

**ELPC  
WISCONSIN WATER POLL**

Study #2198  
601 registered voters in selected SW Wisconsin counties  
Margin of error: ± 4.0 percentage points

SELZER & COMPANY  
November 5-7, 2019  
Weighted by age, sex and county

**Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.**

1. I'm going to mention some issues facing Wisconsin. For each, please tell me how important it is to you personally that government action be taken—very important, fairly important, just somewhat important, or not important. **(Rotate list.)**

	Very/Fairly Important	Smwt/Not Important	Very Important	Fairly Important	Just Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
A. Climate change	60	37	50	11	16	21	3
B. Funding for public education	77	22	62	15	17	5	1
C. Health care	82	17	73	10	13	4	1
D. International trade and tariffs	60	35	41	19	28	7	4
E. The national debt	71	26	57	14	21	5	2
F. Manufacturing jobs	68	30	52	17	25	5	1
G. Safe clean drinking water	89	10	82	7	8	2	1
H. Infrastructure, such as roads and bridges	84	16	67	17	14	2	-
I. Agricultural practices	74	24	62	12	20	4	2

2. I'm going to mention some things that may contribute to the quality of life in southwest Wisconsin. For each, please tell me what rating you would give your part of the state—excellent, good, just fair, or poor. **(Rotate list.)**

	Excellent/ Good	Just fair/ Poor	Excellent	Good	Just fair	Poor	Not Sure
A. Outdoor recreation, including fishing, hunting, biking, hiking, and canoeing	87	12	50	37	11	1	1
B. Productive farmland	83	14	36	47	11	3	3
C. Clean rivers	66	32	17	49	24	8	3
D. Public schools and colleges	69	28	23	46	25	4	3
E. Friendly neighbors and communities	85	14	40	45	11	3	-
F. Local elected officials	46	49	7	38	38	11	5
G. The way farmers take care of the land and water	73	25	29	43	20	5	2
H. Scenic landscapes and quiet places	85	14	46	39	12	1	1

3. I'm going to mention some elected officials and institutions. For each, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of the way each is handling the job. **(Rotate list.)**

	Approve	Disapprove	Not Sure
A. Tony Evers as governor	52	38	11
B. Ron Johnson as U.S. senator	48	35	17
C. Tammy Baldwin as U.S. senator	53	35	12
D. Mark Pocan as U.S. representative for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> congressional district	38	21	41
E. Ron Kind as U.S. representative for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> congressional district	58	21	21
F. Howard Marklein as state senator	46	24	30
G. Todd Novak as state representative	41	17	42
H. Travis Tranel as state representative	43	20	36
I. Wisconsin Farmers Union	48	12	40
J. Wisconsin Farm Bureau	61	12	27
K. Donald Trump as president of the United States	42	52	6
L. Driftless Area Land Conservancy	58	14	28

4. Based just on what you know today, do you feel your part of the state needs more regulation or less regulation to better protect drinking water supplies, or do you feel what is in place now is fine?

- 40 More regulation
- 5 Less regulation
- 49 What is in place now is fine
- 6 Not sure

5. I'm going to mention some legislative proposals addressing drinking water quality that have been discussed in the past few years in Wisconsin. Some of these proposals have become law and some have not. For each, please tell me if this is something you strongly support, mostly support, mostly oppose, or strongly oppose. **(Rotate list.)**

	Support	Oppose	Strongly Support	Mostly Support	Mostly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not Sure
A. Put a freeze on new or expanded construction of CAFOs, meaning concentrated animal feeding operations containing thousands of hogs and cows in southwest Wisconsin	58	34	34	25	18	16	8
B. Allow counties to impose stricter local standards to protect drinking water quality than otherwise required by state law	75	21	43	32	13	8	4
C. Require greater disclosure and regulation of how concentrated animal feeding operations containing thousands of hogs and cows, known as CAFOs, spread manure on fields where it can run off or seep into waterways	72	22	43	29	10	11	7
D. Enact safe drinking water regulations in southwest Wisconsin similar to those put in place in northeast Wisconsin	58	13	29	29	8	6	29
E. Require adoption of specific best management practices to reduce fertilizer and manure runoff that contaminates drinking water supplies	79	16	50	29	9	7	6

6. I'm going to mention some facts about drinking water quality and agricultural practices in southwest Wisconsin. For each, please tell me if this is something you are aware of or not—just answer yes or no. **(Do not rotate.)**

	Aware	Not Aware	Not Sure
A. This part of the state is especially vulnerable to drinking water contamination because the fractured bedrock and sometimes sandy soil allows some contaminants to get into groundwater.	67	30	3
B. Contaminated drinking water results from some concentrated animal feeding operations, known as CAFOs (KAY foes), spreading more manure on fields than can be naturally absorbed, and the manure then seeps into groundwater.	74	23	3
C. Contaminated drinking water can result from over-application of commercial fertilizer on fields, which then seeps into groundwater.	85	12	3
D. An independent study shows that 42% of the wells tested in some southwest Wisconsin counties exceeded health standards for E. coli bacteria and nitrates.	57	40	3
E. Nitrate contamination in drinking water can cause human health problems, including “blue baby” disease, thyroid disease and cancer.	74	23	3
F. The northeast part of the state has stronger regulations for manure management than the southwest Wisconsin areas where we live.	29	66	5

**I'm going to read you some reasons for and against more regulation so you can better understand both sides. First,**

**(Alternate Q.7 and Q.8 every other interview.)**

7. I'm going to read you some reasons to support more regulation on drinking water quality in southwest Wisconsin. For each, please tell me if you think this is an excellent reason, a good reason, or not a good reason to support new regulations. **(Read list. Rotate.)**

	Excellent Reason	Good Reason	Not a Good Reason	Not Sure
A. Access to safe, clean drinking water is a basic need and right that our government ought to protect. Since groundwater in southwest Wisconsin is so vulnerable to contamination from fertilizer and manure pollution, there should be strong regulations in place to ensure safe, clean drinking water.	46	34	11	9
B. The state legislature has already allowed extra regulation to protect some northeast Wisconsin counties' drinking water from nitrate pollution. Since southwest Wisconsin counties have similar geology and risks, we deserve at least that same level of protection.	34	43	14	9
C. It's not fair that CAFO operators get to push the costs of their pollution onto everyone else. Agriculture operations create nitrate pollution, so it ought to be their responsibility to pay to prevent it or clean it up, even if that cuts into their profits or burdens their businesses.	34	37	18	11
D. Megafarms and CAFOs not only have an impact on water quality, they have a negative impact on the quality of life in southwest Wisconsin. They threaten independent family farmers and hurt tourism and outdoor recreation activities.	32	38	19	11

[For the second set of questions asked, precede the question with the word, “Now, . . .]

8. I’m going to read you some reasons to oppose more regulation on drinking water quality. For each, please tell me if you think this is an excellent reason, a good reason, or not a good reason to oppose new regulations. **(Read list. Rotate.)**

	Excellent Reason	Good Reason	Not a Good Reason	Not Sure
A. There are multiple causes of drinking water problems, including leaking septic tanks, in southwest Wisconsin besides manure and excess fertilizer. It is wrong to single out one potential problem to take all the blame.	17	37	35	11
B. Instead of more regulation, it’s better to invest in research and technology to fix these problems even if that takes longer.	16	42	31	10
C. Agriculture is a major business sector in southwest Wisconsin. If there is additional regulation, that could hurt agricultural businesses. We can’t risk that.	16	34	38	12
D. Regulatory agencies don’t really understand agriculture and the people who spend their lives doing it. Agricultural operators know what’s best for their soil and water, and they want to be good stewards. We don’t need more regulation.	17	30	42	11

9. Based just on what you know today, do you feel your part of the state needs more regulation or less regulation to better protect drinking water supplies, or do you feel what is in place now is fine? **[This is retest of Q.4.]**

	More regulation	Less regulation	What is in place now is fine	Not sure
Q.9	47	4	33	16
Q.4	40	5	49	6

10. Some candidates running for elected office might support more regulation to better protect drinking water supplies in southwest Wisconsin. Other candidates might oppose more regulation that could burden CAFOs and megafarms. Which candidate are you more likely to support—the one who supports more regulation or the one who opposes it?

- 52 Supports more regulation
- 22 Opposes more regulation
- 3 Neither (VOL)
- 23 Not sure

11. In your own decision-making as the next general election approaches, do you think this will be a major issue, a minor issue, or not much of an issue as you consider candidates you will support?

- 28 Major issue
- 40 Minor issue
- 19 Not much of an issue
- 12 Not sure

12. Getting near the end of the survey now. When you hear about legislative changes to address a problem, which do you think of as stronger and fairer—to enact standards or to enact regulations?

- 41 Enact standards
- 31 Enact regulations
- 4 Both the same (VOL)
- 24 Not sure

These final questions are asked just to see what cross-section of southwest Wisconsin residents we are interviewing.

100a. Record age from sample

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_  
b. (CODE PROPER CATEGORY :)

1    Under 25  
10   25 to 34  
23   35 to 44  
14   45 to 54  
26   55 to 64  
26   65 and over  
\*    Refused/not sure

101. In politics as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

24   Republican  
22   Democrat  
39   Independent  
1    Other (VOL)  
14   Refused/not sure

102. What is the last grade of school you completed?

25   High school graduate or less  
17   Some college  
11   Associate's (two-year) degree  
24   Bachelor's (four-year) degree  
11   Postgraduate work or degree  
11   Refused/not sure

103. Do you have children under the age of 18 living at home?

27   Yes  
62   No  
11   Refused/not sure

104. With what racial or ethnic group do you identify most—White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, or some other group?
- 84 White
  - \* Black
  - 2 Hispanic
  - Asian
  - Other (specify:)
  - 14 Refused/not sure
105. Is your total annual household income before taxes above or below \$70,000 per year?
- Above **ASK b**
  - Below **ASK c**
- b. Is it above or below \$100,000 per year?
- 15 Above (\$100,000+)
  - 16 Below (\$70,000-\$99,999)
- c. Is it above or below \$50,000 per year?
- 15 Above (\$50,000-\$69,999)
  - 29 Below (<\$50,000)
  - 25 Refused/not sure
106. Phone type
- 31 Cell phone only
  - 69 Landline/other/refused
107. Does anyone in your household work on a farm or in an agriculture-related job? (**Specify which.**)
- 14 Yes, on a farm
  - 7 Yes, in an agriculture-related job
  - 6 Yes, both
  - 61 No
  - 12 Refused/not sure
108. Record sex from sample
- 49 Male
  - 51 Female
109. Record from sample in which election(s) respondent voted. (Multi)
- 84 Nov 2018 general (midterms)
  - 34 2018 primary
  - 90 Nov 2016 general (presidential)
  - 22 2016 primary
  - 76 Nov 2014 general (midterms)
  - 31 2014 primary
  - 86 Nov 2012 general (presidential)
  - 26 2012 primary
110. Record county
- 16 Crawford
  - 41 Grant
  - 16 Iowa
  - 11 Lafayette
  - 15 Richland