

TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

One in four Quebecers admit to littering, poll shows

But help is on its way: 4,500 Quebecers expected to register for the TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup in September

MONTREAL, August 20 2009 - One out of every four Quebecers admit to littering compared to one out of every three Canadians according to a new poll sponsored by the TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup (TD GCSC). A national conservation initiative, the TD GCSC was started by the Vancouver Aquarium in 1994 and is expected to draw some 75,000 registrants, from September 19-27 to clean up over 1,500 shoreline sites across Canada.

Interestingly, the poll indicates that while 41 per cent of Quebecers claim they take action when they see someone littering – from telling the litterbug to pick it up to quietly doing it themselves – no less than 19 per cent of these do-gooders admit to littering themselves.

“It’s encouraging to see that a fair number of Quebecers are willing to take action against litter, but many of us still need to clean up our act,” said Annick Laberge, Senior Manager, Corporate and Public Affairs, TDBFG, Quebec. “By recruiting thousands of Quebecers to register each year, the cleanup has become a catalyst for increasing awareness and appreciation of our beautiful natural shorelines.”

Who Are You Calling a Litterbug?

- Quebecers admit to littering as much as once a month (six per cent) and four per cent say they litter every day.
- It’s a tie! Women and men are equally sensitive when it comes to litter, 73 per cent of women and 74 per cent of men say they never drop their trash.
- Nationally, young adults (18-24 year olds) litter most frequently, with 17 per cent admitting that they do it at least once a week – almost twice as often as 25-34 year olds (eight per cent) and 35-44 year olds (seven per cent).
- Canadians over 65 are the most litter-conscientious, with 86 per cent saying they “never” litter.

The Hit List

Not all junk is created equal. When asked what type of shoreline litter causes their blood to boil, 28 per cent of Quebecers polled pointed the finger at plastic bags and bottles. Used needles (12 per cent) came in a close second followed by cigarette butts (seven per cent).

“Ironically, the number one item found along Quebec shorelines was the cigarette butt, 13,348 of them to be exact,” said Jill Dwyer, Program Manager, TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. “I think people often don’t perceive cigarette butts as litter, yet it is one of the most harmful litter items, affecting both animals -- through ingestion-- and the environment through leaching harmful chemicals into our precious water sources.”

Taking Out the Trash

- Putting litterbugs in their place isn’t easy:

TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

- One in six (16 per cent) brave Quebeckers claim they speak up when they see a stranger littering, with an additional 16 per cent who do the same if the litterbug doesn't appear threatening.
- One in four (25 per cent) quietly pick up after the litterbugs however, while more than half of Quebeckers will take some form of action, one third (38 per cent) said they "do nothing" when they see someone litter.

Get involved

The TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup is one of the largest cleanups in the world. It is a national Vancouver Aquarium conservation initiative encouraging Canadians to have a positive impact on their local environment by removing harmful litter from their local shorelines, including ponds, streams, rivers, lakes and oceans. The 2009 TD GCSC begins on International Coastal Cleanup Day, September 19, and runs to September 27, 2009. To volunteer as a site coordinator, register your own cleanup team or join an existing one, please visit www.tdgcsc.ca.

TD Bank Financial Group has been a proud sponsor of the TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, a Vancouver Aquarium conservation program, through its TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for more than 13 years. The TD GCSC began in 1994 as a small beach cleanup with a handful of employees from the Vancouver Aquarium who wanted to participate in the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup. In 2008, a record-breaking 63,491 Canadians registered for 1,531 sites and removed 135,467 kilograms of garbage from a collective distance of 2,152 kilometres.

Note to editors: For more information on TD GCSC related events in Quebec please contact: Fiona Hirst, TD Bank Financial Group at 514 385 2222 ext. 2474 or fiona.hirst@td.com

Media dive events will take place across Canada in September to help locate some of the more unusual and large trash items found in our waterways. Divers will be going into the water in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton and St. Johns. For more information contact Aurora Bonin, TD Bank Financial Group at 604-654-8832 or at aurora.bonin@td.com.

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About the Survey

The survey was conducted by Harris / Decima on behalf of TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup from July 16 to July 21, 2009. The telephone survey is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,007 Canadians ages 18+ *including representative a sub-sample of 250 residents of Quebec*. The margin of error for the national sample is +/- 3.1%. *The margin of error for the Quebec sub-sample is +/-6.2 %*,

For more information, contact:

Fiona Hirst
TD Bank Financial Group
Tel: 514 385 2222 ext. 2474
fiona.hirst@td.com

Mathieu Beaudoin
Morin Relations Publiques
Tel : 514 289 8688 ext. 225
mathieu@morinrp.com

