

Green Party would get 10% of Ontario vote: Poll

By **ANTONELLA ARTUSO**, QUEEN'S PARK BUREAU CHIEF

One in 10 decided Ontario voters are vowing to go green, reveals a new SES Research poll obtained by Sun Media.

SES Research President Nikita Nanos said Ontario's Green Party is reaping the benefit of heightened public concern over climate change and other environmental issues.

A provincewide survey of decided voters found Dalton McGuinty's Liberals with 41% of the popular support, John Tory's Conservatives at 33%, the NDP at 17% and the Green Party at 10%.

Nanos said the Green Party's double digit showing follows an upward trend that he's been tracking since last fall.

The strong second-place finish of federal Green Party Leader Elizabeth May in last year's London North byelection also points to a surge in interest, he said.

The Green Party has traditionally garnered support in the 3-5% range.

"What it looks like to me is these votes are more likely coming from women and from voters under age 30," he said. "I think if I were the NDP I'd be quite concerned about that because women are a very important demographic."

Ontario Green Party Leader Frank de Jong, who's running in the provincial Burlington byelection, said that people are telling him at the door that they're very concerned about the environment.

"I think people are thinking about their children and grandchildren and starting to worry generally that the planet will not be a friendly place for their grandchildren," he said.

De Jong said the people he spoke to while canvassing a wealthy Burlington neighbourhood were very aware of environmental issues.

"They knew what needed to be done but they said, 'I have to get to my job and public transit is not good enough,'" he said.

The traditional big three provincial parties -- Liberals, Tories and the NDP -- have added green planks to their election platforms, he said.

At the Green Party, the environment is at the heart of all policy positions, he said.

Nanos said the Green Party has the attention of voters' but it has to work to keep that momentum going into the October provincial election.

Federally, the Green Party has often served as a place for voters to park their vote between elections, he said.

"It might be an indication that voters are a bit grumpy..." Nanos said of the Ontario result.

SES Research surveyed 501 Ontarians Jan. 18 to 23, and its results are considered accurate plus or minus 4.4%, 19 times out of 20.

BREAKING DOWN THE BALLOT

DECIDED VOTERS:

- Liberal -- 41%
- Conservative -- 33%
- NDP -- 17%
- Green -- 10%

ALL VOTERS (including undecided):

- Men -- Liberal 35, Conservative 29, NDP 13, Green 6
- Women -- Liberal 33, Conservative 25, NDP 15, Green 11
- n Age 18-20 -- Liberal 29, Conservative 17, NDP 18, Green 16
- Age 30-39 -- Liberal 37, Conservative 30, NDP 14, Green 7
- Age 40-49 -- Liberal 33, Conservative 30, NDP 16, Green 9
- Age 50-59 -- Liberal 37, Conservative 29, NDP 9, Green 9
- Age 60-over -- Liberal 33, Tory 29, NDP 11, Green 3

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