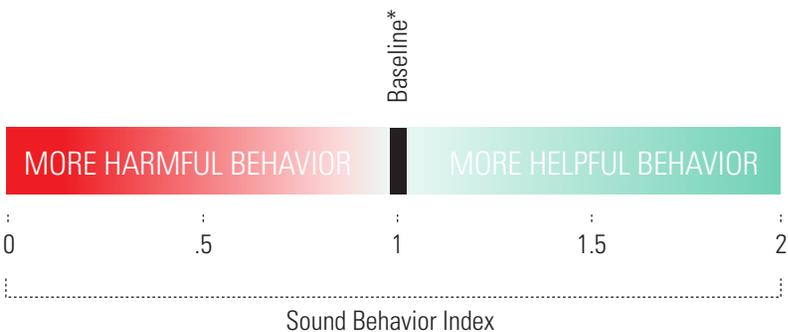


Sound Behavior

Sound Behavior Index

Progress Toward the 2020 Target

There is no numeric target for the Sound Behavior Index. The index is new in 2012 and the data are insufficient at this time to forecast a specific target. A positive trend, i.e., an increasing index value over time, is desirable.



*The Sound Behavior Index is currently in its first iteration, which means there is just one data point. This first data point serves as the baseline value for the 12-county region and is set at 1.0. Future values will be measured against the baseline. Index values above 1.0 will indicate a positive shift in residents' behavior and practices helpful to Puget Sound. Index values falling below 1.0 will indicate that behavior and practices are becoming more harmful to Puget Sound.



What is the Sound Behavior Index?

Many of our common day-to-day behaviors and practices seem benign on their own, but, when multiplied by 4.5 million residents, their cumulative effects can harm Puget Sound. Reversing this trend — fostering beneficial behaviors and reducing detrimental ones — is a crucial step in Puget Sound's recovery.

The Sound Behavior Index tracks 28 specific practices that can affect water quality and aquatic habitat. The index is based on a survey conducted every two years among a statistical sample of Puget Sound residents. It asks them about specific, measurable, repetitive behaviors on their own properties.

The index does not attempt to include all environmental behaviors, but focuses on those proven to affect aquatic health: toxins, bacterial contamination, vegetation management, animal waste management, and septic system function.

The index distills the region's environmental performance into a single score, which can be tracked across time. By measuring long-term shifts in behaviors and practices across the Puget Sound region, the index gives policy makers a tool to set priorities for regional and local programs.

Table 3.5. Puget Sound Behavior Index Survey Results

HELPFUL BEHAVIORS		ALWAYS	USUALLY	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
Residents with yards	Plant or keep native plants on property	40%	16%	21%	9%	14%
	Pull weeds by hand or with tool	43%	24%	20%	7%	6%
Residents with yards along waterways	Plant or keep native vegetation on the banks of waterways on property	29%	6%	8%	4%	53%
Residents with motor vehicles	Check vehicle for fluid leaks or have it checked	46%	24%	16%	7%	3%
	Dispose of recreational vehicle wastewater at an approved facility	35%	5%	3%	4%	52%
All residents	Use non-toxic or natural household cleaners	25%	25%	29%	11%	10%
Residents with dogs	Pick up dog's waste from yard	65%	12%	8%	5%	11%
	Place dog's waste in trash	40%	8%	11%	6%	36%
Residents with on-site septic systems	Spread out laundry loads	35%	16%	17%	9%	21%
	Get septic tank pumped when recommended	46%	17%	13%	9%	15%
	Get septic system annually inspected	27%	8%	16%	16%	29%
Residents with livestock	Cover and compost manure	40%	7%	8%	10%	36%
	Rotate pastures to let grass recover	42%	11%	17%	7%	24%
Residents with boats	Use pumpout stations for boat wastewater	20%	2%	7%	6%	65%
	Check for boat engine fluid leaks	56%	17%	9%	6%	10%

HARMFUL BEHAVIORS		ALWAYS	USUALLY	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
Residents with yards	Use weed and feed products on lawn	5%	6%	22%	21%	45%
	Use chemical products to control or kill moss, weeds, or other plants in yard	5%	5%	24%	24%	41%
	Use chemical products to control or kill insects in yard	4%	3%	15%	25%	53%
	Use fertilizers on lawn or garden	8%	10%	31%	21%	30%
Residents with motor vehicles	Wash vehicles in the driveway, street, or parking lot	10%	7%	22%	20%	40%
All residents	Use chemical drain uncloggers	1%	2%	14%	36%	48%
	Flush or pour chemicals such as paint thinners down the drain	0%	0%	0%	3%	96%
	Flush prescription drugs down the toilet or drain	1%	0%	2%	3%	94%
	Use moss killer on roof	3%	3%	13%	14%	68%
	Use pressure washer with deck cleaners or soap	2%	2%	10%	18%	68%
Residents with on-site septic systems	Use garbage disposal	14%	9%	9%	9%	58%
	Use septic tank additives	7%	3%	12%	12%	67%
	Pour used cooking oil down the sink	0%	0%	5%	8%	87%

Source: Puget Sound Partnership

In time, as we gather more data through successive iterations of the surveys, we will look for trends. Increases in the index value, compared to previous iterations, will indicate increased adoption of environmentally beneficial practices across the region. Decreasing values will indicate declining adoption of these practices. A positive trend, i.e., an increasing index value over time, is desirable.

The index is currently in its first iteration, which means there is just one data point (not enough to detect any trends). The index value for the 12-county region is set at 1.0, which is a typical starting point for a new index. This serves as a baseline against which future values will be measured.

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For more in-depth information, please see:

www.psp.wa.gov/vitalsigns/sound_behavior_index.php

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