



Ipsos Public Affairs



Municipal Licensing and Standards

Noise By-Law Research

MAY 2018

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OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

Background and Objectives

- This research was commissioned by the City of Toronto to collect feedback from Toronto residents on their attitudes and opinions about noise and noise bylaws
- Specifically, the research investigated a number of topics, including:
 - Concerns for reducing noise pollution compared to other priorities in the city
 - Preferences for the restriction of certain types of noise
 - General attitudes and opinions towards noise in the City, including:
 - Acceptability of different types of noise at night
 - Ideal times for restricting noise
 - Awareness and attitudes towards noise bylaws

Methodology

- Interviewing was conducted online via Ipsos' iSay online panel.
- In total, n=1,001 interviews were conducted with Toronto residents over the age of 18.
- Interviews were conducted between February 20th - 26th, 2018.
- Interviewing quotas were administered and weighting was applied to the data to ensure that the results of the survey are representative of the City of Toronto population according to the 2016 Canadian Census.
- The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 3.5 percentage points.
- Where possible we have shown significant differences using green and red highlighting throughout the report as such:

	Significantly higher
	Significantly lower

KEY FINDINGS

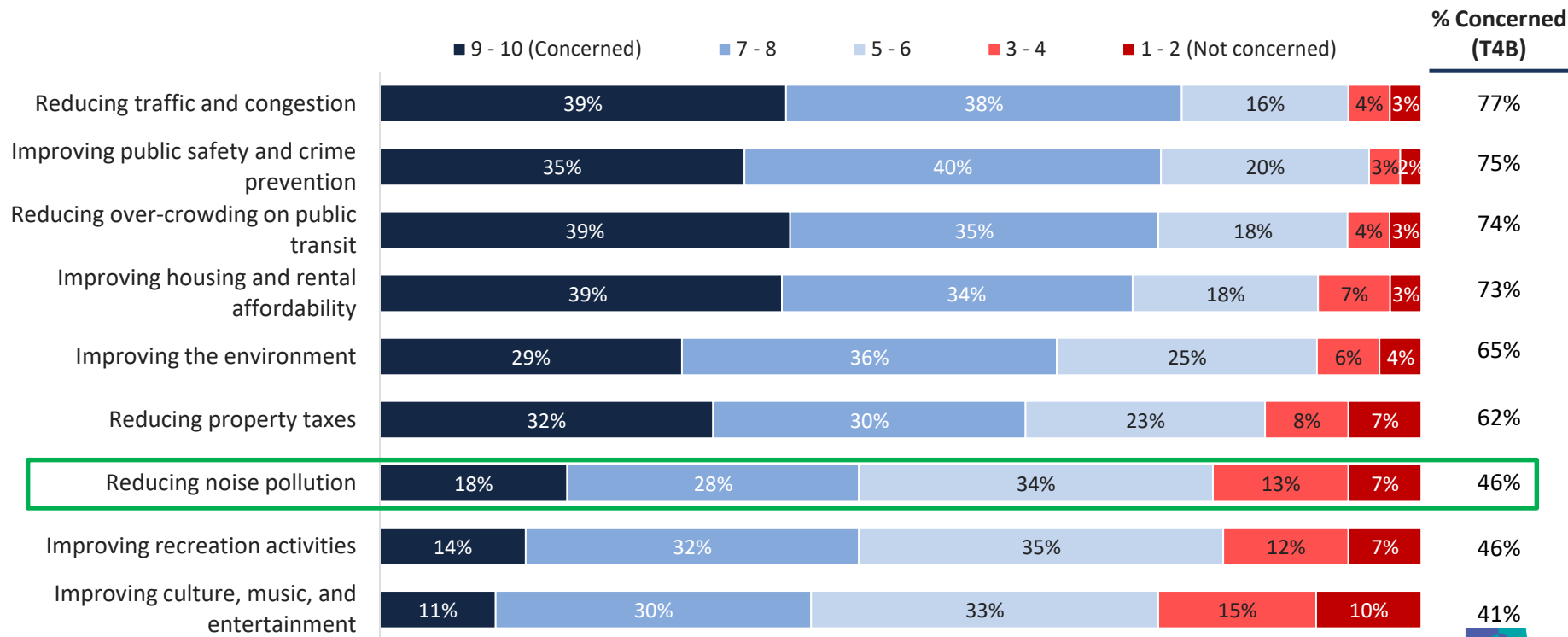
Key Findings

- Toronto residents are less concerned about reducing noise pollution in the city compared to a number of other issues. Although slightly fewer than half (46%) of residents are concerned about noise pollution, concerns are greater for traffic and congestion (77%), public safety (75%), overcrowding on public transit (74%), housing affordability (73%), or the environment (65%).
- Residents are most concerned about noise caused by construction and/or heavy equipment. Notably, residents are less accepting of construction noise caused by residential and commercial building construction, compared to noise caused by infrastructure construction.
- Overall, a majority (64%) of residents believe that noise levels in the City of Toronto are reasonable and reflect life in a big city, while a minority (36%) of residents believe that more needs to be done to restrict noise because of potential negative health consequences.
- On average, residents prefer that noise be restricted before 8:00 AM and after 7:30 PM on weekdays and before 9:30 AM and after 7:00 PM on weekends.
- Residents are generally confused about rules and bylaws for restricting noise in the City of Toronto as residents were only able to correctly identify existing bylaws and rules 57% of the time.

CONCERNS ABOUT NOISE

Concern for Various Issues in the City of Toronto

- Residents are significantly less concerned about reducing noise pollution (46%) compared to other issues, namely reducing traffic and congestion (77%), improving public safety (75%), reducing public transit over-crowding (74%), and improving housing affordability (73%).



Concern for Various Issues in the City of Toronto

- Residents in the former Metro Toronto and East York are more likely to express concern with noise pollution, as are those residents between the ages of 25 and 54.

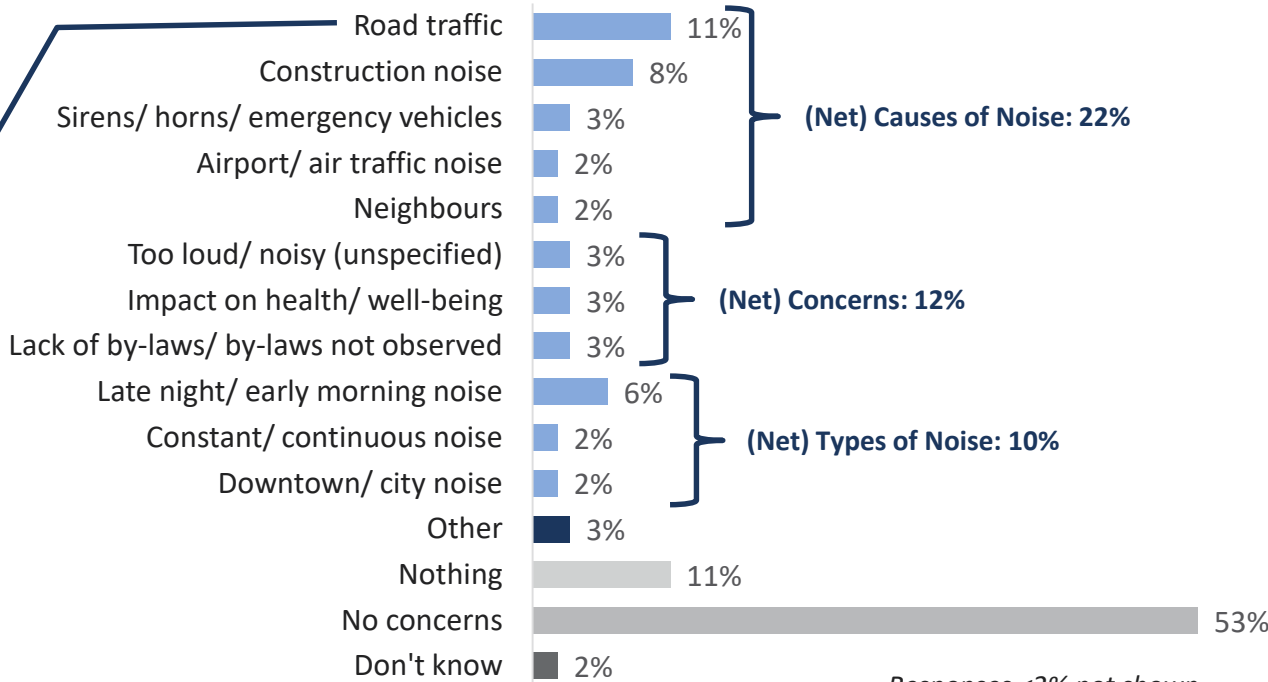
%Concerned (Top 4 Box)	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Reducing traffic and congestion	77%	77%	78%	72%	75%	79%	78%	76%	81%	77%	83%	75%	75%
Improving public safety and crime prevention	75%	68%	80%	66%	77% C	73%	72%	73%	84%	78%	75%	71%	77%
Reducing over-crowding on public transit	74%	71%	78%	70%	75%	73%	79%	75%	75%	73%	76%	75%	76%
Improving housing and rental affordability	73%	64%	79%	71%	79%	77%	74%	67%	65%	65%	75%	76%	69%
Improving the environment	65%	60%	70%	65%	67%	67%	65%	63%	64%	64%	66%	65%	65%
Reducing property taxes	62%	64%	61%	59%	70%	69%	60%	61%	54%	63%	65%	59%	66%
Reducing noise pollution	46%	44%	48%	40%	48%	48%	52%	41%	44%	44%	47%	51%	40%
Improving recreation activities	46%	45%	46%	49%	48%	54%	48%	36%	39%	43%	47%	48%	46%
Improving culture, music, and entertainment	41%	39%	43%	52%	46%	46%	37%	37%	31%	33%	41%	47%	40%

Specific Concerns About Noise in the City

- When asked, two thirds (66%) of residents say that they do not have any concerns about noise in the City of Toronto.
- Among those residents that do have concerns, one in five mention causes of noise such as road traffic (11%) or construction noise (8%). Other residents mention various concerns such as impact on health (3%) or a lack of by-laws (3%).

Certain demographic sub-groups are *more likely* to note that noise pollution from road traffic is a concern in the city. These groups include:

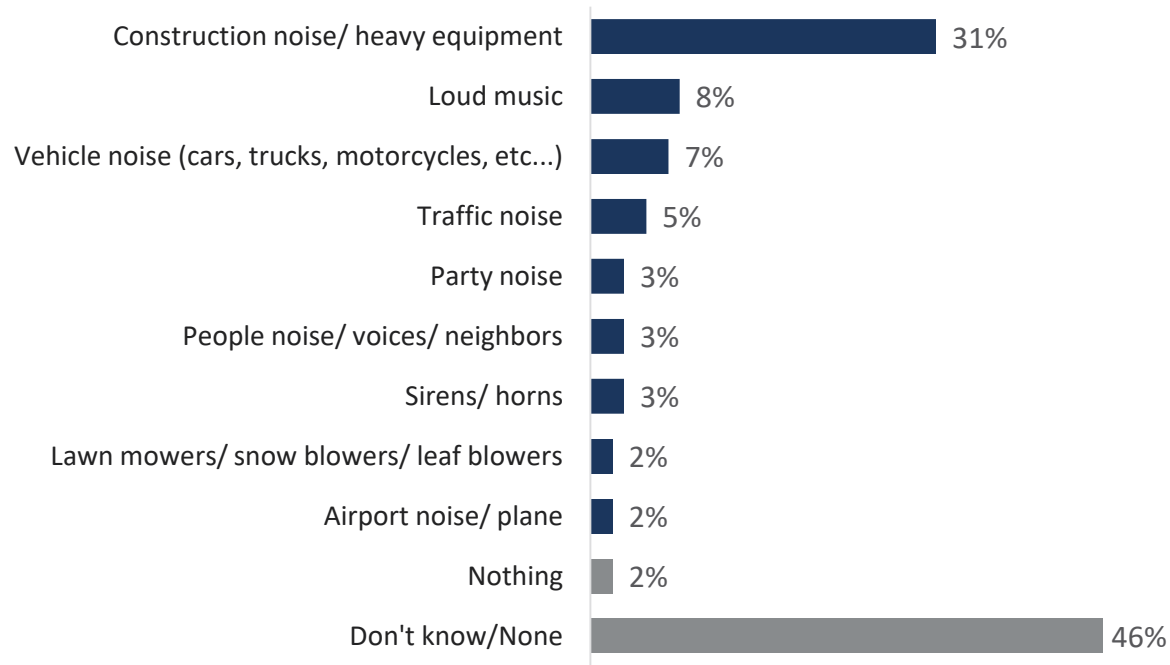
- Women (13% vs. 9% men);
- Torontonians who were *not* born in Canada (14% vs. 9% born in Canada);
- Torontonians with a post secondary or higher education;
- And those living in an apartment or condo (14% vs. 8% detached, 7% semi-detached).



Responses <2% not shown

Most Important Types of Noise to be Restricted

- Half (48%) of residents say they cannot pinpoint a specific type of noise to be restricted or minimized in their neighbourhood. Torontonians under the age of 55 are the most likely to be unable to identify a specific form of noise.
- Three in ten (31%) residents perceive the noise from construction, or heavy equipment, to be the most pressing to restrict. Those over the age of 65 are more likely to express that noise pollution from construction should be minimized.



Responses <2% not shown

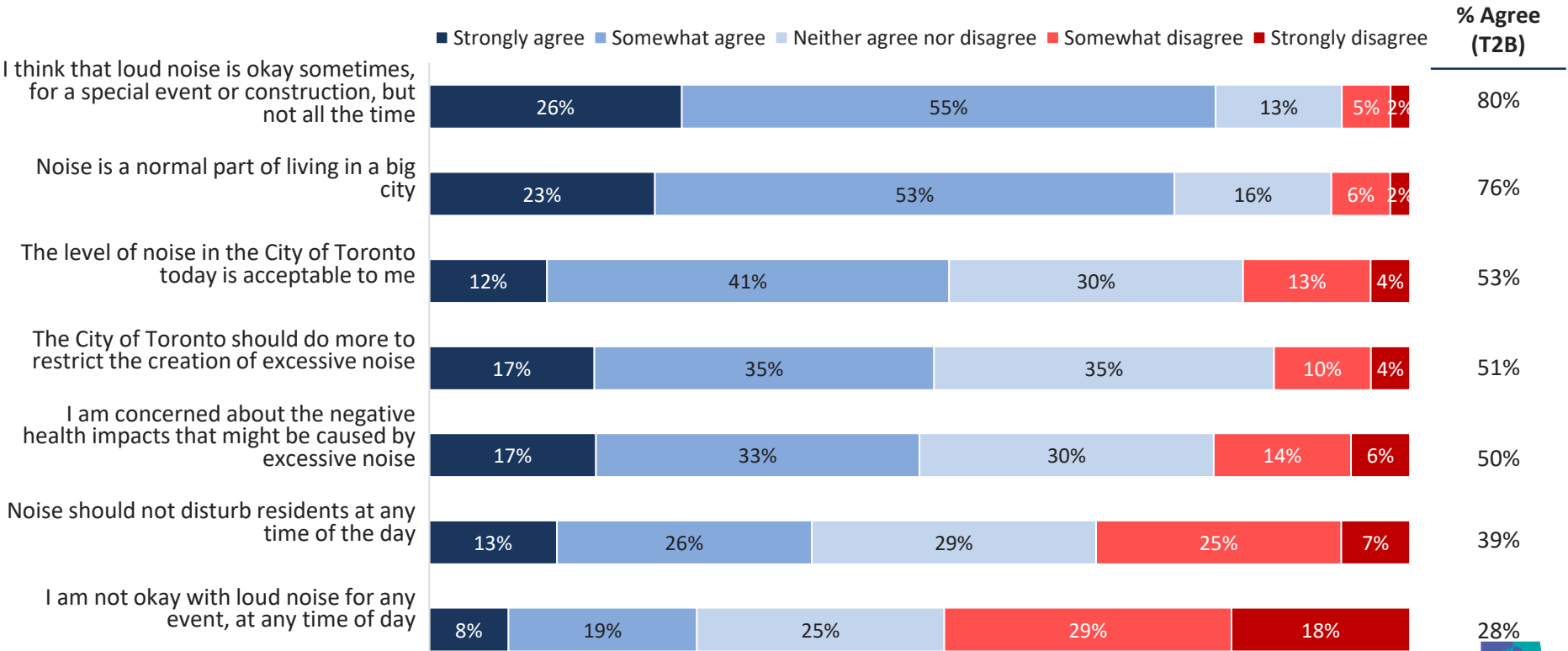
Q23. What, if any, types of noise are the most important for the City of Toronto to restrict and minimize in your neighbourhood?

Base: All Respondents (n=1001)

ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS TOWARDS NOISE IN TORONTO

General Attitudes Towards Noise

- Most (80%) Torontonians perceive noise to be tolerable and a component of living in a big city (76%)- about half (53%) of residents accept the level of noise in the City of Toronto.



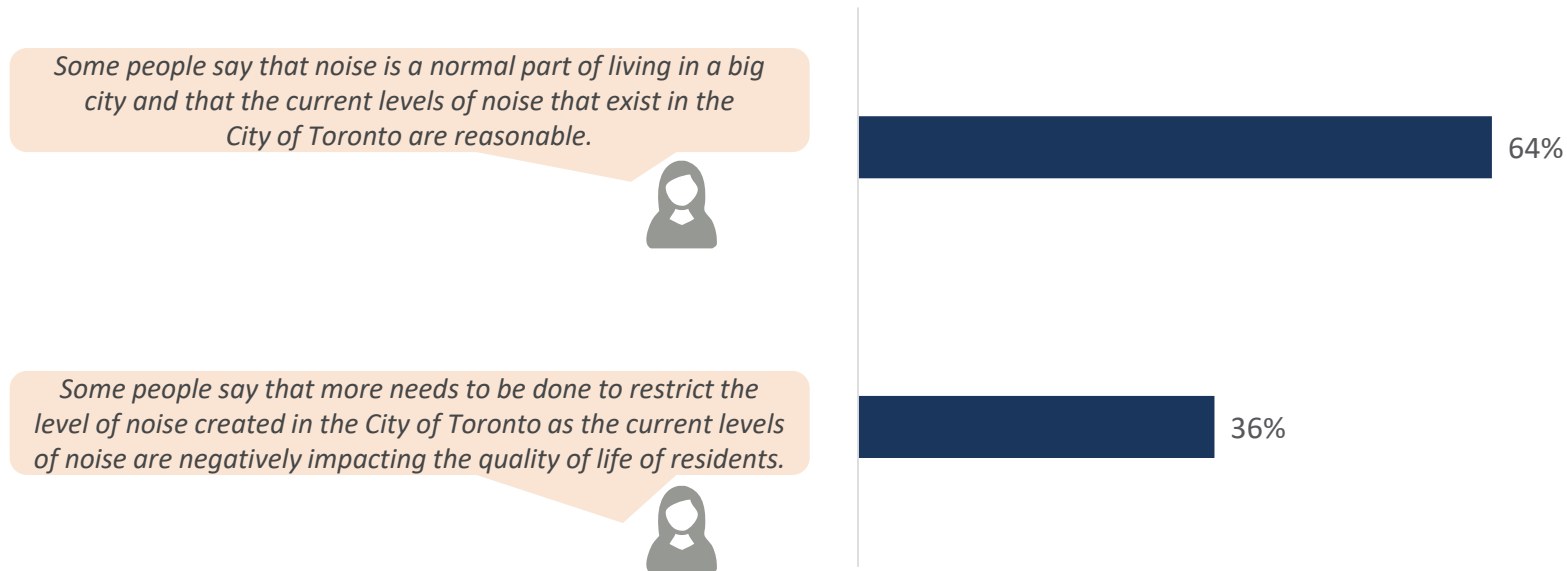
General Attitudes Towards Noise

- Younger residents are significantly more likely to be accepting of noise compared to older residents, while residents of North York are the most likely to agree that noise should not disturb residents at any time or that they are not OK with loud noise at any event.

%Agree (Top 2 Box)	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
I think that loud noise is okay sometimes, for a special event or construction, but not all the time	80%	80%	81%	80%	85%	76%	77%	82%	81%	81%	81%	84%	74%
Noise is a normal part of living in a big city	76%	76%	76%	80%	79%	81%	73%	72%	72%	71%	78%	79%	74%
The level of noise in the City of Toronto today is acceptable to me	53%	56%	51%	71%	58%	55%	50%	47%	43%	47%	52%	55%	56%
The City of Toronto should do more to restrict the creation of excessive noise	51%	51%	51%	44%	52%	52%	49%	54%	53%	53%	54%	53%	44%
I am concerned about the negative health impacts that might be caused by excessive noise	50%	52%	49%	48%	49%	51%	44%	53%	55%	43%	54%	51%	51%
Noise should not disturb residents at any time of the day	39%	39%	39%	42%	41%	37%	39%	36%	39%	39%	48%	33%	38%
I am not okay with loud noise for any event, at any time of day	28%	31%	25%	32%	28%	31%	26%	24%	27%	29%	34%	25%	25%

Overall Opinion About Noise in the City

- A majority (64%) of Torontonians perceive noise to be a usual part of living in a big city and therefore believe that the City of Toronto has a reasonable level of noise, compared to a minority (36%) of residents who feel that more needs to be done to restrict the level of noise in the city as current noise levels are negatively impacting the quality of life of residents.



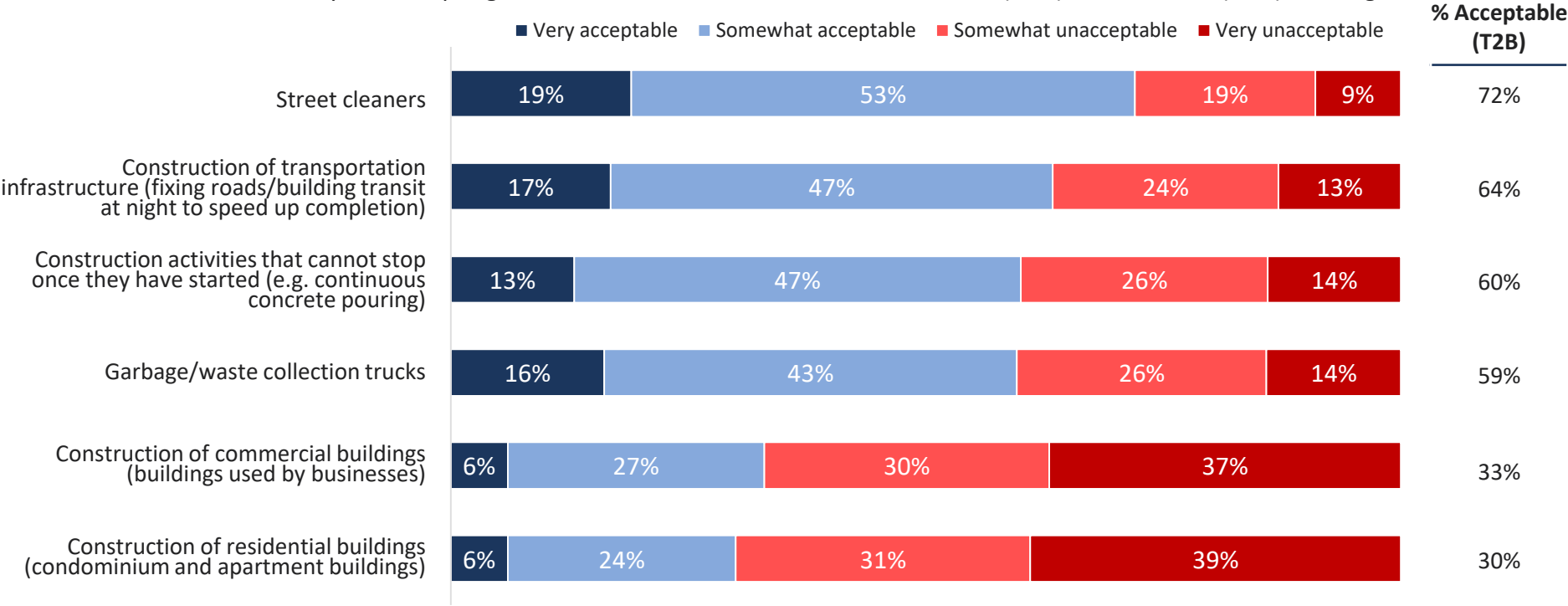
Overall Opinion About Noise in the City

- Torontonians between the ages of 18 and 34 are the most likely to say that noise is a normal part of living in a big city, and that the current levels of noise in Toronto are acceptable. Conversely, those aged 55 to 64 are more likely to say that more needs to be done to restrict the noise in the city.

	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Some people say that noise is a normal part of living in a big city and that the current levels of noise that exist in the City of Toronto are reasonable.	64%	65%	64%	70%	69%	62%	66%	56%	63%	62%	59%	66%	68%
Some people say that more needs to be done to restrict the level of noise created in the City of Toronto as the current levels of noise are negatively impacting the quality of life of residents.	36%	35%	36%	30%	31%	38%	34%	44%	37%	38%	41%	34%	32%

Acceptability of Type of Noise At Night Time

- Most Torontonians find noise from street cleaners (72%), construction of transportation infrastructure (64%), certain construction activities that are continuous (60%), and noise from garbage or waste collection to be acceptable at night time. On the other hand, residents are considerably less accepting of noise from the construction of commercial (33%) or residential (30%) buildings.



Acceptability of Type of Noise At Night Time

- In general, men and younger respondents, are more likely to believe that the mentioned forms of noise are acceptable.

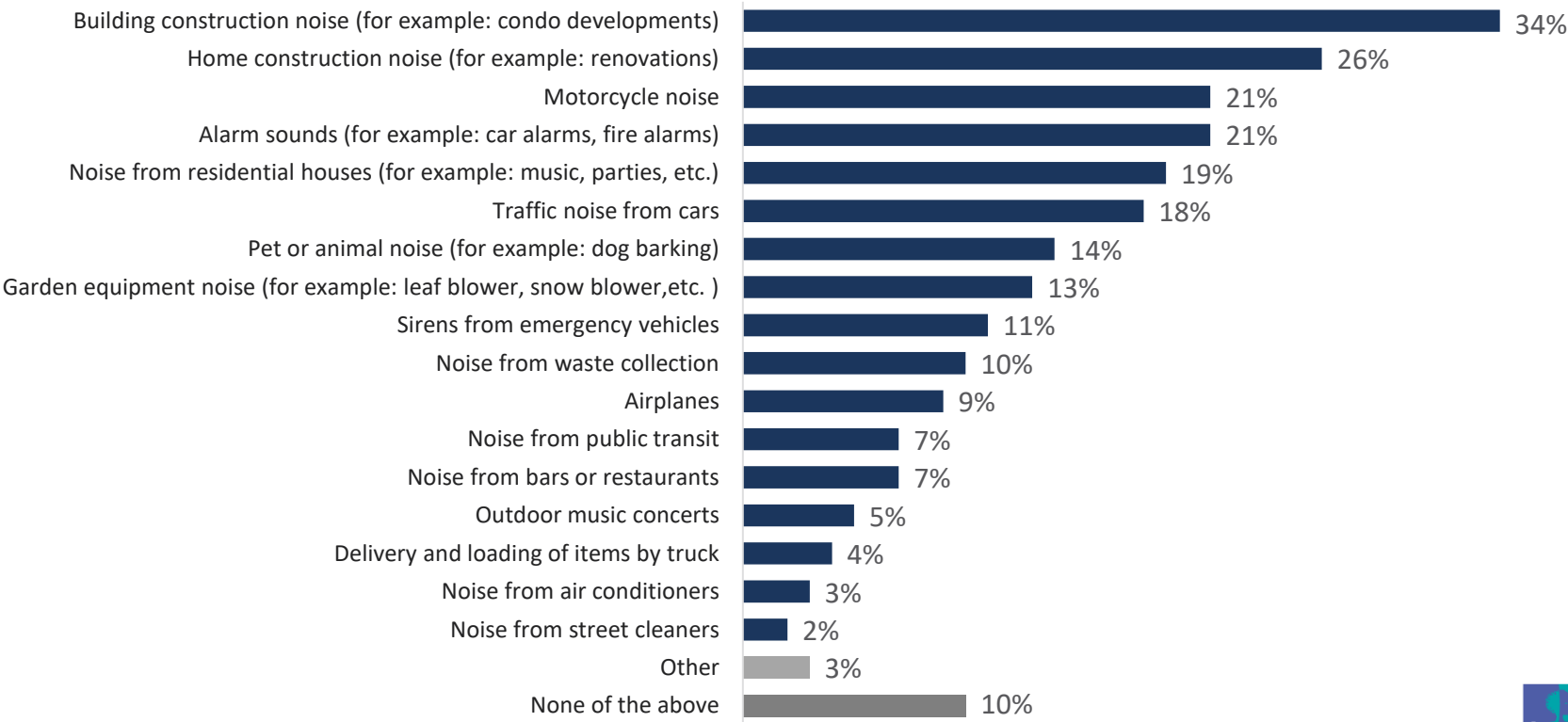
%Acceptable (Top 2 Box)	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Street cleaners	72%	78%	66%	79%	74%	74%	73%	67%	65%	63%	74%	74%	74%
Construction of transportation infrastructure (fixing roads/building transit at night to speed up completion)	64%	68%	60%	66%	69%	66%	59%	57%	64%	63%	65%	61%	66%
Construction activities that cannot stop once they have started (e.g. continuous concrete pouring)	60%	64%	57%	65%	64%	60%	55%	54%	63%	65%	62%	55%	61%
Garbage/waste collection trucks	59%	65%	54%	68%	72%	62%	54%	52%	50%	48%	61%	61%	64%
Construction of commercial buildings (buildings used by businesses)	33%	39%	28%	47%	44%	39%	30%	26%	17%	31%	36%	29%	39%
Construction of residential buildings (condominium and apartment buildings)	30%	36%	25%	45%	39%	35%	31%	26%	10%	26%	34%	25%	37%

Q28. How acceptable or unacceptable would it be to allow noise from the following sources at night time (from 7pm in the evening to 7am in the morning)?

Base: All Respondents (n=1001)

Most Bothersome Source of Noise

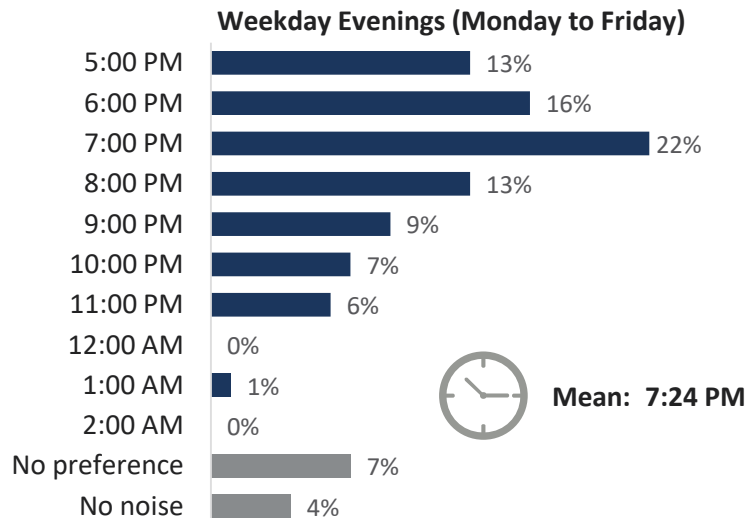
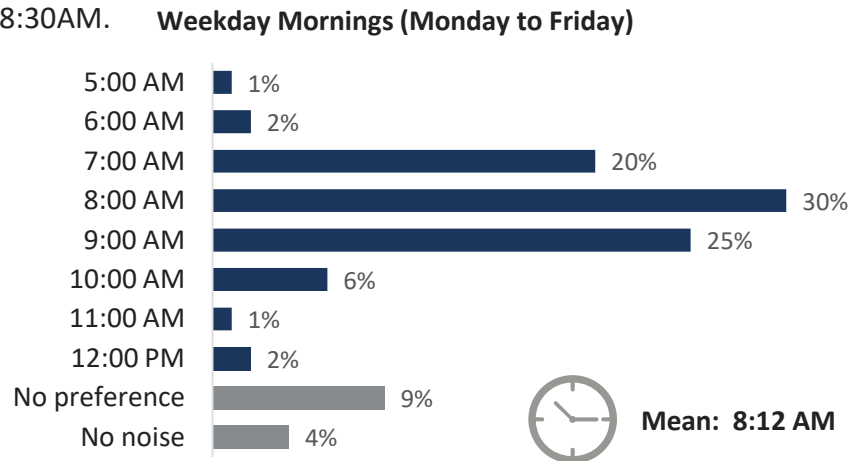
- Building (34%) and home (26%) construction noise are mentioned as the most bothersome sources of noise in Toronto among residents. Other sources of bothersome noise include motorcycle noise (21%), alarm sounds (21%), noise from residential homes (19%), and traffic noise from cars (18%).



IDEAL TIMES FOR RESTRICTING NOISE

Restricting Noise - Weekday

- Torontonians believe that during the week it is acceptable for noise to begin shortly after 8:00AM, and end just before 7:30PM. It should be noted that residents believe that noise relating to the construction of buildings is the most important to be restricted. Torontonians age 65 and older are more comfortable with noise beginning at 8:00AM, while those under 45 would prefer noise to begin closer to 8:30AM.



	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Weekday mornings: Average time	8:12	8:12	8:18	8:24	8:24	8:24	8:06	8:06	8:00	8:12	8:18	8:18	8:12
Weekday evenings: Average time	7:24	7:18	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:18	7:24	7:36	7:12	7:18	7:18	7:30	7:30

Q19. When do you believe it is an acceptable time for noise to begin; on weekdays (Monday to Friday), in the morning.

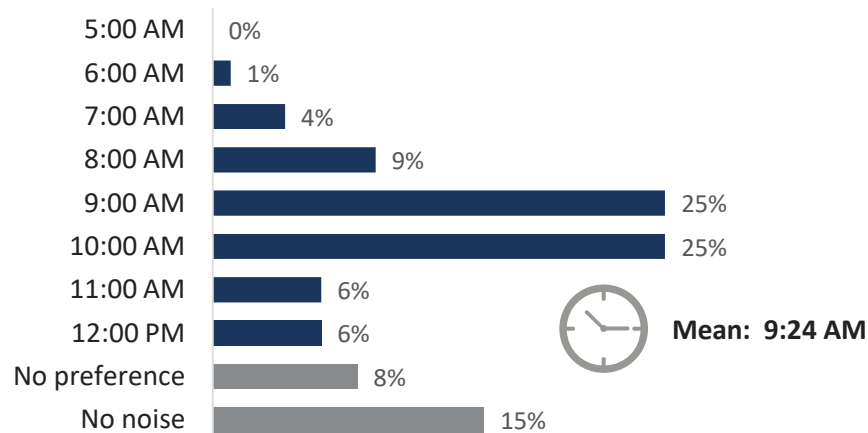
Q20. When do you believe it is an acceptable time for noise to end; on weekdays (Monday to Friday), in the evening.

Base: All Respondents (n=1001)

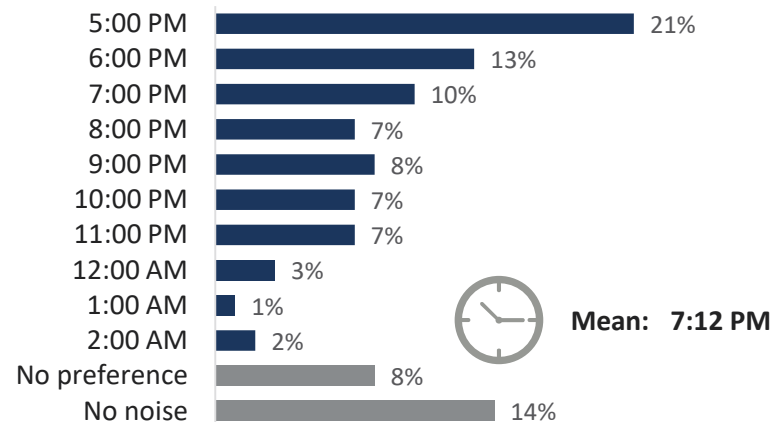
Restricting Noise - Weekend

- On the weekends, Torontonians believe it is acceptable for noise to begin at around 9:30AM, and end just after 7:00PM. Torontonians over the age of 55 express that they are okay with noise beginning just after 9:00AM, while those under the age of 44 would prefer noise to begin closer to 9:40AM. Torontonians are generally in agreeance as to when weekend noise should end.

Weekend Mornings (Saturday and Sunday)



Weekend Evenings (5pm-2am)



	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Weekend mornings: Average time	9:24	9:18	9:36	9:42	9:36	9:42	9:24	9:12	9:12	9:18	9:24	9:30	9:30
Weekend evenings: Average time	7:12	7:12	7:18	7:48	7:18	6:48	7:12	7:24	7:00	7:06	7:00	7:12	7:36

Q21. When do you believe it is an acceptable time for noise to begin; on weekends (Saturday and Sunday), in the morning.

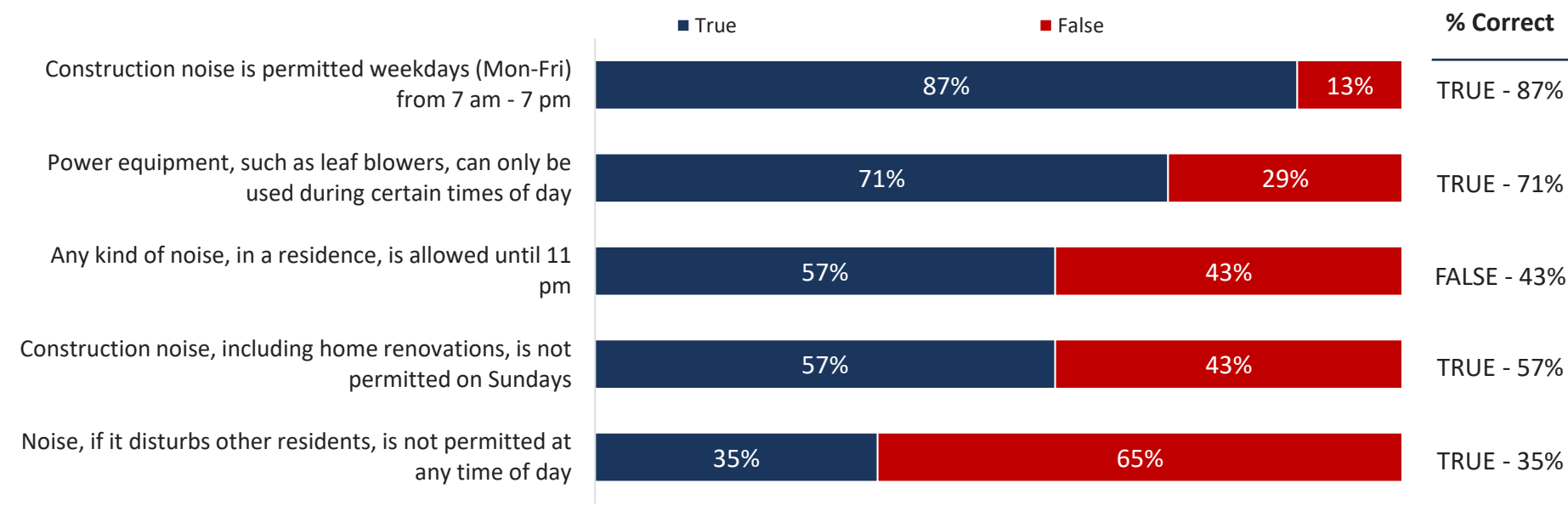
Q22. When do you believe it is an acceptable time for noise to end; on weekends (Saturday and Sunday), in the evening.

Base: All Respondents (n=1001)

AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT NOISE BYLAWS

Current Noise Bylaw Awareness

- Residents do not have a clear understanding of the current noise by-laws in the City of Toronto as many provide an incorrect answer – namely, only one third (35%) of residents indicate that noise that disturbs other residents is not permitted at any time of the day or that construction noise (including home renovations) is not permitted on Sundays. On average, residents are able to correctly answer questions about noise bylaws only 57% of the time.



Current Noise Bylaw Awareness

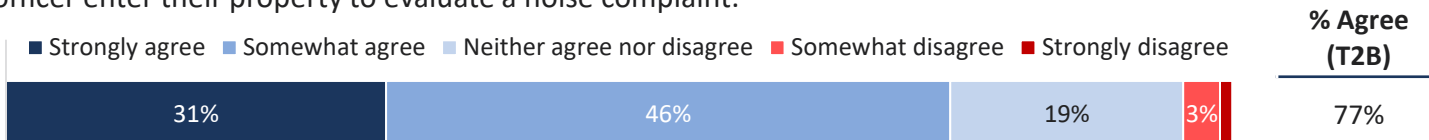
- Torontonians are generally on the same page when it comes to awareness of current noise bylaws, with the exception of some differences by gender and age.

%Correct	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Construction noise is permitted weekdays (Mon-Fri) from 7 am - 7 pm.	87%	87%	87%	83%	84%	88%	90%	86%	89%	83%	86%	88%	89%
Power equipment, such as leaf blowers, can only be used during certain times of day.	71%	70%	71%	74%	79%	67%	69%	68%	67%	68%	68%	75%	69%
Any kind of noise, in a residence, is allowed until 11 pm.	43%	49%	37%	42%	42%	42%	36%	42%	52%	47%	41%	45%	39%
Construction noise, including home renovations, is not permitted on Sundays.	57%	56%	58%	60%	59%	55%	56%	51%	60%	54%	59%	58%	55%
Noise, if it disturbs other residents, is not permitted at any time of day.	35%	42%	30%	42%	38%	37%	30%	30%	37%	31%	40%	33%	38%

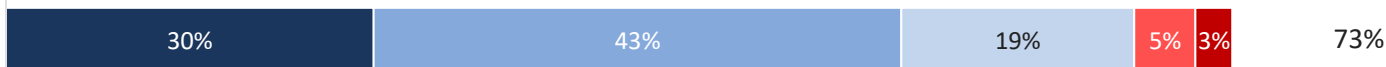
Measuring Noise & By-Law Enforcement

- Nearly eight in ten (77%) residents agree that decibels should be used to measure how loud an event or object is. In the event that a noise complaint is made, nearly three in four (73%) say that they are comfortable with a bylaw officer entering their property to assess the noise. Torontonians age 55 and older are more likely to be in favour of using sound level limits to measure noise, as well as willing to have a bylaw officer enter their property to evaluate a noise complaint.

Sound level limits (decibels) should be used to measure how loud an event or object is



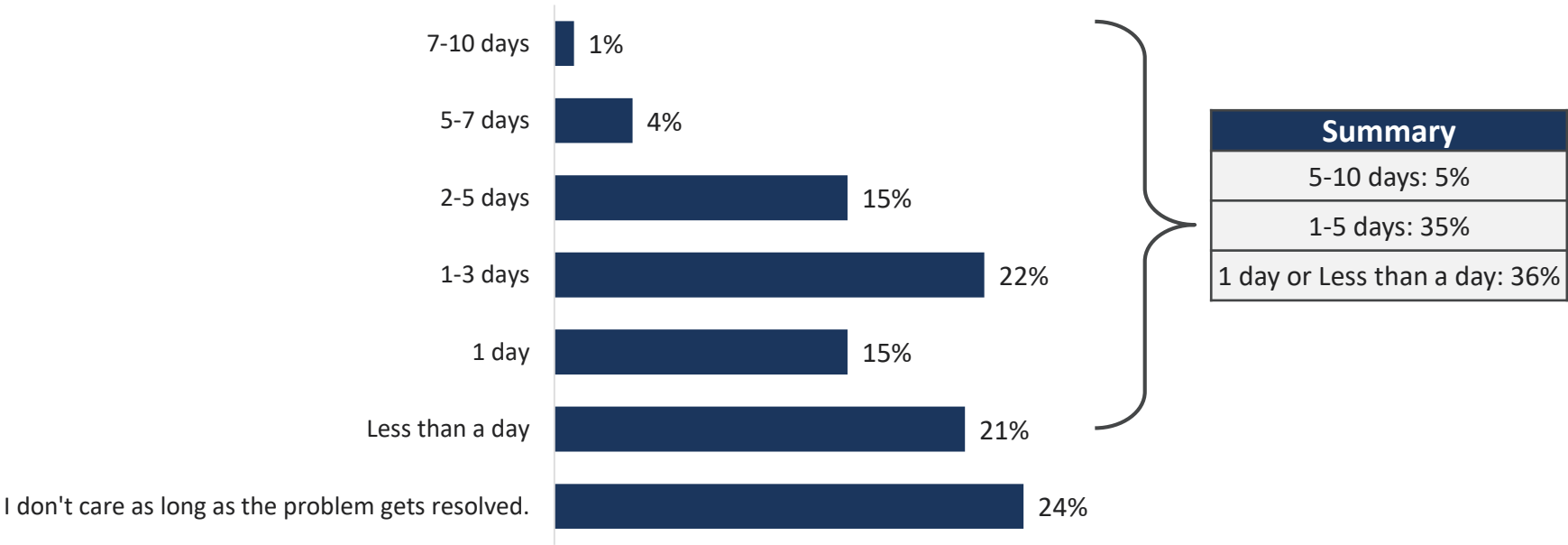
If I make a complaint about noise, I would be willing to let a bylaw officer enter my property to determine how loud the noise is



%Agree (Top 2 Box)	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
Sound level limits (decibels) should be used to measure how loud an event or object is.	77%	79%	75%	69%	75%	78%	71%	85%	82%	69%	81%	80%	74%
If I make a complaint about noise, I would be willing to let a bylaw officer enter my property to determine how loud the noise is.	73%	71%	74%	62%	67%	71%	69%	83%	82%	71%	79%	70%	71%

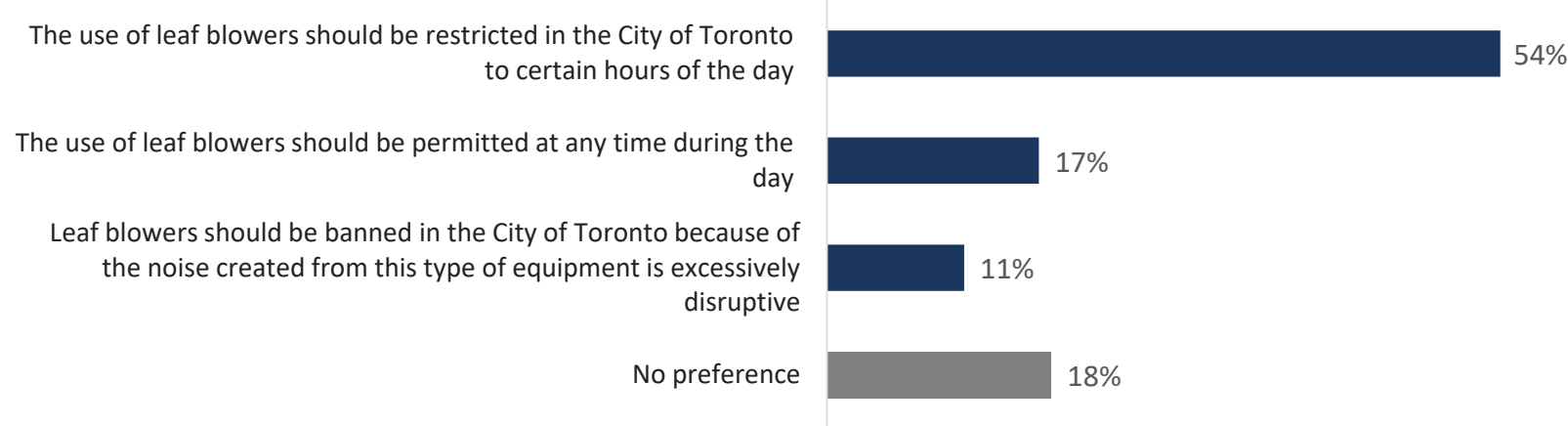
Bylaw Officer Noise Complaint Response Time

- While noise bylaw officers try to respond to complaints within 2-5 days, some Torontonians feel that a more appropriate response time would be 1 day (15%), or less than a day (21%). Other residents are less concerned about the response time, as long as the problem is resolved (24%).



Leaf Blower Restrictions

- Seven in ten (71%) believe that leaf blowers should be permitted in the City of Toronto; however, most (54%) agree that there should be restrictions as to when this equipment can be used. Only one in ten (11%) residents say that they should be banned in the City of Toronto altogether.



Leaf Blower Restrictions

- Torontonians over the age of 45 are more likely to believe that leaf blowers should be banned in the City of Toronto altogether because of the noise they emit. Younger respondents are slightly more likely to have no preference on the matter.

	Total	GENDER		AGE						REGION			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Etobicoke & York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Base: All respondents	1001	474	527	109	207	174	182	153	176	174	243	360	224
The use of leaf blowers should be restricted in the City of Toronto to certain hours of the day	54%	53%	56%	53%	53%	54%	54%	55%	57%	54%	53%	57%	51%
The use of leaf blowers should be permitted at any time during the day	17%	19%	15%	21%	21% H	16%	17%	17%	13%	17%	19%	14%	21%
Leaf blowers should be banned in the City of Toronto because of the noise created from this type of equipment is excessively disruptive	11%	9%	12%	3%	8%	9%	11%	14%	17%	10%	8%	15%	6%
No preference	18%	19%	17%	22%	18%	22%	19%	14%	13%	19%	20%	13%	22%

Q25. Which of the following is closest to your point of view?

Base: All Respondents (n=1001)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics

Gender

Male	47%
Female	53%

Age

18-34	32%
35-54	34%
55+	34%

Rent or Own

Rent	35%
Own	65%

Residence Type

Single family detached	37%
Single family semi-detached	9%
Townhome or rowhouse	8%
Apartment	24%
Condominium	22%
Other	1%

Income

<\$40K	18%
\$40K-\$60K	18%
\$60K-<\$100K	26%
\$100K+	26%
Prefer not to answer	13%

Region

Etobicoke & York	18%
North York	24%
Toronto & East York	35%
Scarborough	23%

Years Living in Toronto

< 1 Year	4%
1 to just under 5 years	11%
5 to just under 10 years	10%
10 to just under 20 years	13%
20 years or more	63%

Demographics

Have Children

Yes	24%
No	76%

Household Composition

1	27%
2	35%
3	19%
4	13%
5	4%
6	1%

Language

English	90%
Chinese - Contonese	5%
French	4%
Chinese - Mandarin	3%
Tagalog	3%
Spanish	2%
Chinese - other	1%
Portuguese	1%
Tamil	1%
Russian	1%
Hindo	1%
Greek	1%
Italian	1%
Urdu	1%
Other	3%

Education

Primary or less	1%
Some high school	2%
Graduated high school	10%
Some college/CEGEP/Trade school	8%
Graduated college/CEGEP/Trade school	16%
Some university, did not finish	9%
University undergraduate degree	35%
University graduate degree	19%

Born in Canada

Yes	67%
No	33%



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