

Executive Summary

2020 Don't mess with Texas[®] Tracking Quantitative Research Report

May 15, 2020



Methodology And Sampling



A statewide online survey was conducted among 730 Texas adults and teens, aged 16 years and older. The survey was fielded from April 16 to April 21, 2020. The study included metrics gathered in prior waves of research, as well as updates and additions to behavioral and attitudinal questions. Comparisons to the last wave of research (2017) are included on key metrics.

Survey qualifications included:

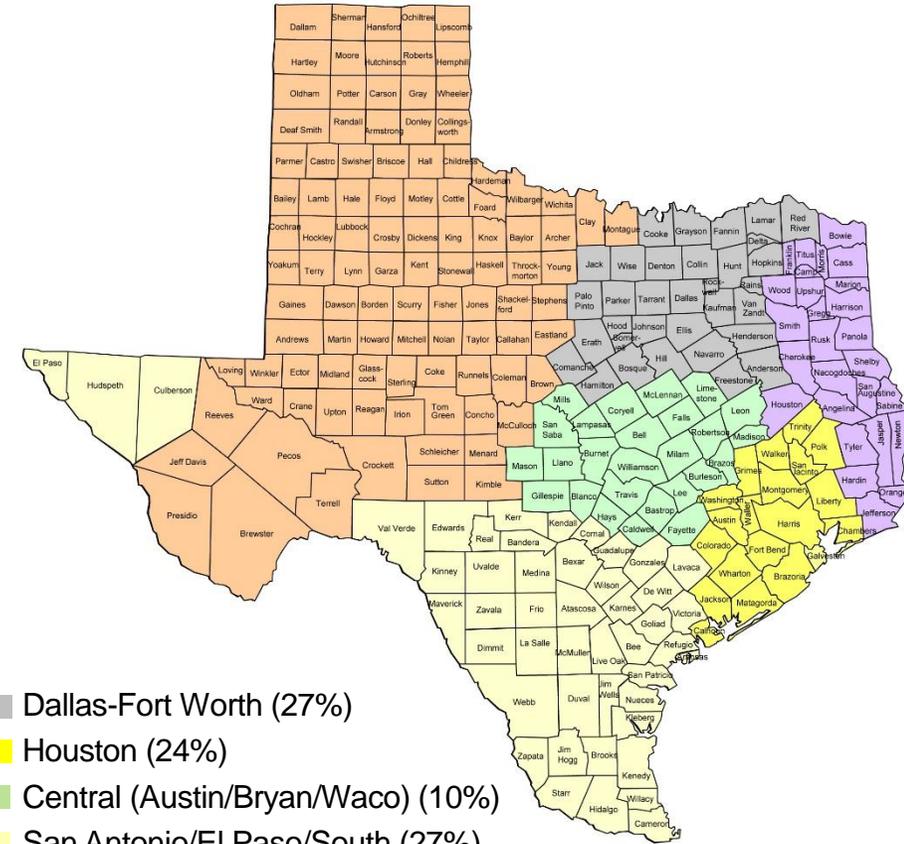
- Aged 16 or older
- Texas resident
- Not employed in a sensitive industry (the news media, a market research firm, an elected official, or actively involved with advertising and marketing)

Quotas/Weighting were applied to ensure the following:

- At least 100 Spanish-dominant speakers within the Hispanic group
- At least 100 within the 16 to 25 and 26 to 35 age groups
- Representativeness and comparability to the prior wave (2017) by Texas region and demographics

Notes: Some charts do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Statistically significant differences between years and subgroups are shown at the 90% confidence level, and indicated by ^ (higher), v (lower), or letters noting the lower subgroup.



Overall Program Awareness And Impact



- Despite almost topping out in 2017, overall support for Don't mess with Texas® improved this year.
 - 98% of Texans support the campaign, and the same number would like to see the program continue.
- Aided awareness of DMWT was similar to 2017, with 94% of Texans recognizing the slogan this year.
 - Unaided awareness was also high, with 52% of these respondents mentioning DMWT when asked to name slogans or programs to reduce littering in Texas.
 - 52% identified the slogan specifically as an anti-litter/cleanliness message. Still, the state's culture and people were mentioned as a theme 17% of the time.
 - The youngest age group (16- to 25-year-olds) mentioned seeing the slogan on T-shirts and online significantly more often than their older counterparts did.
- 74% of respondents have a “strongly positive” impression of DMWT—it was rated much higher than other programs (e.g., Keep Texas Beautiful). This positive impression increases by respondent age.
- 71% believe the program has had a “very positive” impact on reducing litter—a significant increase over 2017 (60%).

Message Importance And Impact



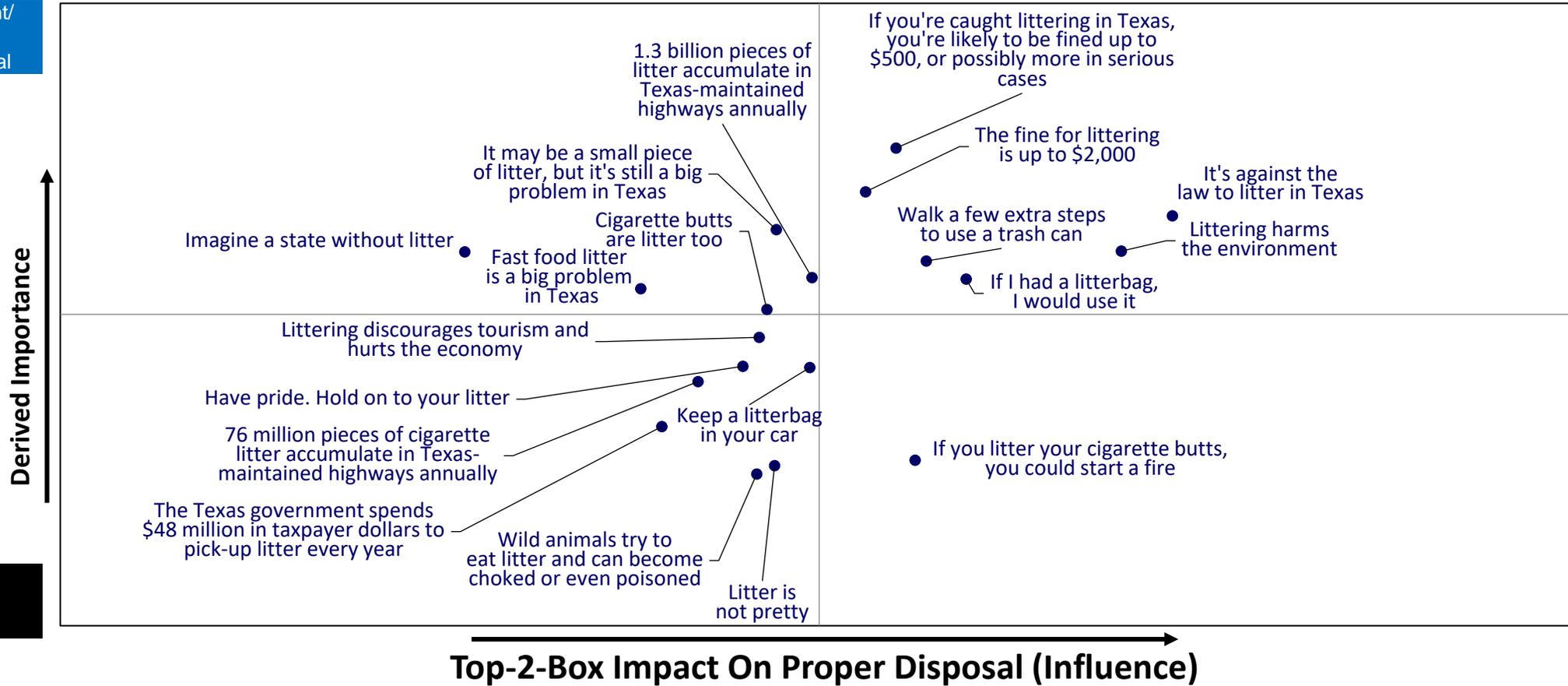
- On a modeled basis (using correlation analysis), the top 4 messages in reducing litter include the following, with the “\$500 likely fine” being the most impactful by a fair margin.
 - *If you're caught littering in Texas, you're likely to be fined up to \$500, or possibly more in serious cases*
 - *The fine for littering is up to \$2,000*
 - *It's against the law to litter in Texas*
 - *It may be a small piece of litter, but it's still a big problem in Texas*
- The ranking of these messages on importance differs quite a bit by age and ethnicity.
 - Among 16- to 25-year-olds, *If I had a litterbag I would use it* was the most impactful message by a very wide margin.
 - Among Hispanics, *Imagine a state without litter*, *Littering harms the environment*, and the threat of a *\$500 fine* were all ranked at the top of impactful messages.
- On a stated basis (based on survey answers alone), the oldest segment (aged 36+) rated the 19 messages significantly higher than their younger counterparts did on the impact on proper disposal. This indicates a positive relationship with age and proper disposal messaging, and ample opportunity to communicate with the younger segments (16- to 35-year-olds).
- 82% of respondents would be “very likely” to properly dispose of litter after seeing these messages—an uptick from 2017 (79%).

Most Important/Influential Messages



Important/
Less
Influential

Persuasive



Lower
Priority

Lower
Priority

Base: Total (n=730)
Source: Advanced Analytics

Litter Behaviors And Attitudes



- Despite the positive upticks in DMWT awareness and support, fewer Texans believe littering is “against the law in all cases” (77% vs. 81% in 2017), driven mainly by the youngest segment. This indicates a clear opportunity to inform young Texans on the seriousness of littering when it comes to breaking the law.
- *Plastic bags/Other plastic* and *beer cans/bottles* remain in the top tier of litter items considered very serious. There was little change from 2017 in people’s views about the seriousness of specific litter items.
- Agreement with statements about littering was also similar to 2017, with a couple of exceptions. *Non-littered areas are good for tourism and the economy* and *I am less likely to return to a vacation destination that has too much litter* both saw a decline on “strongly agree” ratings.
- As with other attitudes toward littering, the older segment (aged 36+) are more likely to agree with the litter statements, including *I take pride in not littering*, *It is important to instill anti-littering values in children*, and *Littering is socially unacceptable behavior*, among others.
- The incidence of past-month littering was down by a notable margin, compared to 2017 (34% vs. 50% in 2017). This is most likely due to a significant downturn in driving frequency brought on by COVID-19 restrictions and advisories. Daily driving fell from 72% in 2017 to 57% this wave.