used in the home, and the household's interactions with nature. Data from the survey are used by governments to guide policies and programs, by researchers to learn more about Canadians, and by individuals to see how they compare with the rest of the country.

In 2021, the HES surveyed approximately 38,000 households.

The target population of the 2021 HES consisted of households in Canada, excluding households located in Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut; households located on reserves and in other Indigenous settlements in the provinces; and households located on Canadian Forces bases. Institutions, collectives and households in certain remote regions were also excluded.

First conducted in 1991, the HES was subsequently conducted in 1994, 2006 and every second year starting in 2007. Some of the environmental variables from the first cycle continue to be measured, but many new topics have been introduced over the years.

Available tables: [38-10-0011-01](#), [38-10-0015-01](#), [38-10-0016-01](#), [38-10-0048-01](#), [38-10-0148-01](#) and [38-10-0286-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3881](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).