

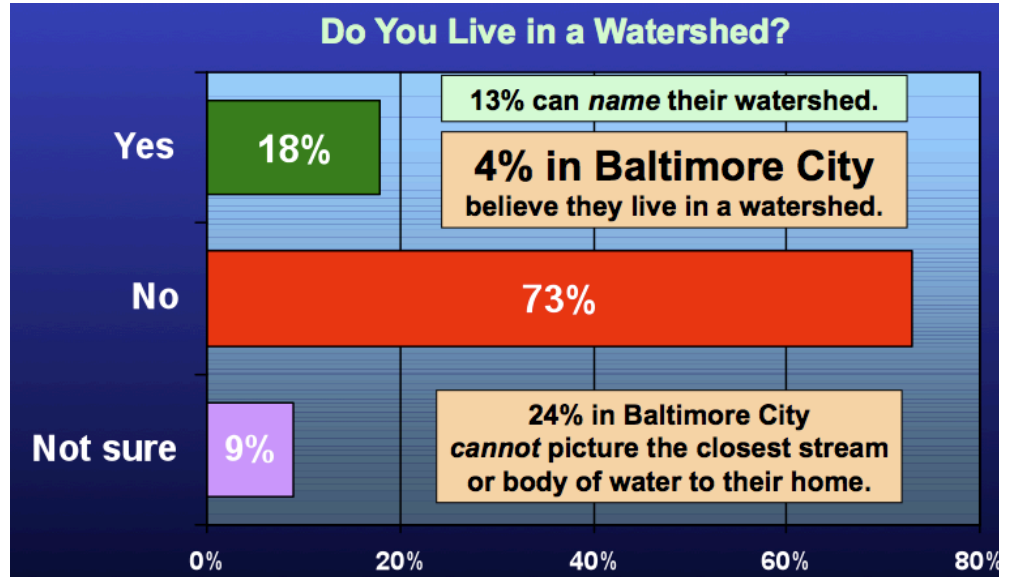
Public Perceptions

Recent independently conducted consumer surveys in the Baltimore/Maryland region found that while the public is aware of polluted water, most citizens do not know how it happened or what to do about it. Most blame industry and overdevelopment, but few understand the flushing effect that a large storm event has on the landscape. There is very little awareness of the problem of trash, sediment, nutrients, and other contaminants washing off lawns, parking lots, rooftops, and driveways into neighborhood storm drains, which in turn discharge into streams and the Harbor.

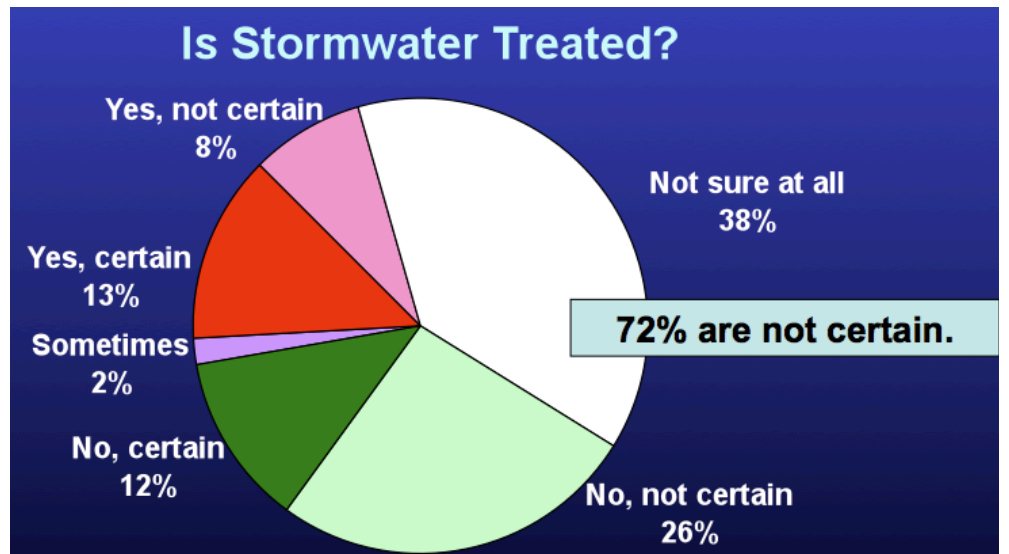
In a 2008 statewide survey 73% of residents answered “no” when asked, “do you live in a watershed?” Even though everyone lives in a watershed, very few people could define the term, let alone name the watershed in which they live.

Over two-thirds of people either wrongly believe that stormwater is sent to a treatment plant or are unsure of what happens to it. Similarly, three-quarters of Baltimore residents surveyed were unsure whether trash is filtered out of the storm drain system before it reaches the Harbor – it is not.

Despite this lack of information, 9 out of 10 people believe that the problem can be fixed and a large majority say that individuals should be a meaningful part of the solution. The public is aware that the Harbor is not safe for swimming or fishing. Over 70% of respondents indicated their support for creating a swimmable and fishable Harbor.



Survey Question: Do you live in a watershed? © OpinionWorks



Survey Question: Is Baltimore City's stormwater treated? © OpinionWorks