



Social Research Laboratory, PO Box 15301, Flagstaff, AZ 86011 (520) 523-1515

---

Thursday, October 21, 1999

For Immediate Release

For More Information:  
Fred Solop, Director  
NAU, Social Research Laboratory  
(520) 523-3135

**Y2K AWARENESS INCREASES;  
FEAR SUBSIDES AS PREPARATION CONTINUES;  
ONE-THIRD NOT SURE THEIR HOME COMPUTER IS COMPLIANT**

As the new century approaches, the deadline for repairing Y2K problems nears. A new survey indicates that Arizonans are more familiar with the Y2K issue today than they were last February. Arizonans are cautiously preparing for Y2K problems, but they are less likely today to think the Year 2000 computer bug will personally affect them. *Grand Canyon State Poll* results also indicate that almost two-thirds of Arizona households have computers and one-in-three people with computers in their home are not sure if their computers are Y2K compliant.

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* was conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University, from October 2 to October 10, 1999. A random sample of 854 adult residents of Arizona was asked questions about the Y2K issue. A sample of this size is associated with a margin of error of +/- 3.4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

## **Y2K AWARENESS INCREASES**

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* asked Arizonans questions about their awareness of the Year 2000 computer bug problem, also known as the Y2K bug. Ninety-two percent of Arizonans have heard either a great deal or some about the Y2K problem. Ten percent more people today say they have heard a great deal about the Y2K bug compared to a similar survey conducted last February. The Year 2000 computer bug problem involves a computer hardware and software problem whereby many systems will not correctly recognize the changeover in dates that will occur as the world enters the year 2000.

Equal numbers of Arizonans today, compared to last February, say they are preparing for potential Y2K problems. Almost two-thirds said they will obtain copies of bank account balances or other financial records (64%) and 43 percent said they will withdraw and set aside cash from the bank. Other Y2K preparations underway include working with their neighbors to plan for possible problems (40%), arming themselves (17%) and/or buying a generator (11%). More people today are planning on avoiding airplane travel on or around January 1, 2000 (58% compared to 46% last February) and more people are now planning on stockpiling food and water (40% versus 34% last February).

## **FEAR SUBSIDES**

Increased Y2K awareness and continuing preparation for potential problems have led to a 14 percent decrease in concern for the problem. Only one-third of Arizonans (32%) said they were either very concerned or somewhat concerned about the Y2K problem today compared to 46 percent who expressed concern in the previous survey.

When asked to anticipate whether Y2K will cause major problems, minor problems or no problems at all, equal numbers of residents thought problems would occur compared to the February results (81% versus 82%, respectively). Among those who think problems will occur, concern has shifted away from thinking that major problems will occur to more people thinking only minor problems will occur. Survey respondents were also asked to predict if they personally will experience Y2K-related problems. There was an 11 percent decline in the number of people thinking they will personally experience problems. Fifty-three percent today believe they will personally experience major or minor Y2K-related problems compared to 64 percent in the previous poll.

According to Fred Solop, director of the Grand Canyon State Poll, "People are more aware of the Y2K issue today and better prepared to handle potential problems. Hopefully people can avoid panicking as the end of the year approaches. We don't have to think of Y2K as a timebomb ready to explode."

### **PROBLEMS MAY OCCUR WITH PERSONAL COMPUTERS**

Two-thirds of Arizonans (63%) say they have at least one personal computer in their household. Among those with a computer, only 66 percent know their home computer is Y2K compliant. Fourteen percent say their home computer is definitely not Y2K compliant, 18 percent don't know if their computer is Y2K compliant and two percent say some of their home computers are compliant and some are not. Home computers that are not Y2K compliant may not work at all once the date changes to January 1, 2000.



Social Research Laboratory, Northern Arizona University

October 21, 1999

**GRAND CANYON STATE POLL  
BACKGROUND MEMO**

4-NAU015/Fall

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* was conducted between October 2 and October 10, 1999. A random sample of 854 adult residents of Arizona was asked questions regarding Y2K issues. Survey questions addressed to a sample of this size are subject to a sampling error of +/-3.4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Recently collected data are compared to data collected in February 1999 from a random sample of 435 adult residents of Arizona by the Social Research Laboratory. The February data are associated with a margin of error of +/- 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from the population. Sampling error does not take into account additional sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The data referred to in this release are presented below.

Do you think that computer mistakes due to the Year 2000 issue will cause major problems, minor problems, or no problems at all?

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>	<b>Feb. 1999</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Major Problems	9%	18%	-9%
Minor Problems	72%	64%	+8%
No Problems At All	16%	11%	+5%
Don't Know	<u>3%</u>	<u>7%</u>	-4%
Totals	100%	100%	

Do you think that computer mistakes due to the Year 2000 issue will cause major problems, minor problems, or no problems at all for *you personally*?

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>	<b>Feb. 1999</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Major Problems	4%	10%	-6%
Minor Problems	49%	54%	-5%
No Problems At All	45%	32%	+13%
Don't Know	<u>2%</u>	<u>5%</u>	-3%
Totals	100%	101%	

How much have you seen or heard about the Year 2000 computer bug problem, sometimes called the Millennium bug or the Y2K bug – a great deal, some, not much or nothing at all?

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>	<b>Feb. 1999</b>	<b>Difference</b>
A Great Deal	64%	54%	+10%
Some	28%	34%	-6%
Not Much	6%	8%	-2%
Nothing At All	<u>2%</u>	<u>4%</u>	-2%
Totals	100%	100%	

Overall, how concerned are you about the Y2K computer bug problem – are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>	<b>Feb. 1999</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Very Concerned	5%	9%	-4%
Somewhat Concerned	27%	37%	-10%
Not Too Concerned	42%	41%	+1%
Not At All Concerned	25%	12%	+13%
Don't Know	<u>1%</u>	<u>1%</u>	---
Total	100%	100%	

For each of the following, please say whether this is something you probably will or will not do in order to protect yourself against problems associated with the Y2K computer bug. Will you ...

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>	<b>Feb. 1999</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Obtain copies of bank account balances or other financial records?	64%	64%	---
Avoid travel on airplanes on or around January 1, 2000?	58%	46%	+12%
Withdraw and set aside cash from the bank?	43%	45%	-2%
Work with your neighbors to plan for possible problems?	40%	40%	---
Stockpile food and water?	40%	34%	+6%
Arm yourself?	17%	18%	-1%
Will you buy a generator?	11%	11%	---

Now, do you have a personal computer in your household?

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>
Yes	51%
Yes, more than one	12%
No	<u>37%</u>
Totals	100%

For those with a computer:

Is/Are your home computer/s Y2K compliant, or programmed to understand the Year 2000 date field correctly?

	<b>Oct. 1999</b>
Yes, programmed correctly	66%
Some are/some aren't	2%
No	14%
Don't know	<u>18%</u>
Totals	100%