



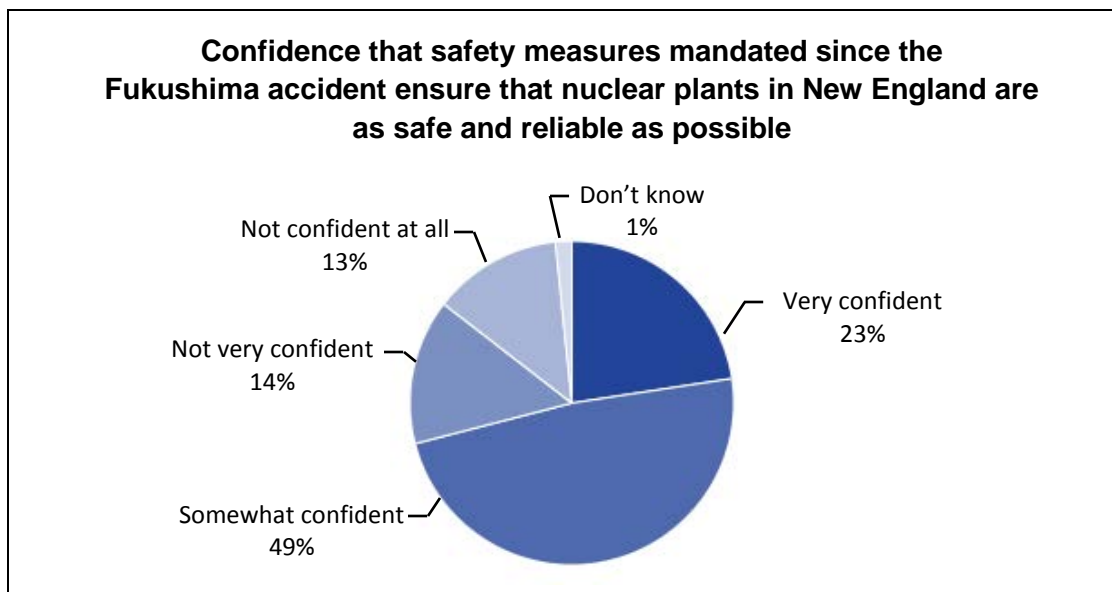
2012 Survey Issue Brief

Energy Infrastructure Preferences of New Englanders

An annual survey conducted by Opinion Dynamics for the New England Energy Alliance found that sixty-seven percent (67%) believe all domestic energy resources are needed to ensure U.S. energy independence. New Englanders continue to strongly favor LNG terminals and wind farms. Support for nuclear energy plants remains stable despite the Fukushima accident. There also appears to be increased support for above-ground transmission lines, while support for new coal plants remains marginal. The survey also found that a solid majority (56%) of New Englanders favor the use of smart meters to better control electricity use, save money and help the environment.

Stable support for nuclear energy plants

New England relies on nuclear energy plants to generate 28% of its electricity – the second largest source of supply. Almost three out of four New Englanders (72%) expressed some level of confidence that safety reviews of U.S. nuclear power plants conducted since the Fukushima nuclear accident ensure that nuclear plants operating in New England are safe and reliable.



In terms of nuclear plant relicensing, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) formally reviews all license renewal applications in a stringent process that can last many years. To date, the NRC has approved license renewal for dozens of plants including Millstone Units 2 and 3 in Connecticut and, most recently, the Pilgrim plant in Massachusetts. The NRC also approved the



license renewal of the Vermont Yankee plant in March 2011; however, the decision continues to be challenged by the state.

Supporters of nuclear plant license renewal say nuclear plants are safer and operating better than ever and don't contribute to global warming. Opponents say the technology in these facilities is outdated and that we need to be even more vigilant after what happened in Japan.

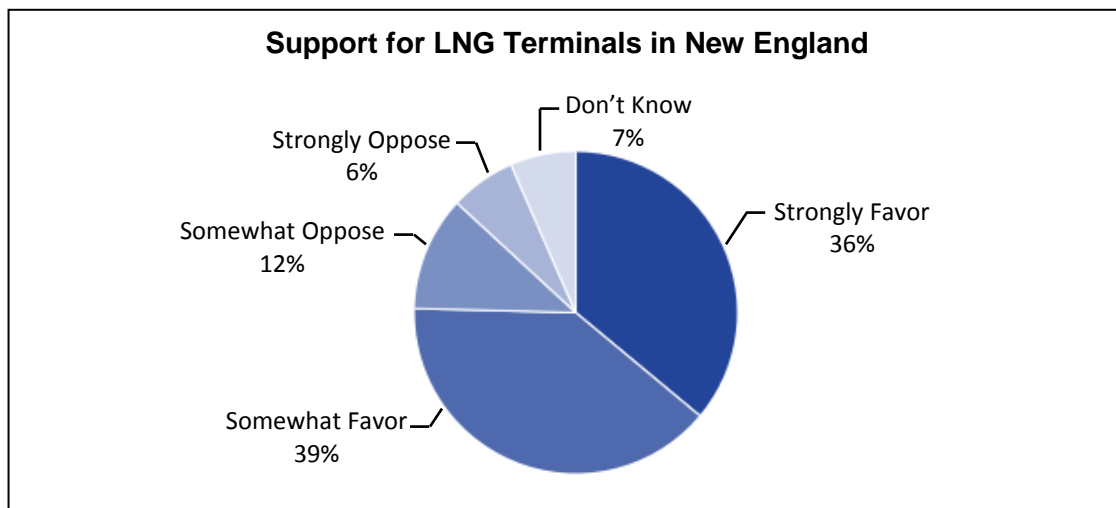
Seventy percent (70%) of New Englanders said they at least *somewhat favor* renewing the licenses of existing nuclear energy plants – with 35% *strongly in favor*. Support, however, fell to 59% with only 25% *strongly in favor* when a split sample was asked whether they support the relicensing of nuclear energy plants “like Vermont Yankee and Pilgrim”.

Solid support for LNG terminals

For decades, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) has been vital in maintaining a balance between the region's natural gas supply and demand. LNG is delivered by tanker to the Distrigas terminal in Everett. Offshore deepwater LNG ports in New England include the Northeast Gateway facility located off Cape Ann, Massachusetts and the Neptune LNP port, located approximately 10 miles off the coast of Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Supporters of LNG terminals point to the fact that LNG currently supplies about 30% of the region's natural gas on a cold winter day, has a proven track record of safety all over the world, and that we need to expand supplies of natural gas. Opponents point to safety concerns like vulnerability to a terrorist threat.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of New Englanders surveyed are in favor of using LNG terminals in the region – with 36% strongly in favor.

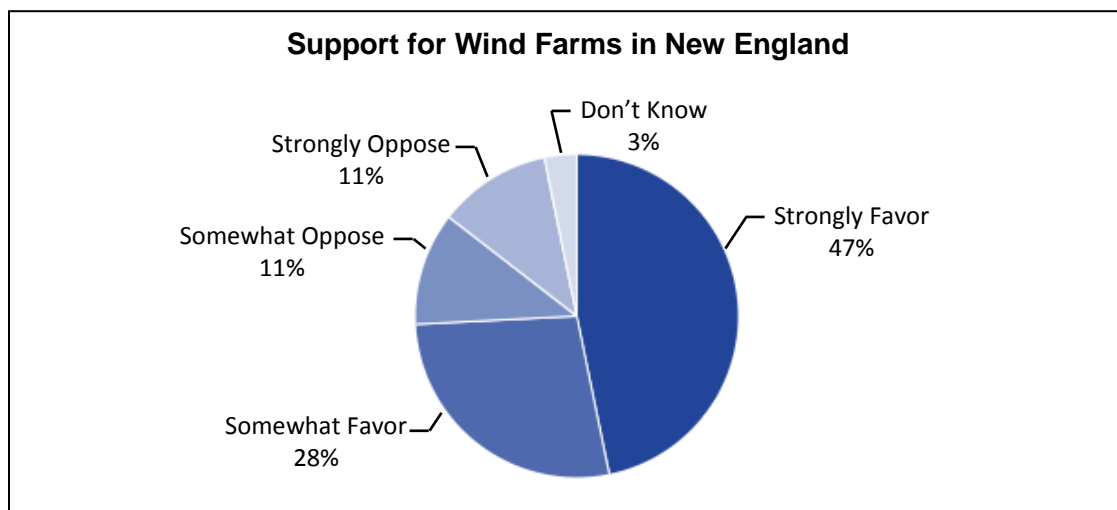




Strong support for wind farms

Wind generation currently comprises less than 1% of New England’s electricity supply. Technology advancements along with federal and state subsidies have enabled wind generating facilities to produce electricity that is cost competitive with other sources of generation. Wind facilities have no fuel costs, but they do have maintenance and capital development costs that must be recovered over periods of intermittent operation. Supporters of large wind farms say that they don’t emit greenhouse gases and are a high-tech, viable source of electricity. Opponents say wind farms are ugly, expensive, and have to be backed up by fossil fuels plants because they only operate about 30% of the time.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of survey respondents said they are in favor of wind farms, about the same as last year, but down from a high of 84% in 2008.



Marginal support for clean coal plants

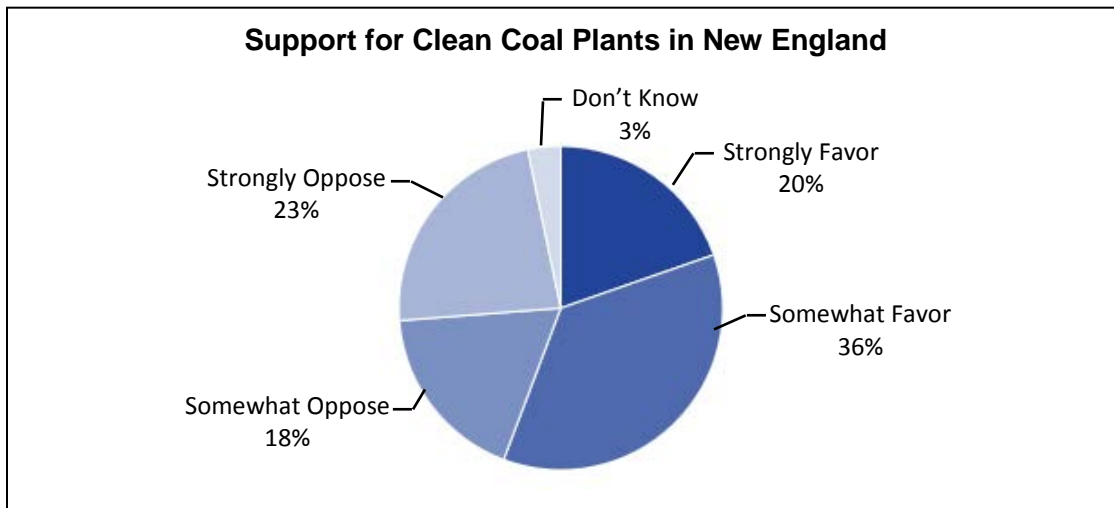
Coal is used to generate about 6% of New England’s electricity. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in the region in emission control equipment, to significantly reduce the by-products of coal combustion including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and particulate emissions. Notwithstanding these investments, coal burning, produces significant carbon dioxide emissions, a leading global warming gas.

Clean coal is chemically washed of impurities or gasified, burned and then treated with steam to remove sulfur dioxide and re-burned so as to make the carbon dioxide in the flue gas recoverable.



Clean coal supporters say this technology reduces greenhouse gas emissions compared to the old coal technology and coal is a low-cost domestic source of fuel. Opponents say cleaner coal plants still produce a lot of greenhouse gases, and that mining coal damages the environment.

Fifty-six percent (56%) of survey respondents said they favor clean coal plants – with 20% strongly in favor. However, support dropped substantially to 40% when a split sample was asked whether they support “coal plants” instead of “clean coal plants”.

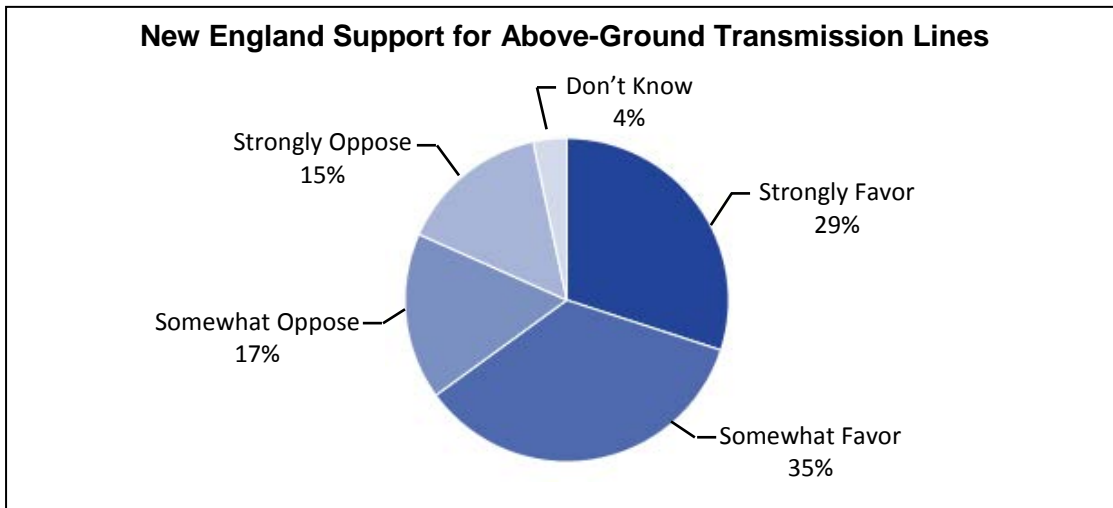


Majority support above-ground transmission lines

The region’s transmission system serves two vital roles: to ensure reliable delivery of electricity from power plants to where it is needed, and to facilitate the trading and delivery of the commodity in the region’s wholesale market. Without a reliable and efficient transmission system to move electricity as a tradable commodity, the ability to meet electricity demand reliability and economically is diminished. Over the past few years, significant progress has been made to expand and upgrade the region’s transmission system with more expansion planned.

Supporters say new lines could bring in affordable electricity generated by hydro and wind facilities in Canada. Opponents say transmission lines are ugly and can pose health risks.

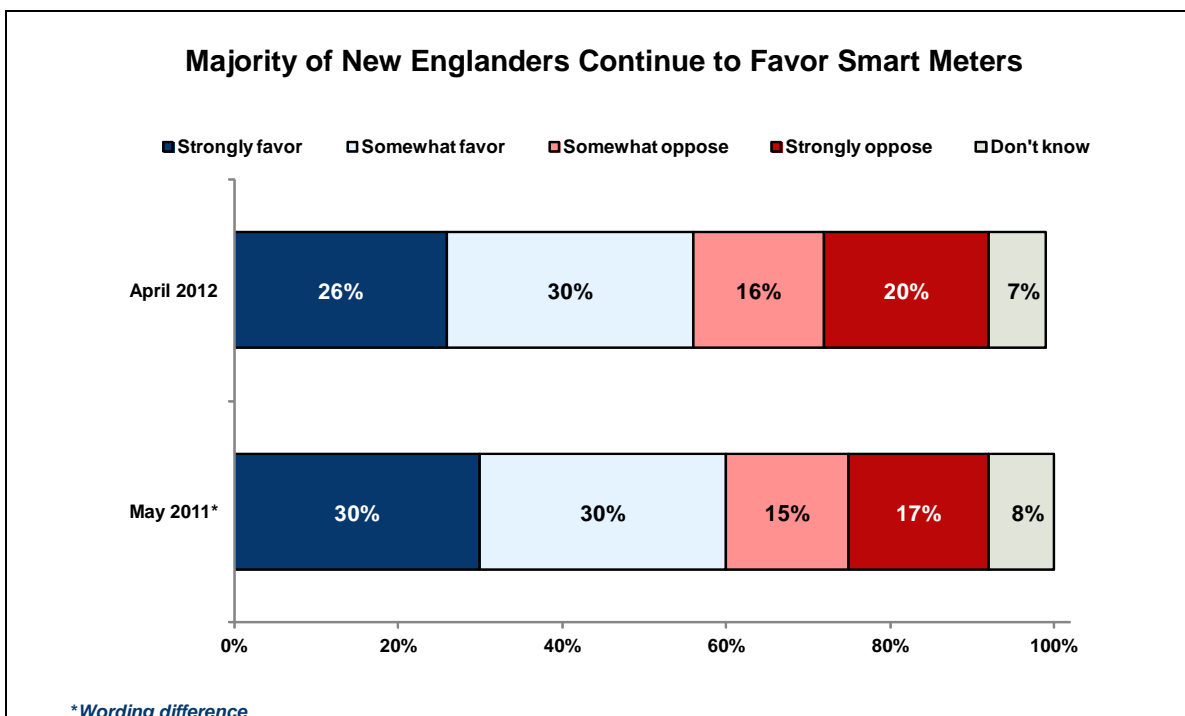
Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents said they at least *somewhat favor* transmission lines in the region – up from 47% in 2011 (this increase may be due to a wording change that eliminated mention of “rights of way” issues associated with transmission lines).



Majority favor the use of smart meters to control electricity use, save money and help environment

Smart meters are digital meters installed in homes that wirelessly transmit electricity usage data to utilities. Opponents say smart meters are an invasion of privacy and emit electromagnetic frequencies that can be harmful to one's health. Supporters say smart meters allow consumers to control their electricity usage, save money and help the environment.

Twenty-six percent (26%) strongly favor the use of smart meters, while 30% somewhat favor them, while 36% oppose them. These findings remain relatively unchanged from last year.





The annual telephone survey was performed by Opinion Dynamics Corp for the New England Energy Alliance in April 2012 and included 600 registered voters proportionately distributed throughout New England. The margin of error is +/-4%. The complete results on a variety of energy issues are available at www.newenglandenergyalliance.org.

The New England Energy Alliance is a coalition of energy companies and trade organizations that advocates for action to ensure the availability, reliability, and affordability of future energy supplies.