







Covington Residential Survey on Mobile Businesses

Prepared for Goldstreet Designs and City of Covington





Cunningham Environmental Consulting Bainbridge Island, WA

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Table of Contents

2. Survey Findings Residents Hiring Practices	
How Residents Find Contractors to Hire	
Factors that Influenced Hiring Decisions	
Marked Vehicles	
Considerations for Future Hiring of Contractors	
Factors that Might Influence Future Hiring Decisions	
Residential Awareness about Contractor Practices that Affect Stormwater	

Appendix

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1. Project Overview

Purpose of the Survey

This report describes the results of an online survey of Covington residents who have either hired a home maintenance contractor in the past two years, or plan to hire one in the next two years. The home maintenance contractors were specifically defined as painters, carpet cleaners, and pressure washing contractors because of common practices they use that can have a negative impact on stormwater and water quality.

The main purpose of this survey was to:

- Gauge residential awareness about the possible effects of washwater from these activities flowing into storm drains.
- Find out what factors play a role in deciding to hire these types of contractors.
- Find out what factors are important in making future decisions about hiring these types of contractors.

The information from the survey was intended to inform an outreach program for residents to educate them about possible practices used by mobile businesses so that residents might take a proactive role in discussing washwater practices with contractors.

Survey Methodology

Method:

Online survey. Notification of the survey was provided on the home page of the City of Covington website and the city's official Facebook page. Residents on the Parks Department email list were emailed a notification about the survey. The survey took on average 3 minutes to complete.

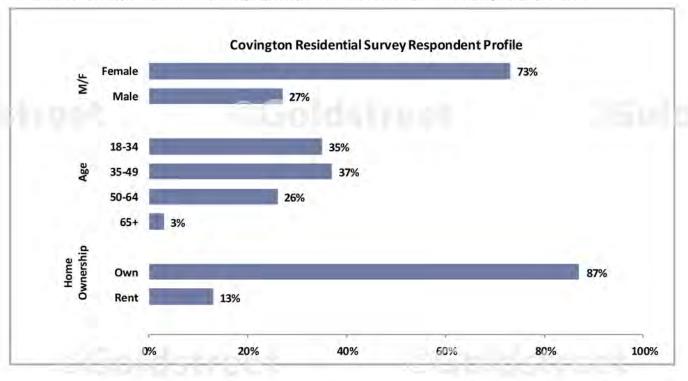


March 8 – June 20, 2016

Incentive:	By providing a contact email at the end of the survey, respondents had						
	one in eight chances to win a \$25 Visa gift card.						
Results:	78 complete surveys.						
Margin of Error:	±11.0% based on a 2015 estimate of 5,817 Covington households.						



Respondent Profile



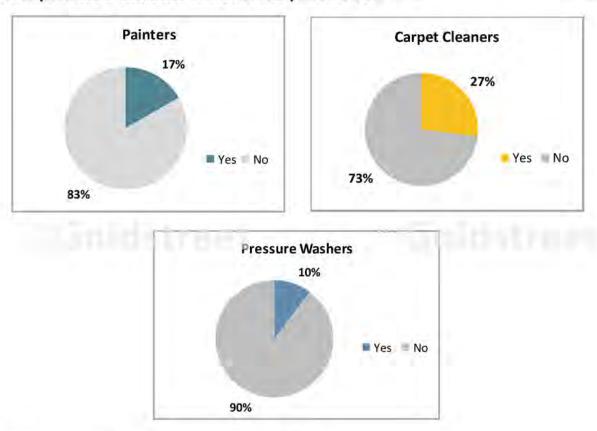
The bar chart presents the demographic characteristics of the 78 survey respondents.

- Nearly 3 in 4 (73%) were women.
- About 1 in 3 (35%) were under the age of 35. About 3 in 4 (72%) were under the age of 50.
- The vast majority (87%) were homeowners.

2. Survey Findings

Residents Hiring Practices

About 2 in 5 of survey respondents (42%) had hired a mobile contractor in the past two years. Three respondents had hired all three types of contractors. Respondents had hired carpet cleaners more than painters or pressure washers.



Have you hired a contractor in the last two years? n=78

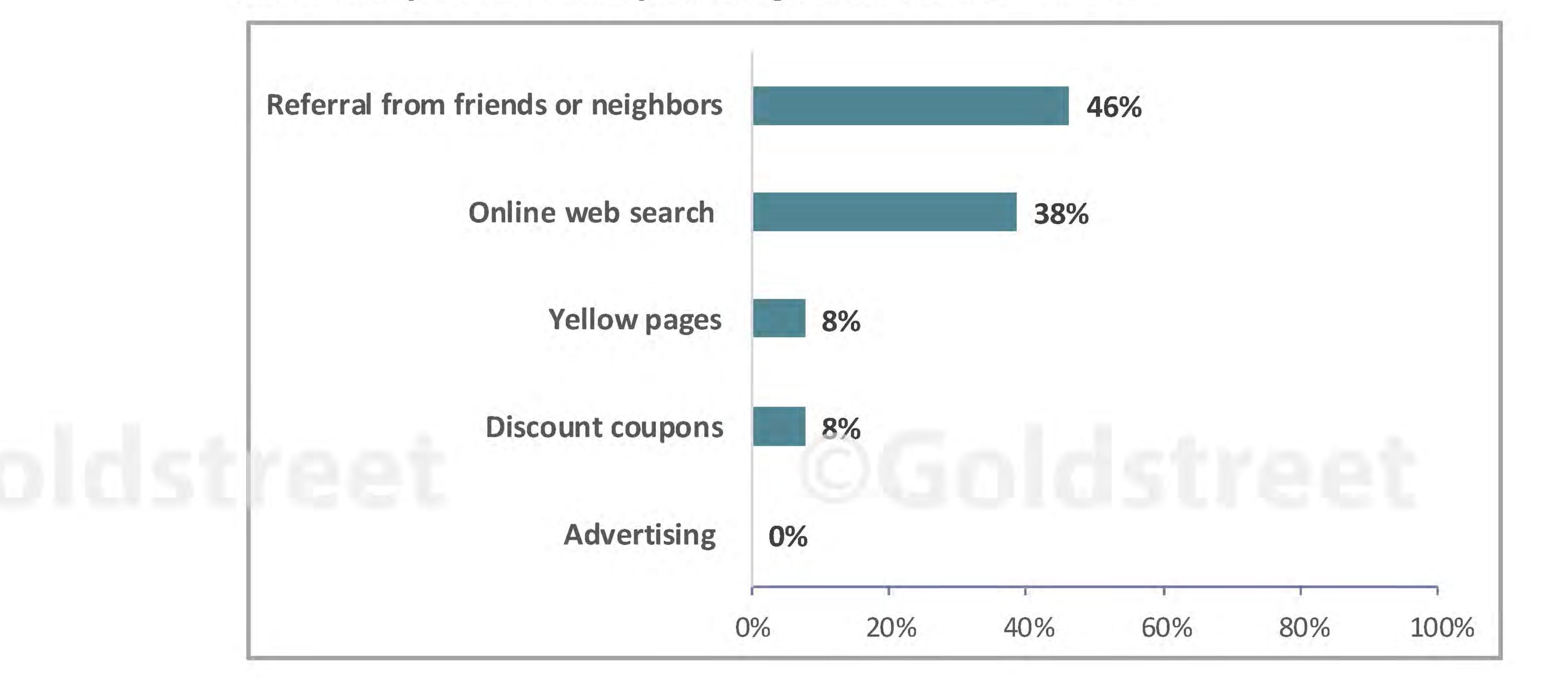
How Residents Find Contractors to Hire

Although the number of survey respondents was low, there was a trend showing that referrals from friends or neighbors, and online searches were the two primary ways used to hire a contractor. Nearly one-half of respondents hired painters and carpet cleaners based on referrals. When referrals and online searches were combined, they accounted for 84% of respondents hiring painters, 77% hiring carpet cleaners, and 51% hiring pressure washing contractors. Advertising and yellow pages appeared to have little effect on hiring decisions. Discount coupons were used by about 1 in 4 (24%) to hire carpet cleaners.



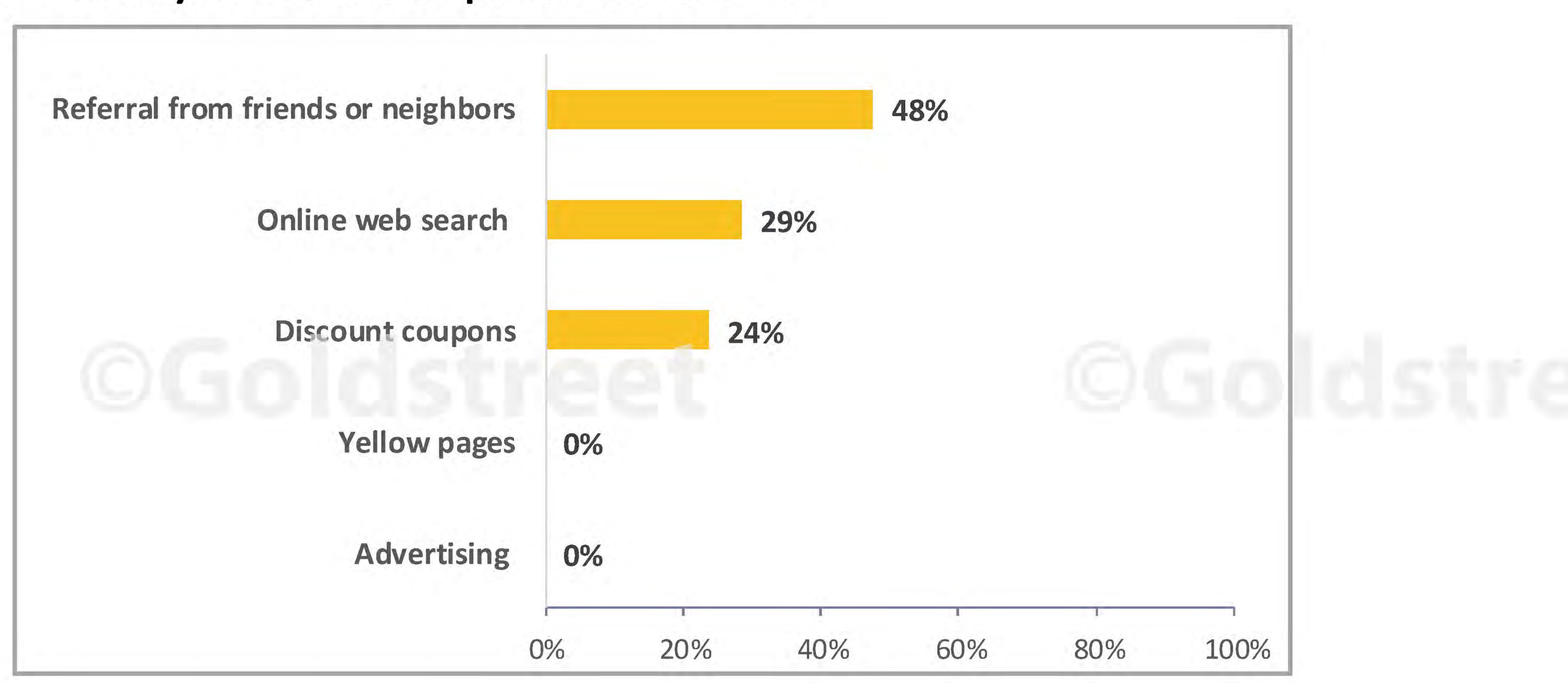


How did you find the painting contractor? n=13

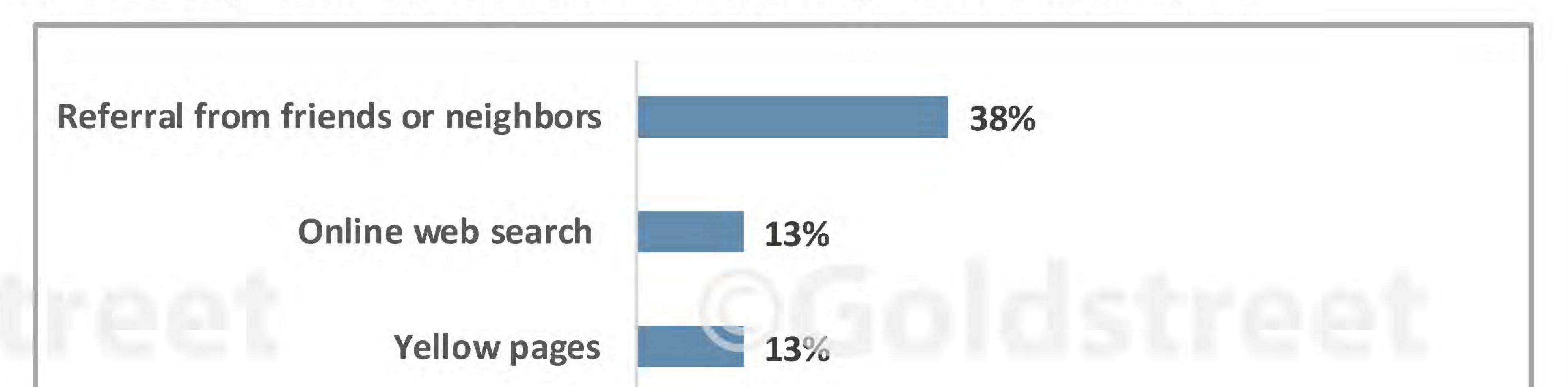


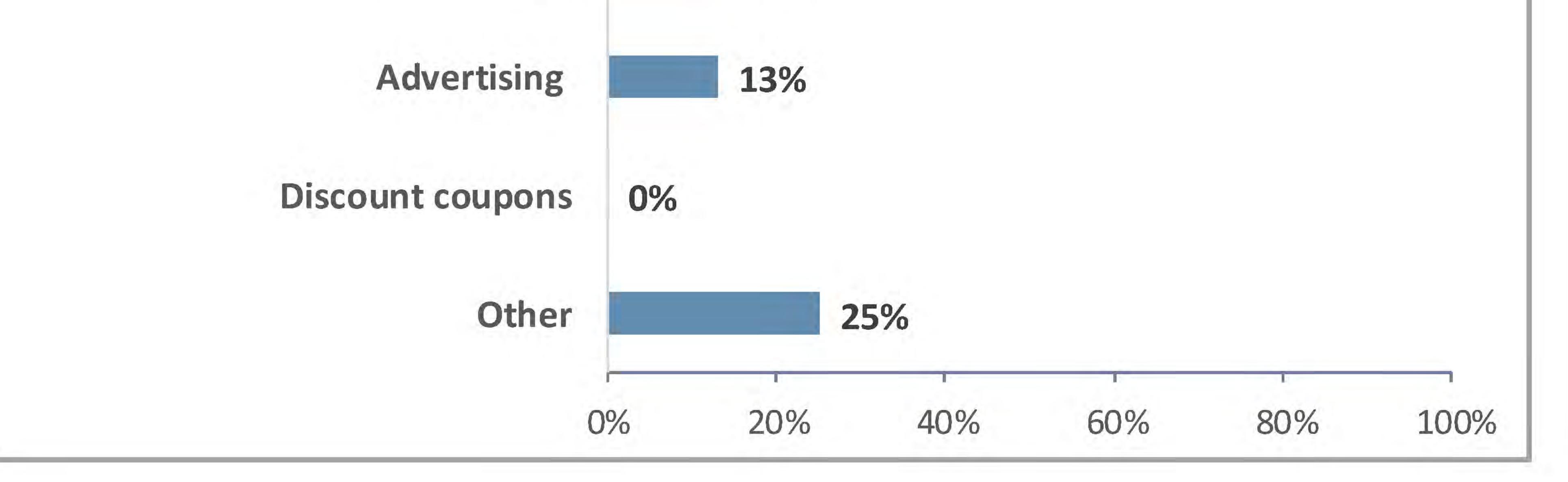


How did you find the carpet cleaner? n=21



How did you find the pressure washing contractor? n=8

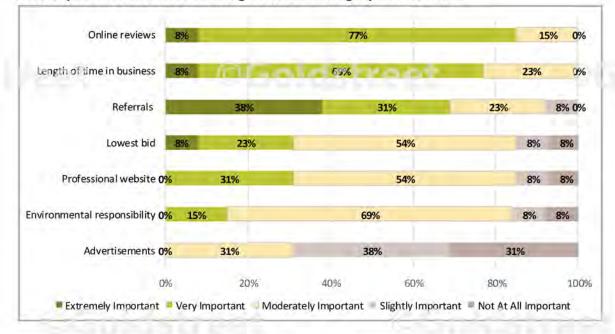






Factors that Influenced Hiring Decisions

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of seven factors that were used in their decision to hire a contractor.



How important were the following factors in hiring a painter? n=13

For painters the most important factors were:

- Online reviews
- Length of time in business
- Referrals

Online reviews was either extremely or very important for 85% of the respondents. The length of time in business was also an important factor with 77% saying it was either extremely or very important. Referrals was either extremely or very important for 69% of respondents.

Environmental responsibility was moderately important for 69% of respondents but only 15% said it was either extremely or very important. Advertisements were not extremely or very important for any of the respondents and were slightly or not at all important for 69% of respondents.



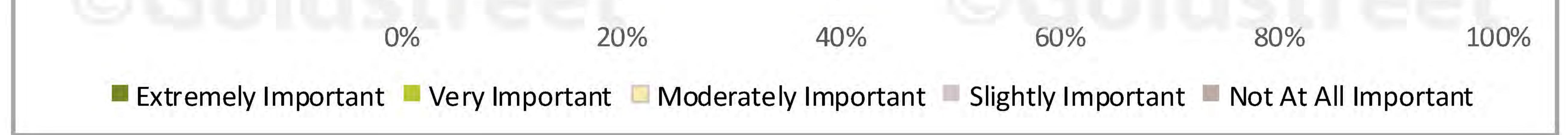


The next chart shows the importance of these seven factors in hiring a carpet cleaner. For **carpet cleaners** the most important factors were:

- Referrals
- Online reviews
- Environmental responsibility

How important were the following factors in hiring a carpet cleaner? n=21

	Referrals		64.96		52%		10%	5% 10%
	Online reviews		24%	24%		33%	5%	14%
En	vironmental responsibility	5%		38%	10%	29%		19%
	Length of time in business O		33%		489	%	5%	14%
	Lowest bid	10%	19%		43%		14%	14%
	Professional website	5%	19%		43%		19%	14%
	Advertisements	5%	19%	29%		19%	2	9%



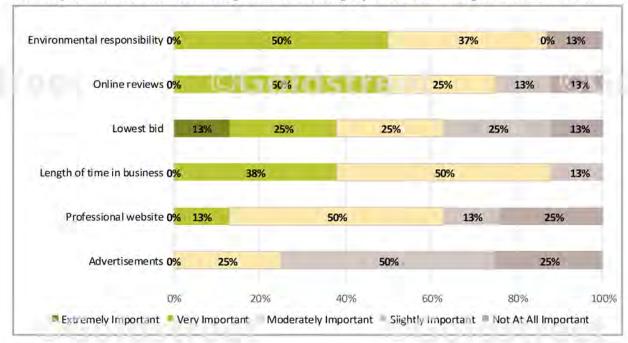
Referrals were either extremely or very important for 76% of the respondents. Online reviews was the second most important factor with nearly one-half (48%) saying it was either extremely or very important. Environmental responsibility was very important for 38% of respondents but only 5% said it was extremely important. Advertisements were rated as the least important factor with 48% of respondents saying it was slightly or not at all important.

The next chart shows the importance of these seven factors in hiring a pressure washing contractor. For **pressure washing contractors** the most important factors were:

- Environmental responsibility
- Online reviews
- Lowest bid
- Length of time in business



Environmental responsibility and online reviews were both very important for one-half (50%) of the respondents. The lowest bid and length of time in business were either extremely or very important for more than one-third (38%) of the respondents.

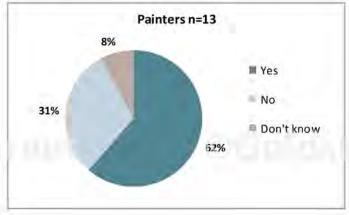


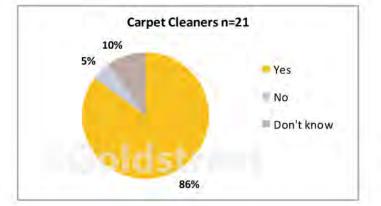
How important were the following factors in hiring a pressure washing contractor? n=8

Even with the small number of residents who answered these three questions, the respondents showed a tendency to value the importance of referrals and online reviews as factors in their hiring decision. These results are consistent with how residents found the contractor to hire. In general, the results show that advertisements and professional websites play a smaller role for residents in making hiring decision.

Marked Vehicles

In Covington, some of the issues of illicit discharges to stormwater have occurred by contractors with unmarked vehicles. The lack of business identification on the vehicle can create an opportunity for the contractor to dump washwater contaminated with soaps and chemicals without risk of being caught.







The majority of contractors arrived to start work in a vehicle marked with their business name. The highest percentage with marked vehicles was for carpet cleaners at 86% and the lowest percentage was for painters at 62%. Given the small number of respondents, that difference is not necessarily significant.

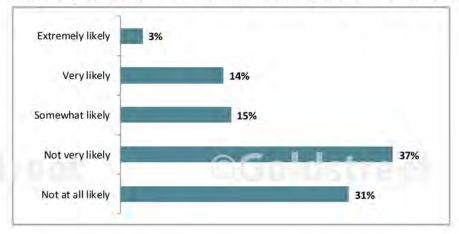
- Nearly 1 in 3 painters (31%) arrived at the residence with an unmarked vehicle.
- 1 in 4 pressure washing contractors (25%) had an unmarked vehicle.
- 1 in 20 carpet cleaners (5%) had an unmarked vehicle.

Considerations for Future Hiring of Contractors

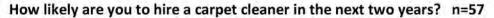
The majority of respondents said they were either not very or not at all likely to hire a painter, carpet cleaner, or pressure washing contractor in the next two years. This question was asked of residents who had not already hired that specific contractor.

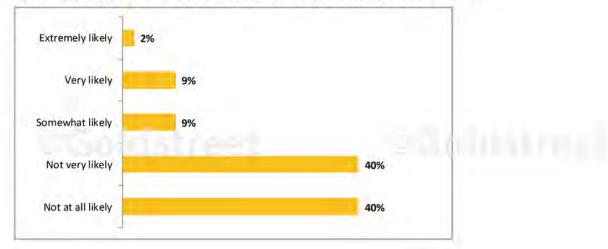
Less than 1 in 5 (17%) said they were either very or extremely likely to hire a painter. Only about 1 in 10 (11%) gave a similar response to hiring a carpet cleaner. No one said they were very or extremely likely to hire a pressure washer.

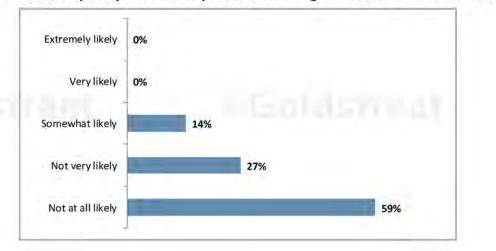
Was the contractor's vehicle marked with their business name?



How likely are you to hire a painting contractor in the next two years? n=65







How likely are you to hire a pressure washing contractor in the next two years? n=70

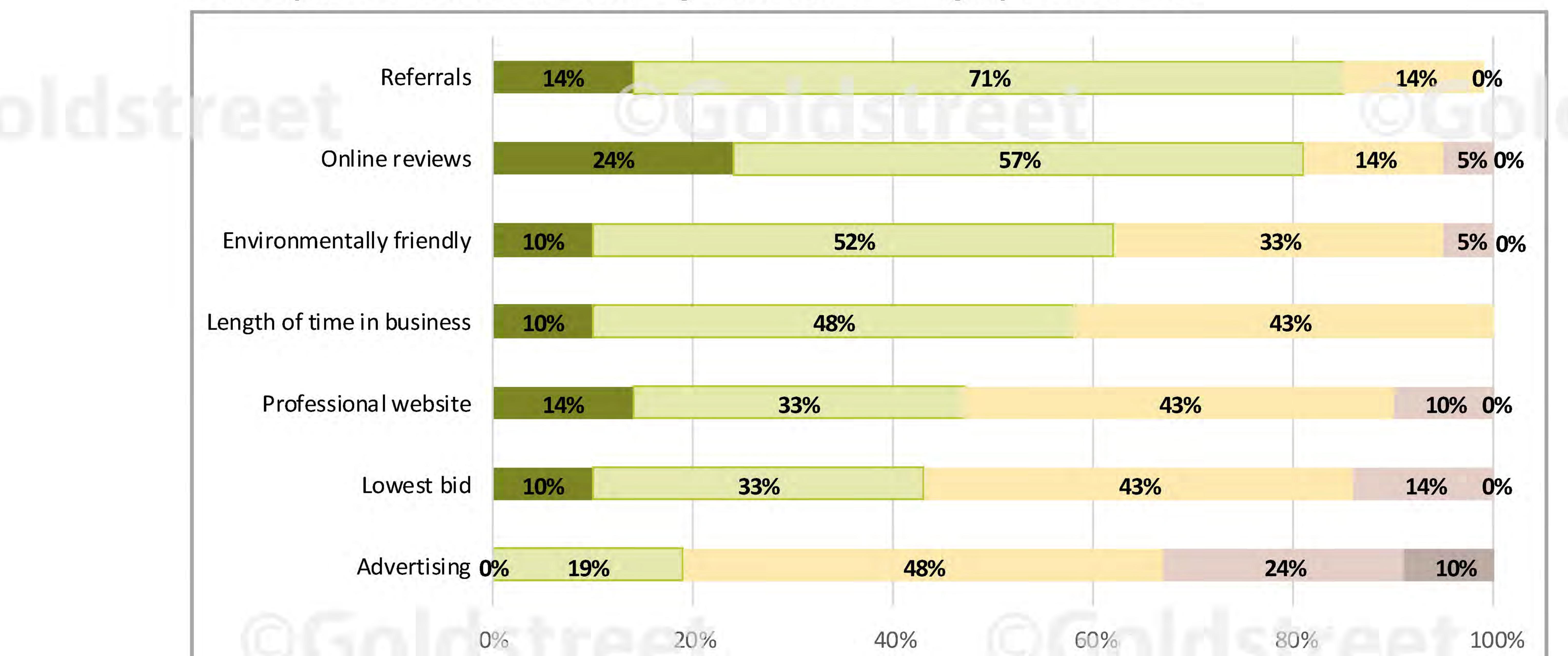




Factors that Might Influence Future Hiring Decisions

Respondents who said they were either somewhat, very, or extremely likely to hire a contractor in the next two years were asked to rate the importance of seven factors that could be used in their decision.

How important would the following factors be in hiring a painter? n=21



For painters the most important factors were:

- Referrals
- Online reviews
- Environmentally friendly
- Length of time in business

The first tier of important factors was referrals and online reviews. Referrals were either extremely or very important for 85% of the respondents. Online reviews was also an important factor with 81% saying it was either extremely or very important. The second tier of important

factors were environmental responsibility and length of time in business. Environmental friendly was either extremely or very important for 62% of the respondents, followed by length of time in business which was either extremely or very important for 58% of respondents. Advertisements were rated the lowest with 19% of respondents saying that advertising was very important.

Covington Residential Survey Report on Mobile Businesses

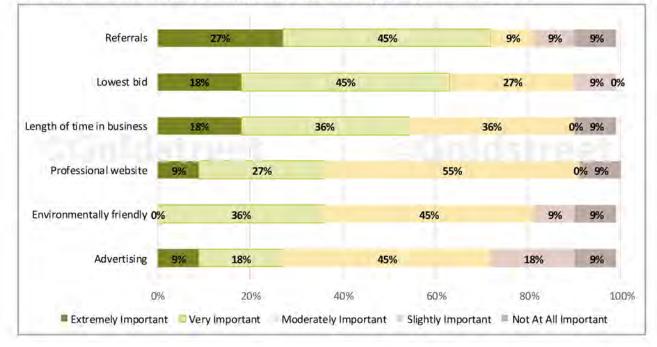


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The next chart shows the importance of these seven factors in hiring a carpet cleaner. For **carpet cleaners** the most important factors were:

- Referrals
- Lowest bid
- Length of time in business

Referrals were either extremely or very important for 72% of the respondents. Lowest bid was the second most important factor with 63% saying it was either extremely or very important. Length of time in business was either extremely or very important for 54% of respondents. Advertisements were rated as the least important factor with 27% of respondents saying it was either extremely or very important.

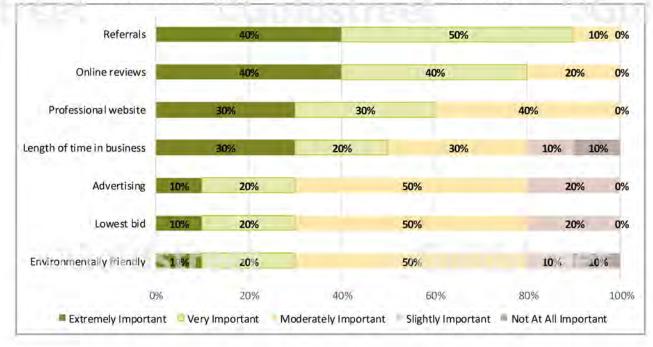


How important would the following factors be in hiring a carpet cleaner? n=11

The next chart shows the importance of these seven factors in hiring a pressure washing contractor. For **pressure washing contractors** the most important factors were:

- Referrals
- Online reviews
- Professional website
- Length of time in business

Referrals was either extremely or very important for the vast majority (90%) of respondents. Online reviews was rated the second most important factor with 80% saying it was either extremely or very important. Professional website and length of time in business were either extremely or very important to at least half of the respondents. Environmental friendly, lowest bid, and advertising were either extremely or very important for less than one-third (30%) of the respondents.



How important would the following factors be in hiring a pressure washing contractor? n=10

Residential Awareness about Contractor Practices that Affect Stormwater

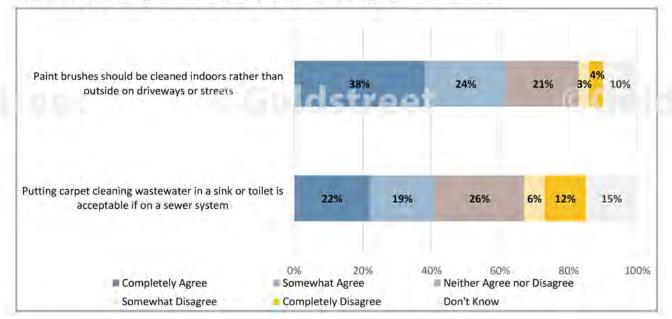
The survey respondents were asked to rate their degree of agreement with a set of four statements. The purpose of these questions was to gauge the level of awareness about common practices that contractors use in disposing of washwater.

The next chart shows statements about acceptable practices for painters and carpet cleaners. Awareness about these two practices is demonstrated by agreeing with these statements.

Practice #1: Paint brushes should be cleaned indoors rather than outside on driveways or streets.

More than half (62%) either completely or somewhat agreed with this statement showing that they were aware that paint brushes should be cleaned indoors.

- Less than 1 in 10 (7%) somewhat or completely disagreed with the statement.
- 10% said they did not know and 21% were neutral.



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? n=78

Practice #2: Putting carpet cleaning wastewater in a sink or toilet is acceptable if on a sewer system.

- Less than half (41%) either completely or somewhat agreed with this statement showing that they were aware that putting carpet cleaning wastewater in a sink or toilet in a house on a sewer system is an acceptable practice.
- Less than 1 in 5 (18%) somewhat or completely disagreed with the statement.
- 15% said they did not know and 26% were neutral.

The next chart shows statements about practices that are not acceptable for carpet cleaners and pressure washing contractors. Awareness about these two practices is demonstrated by disagreeing with these statements.

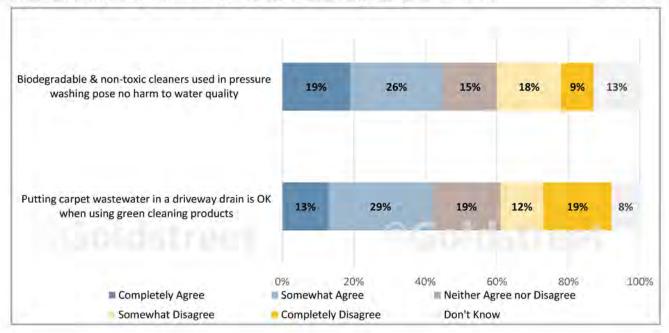
Practice #3: Biodegradable and non-toxic cleaners used in pressure washing pose no harm to water quality.

- Nearly one-half (45%) completely or somewhat agreed with this statement, meaning they thought it was acceptable for biodegradable and non-toxic cleaners to enter storm drains.
- About 1 in 4 (27%) knew that cleaners should not enter the storm drain.
- 13% said they did not know and 15% were neutral.

Practice #4: Putting carpet wastewater in a driveway drain is OK when using green cleaning products.

- 42% completely or somewhat agreed with this statement, meaning they thought it was acceptable that washwater containing "green" cleaning products enter storm drains.
- About 1 in 3 (31%) knew that carpet wastewater should not enter the storm drain.
- 8% said they did not know and 19% were neutral.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? n=78



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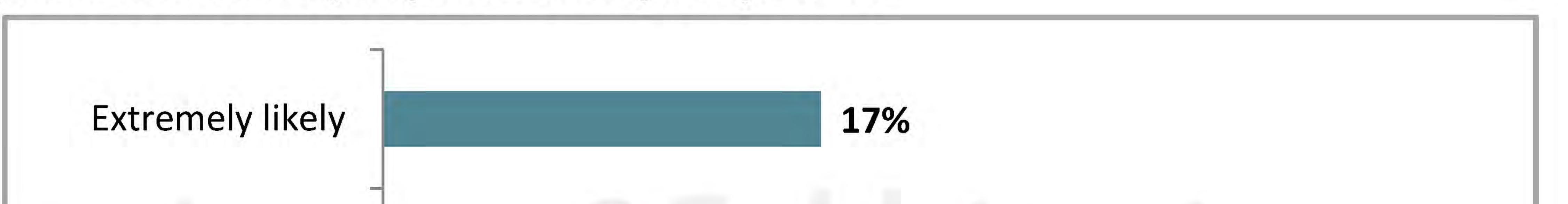
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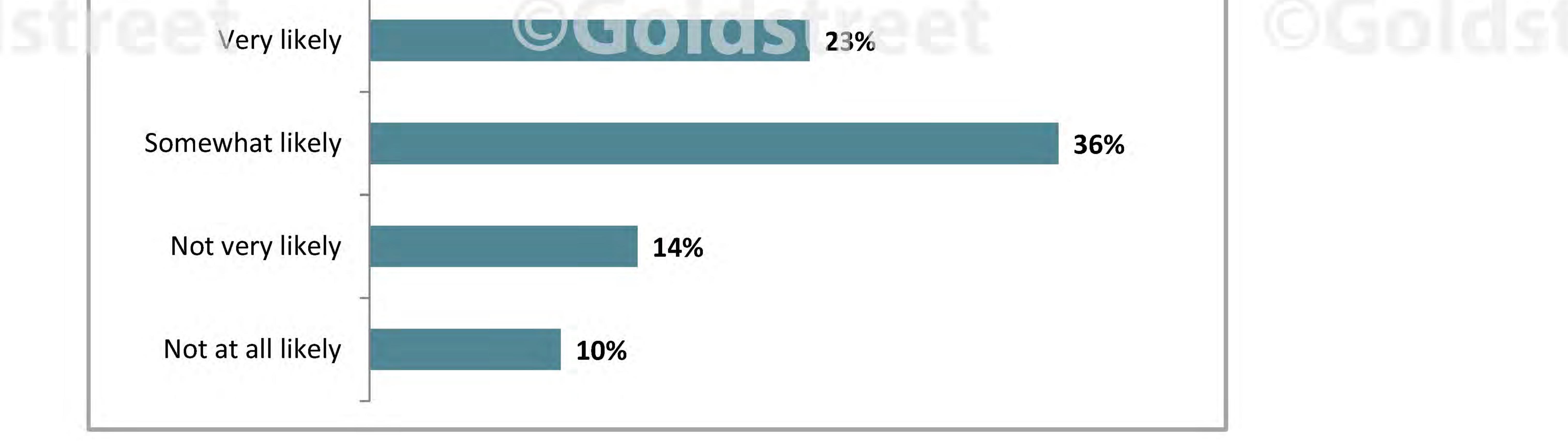




The last survey question asked respondents their likelihood in asking contractors about practices that might impact water quality.

How likely would you be to ask contractors about how they handle wastewater and other practices that may impact water quality? n=78





2 in 4 (40%) said they would be either extremely or very likely to broach the subject of contractor practices that could have a negative effect on water quality.

About 1 in 3 (34%) said they would be either not very or not at all likely to bring up the subject contractor practices.







Questionnaire

Covington Residential Survey on General Home Maintenance Businesses

Welcome Covington residents! We invite you to take a short survey about general home maintenance businesses.



All residents who complete the survey will be eligible to receive a

\$25 gift card. We will be selecting 8 winners. Only 1 entry per household, age 18 and over, please. Your entry form will be kept separate from your survey response.

Screeners – no screener

Survey will be advertised on websites targeted to Covington Residents, including both those within City limits and those in unincorporated King County who have a Covington address and may identify themselves as Covington residents.

Painters

P1. Have you hired a painting contractor in the last two years? Yes No – skip to P5

P2. How did you find the painting contractor you hired? *randomize*, 1 *response only* Advertising on their vehicles, signs or local publications

Discount coupons in the mail or online Referral from friends or neighbors Yellow pages Online web search Other - specify

P3. How important were the following factors in your hiring decision? Matrix (extremely

important, very important, moderately important, slightly important, not at all important), randomize

Reputation for environmental responsibility Lowest bid Advertisements Referrals from friends and neighbors Online reviews Professional website Length of time in business

P4. When the painter arrived to start work, was their vehicle marked with their business name?

Yes No Don't know *Skip to CC1*

P5. How likely are you to hire a painting contractor in the next two years?

Extremely likely Very likely Somewhat likely Not very likely – skip to CC1 Not at all likely – skip to CC1

P6. How important would the following factors be in hiring a painting contractor? Matrix with

Likert scale for importance, see P3, randomize Professional website Lowest bid Advertising Online reviews Environmentally friendly Length of time in business Referrals from friends or neighbors

Carpet Cleaners

CC1. Have you hired a carpet cleaner in the last two years? Yes

No - skip to CC3

CC2. How did you find the carpet cleaner you hired? randomize, 1 response only

Advertising on their vehicles, signs or local publications Discount coupons in the mail or online Referral from friends or neighbors Yellow pages Online web search Other - specify

CC3. How important were the following factors in your hiring decision? Matrix, with Likert

scale for importance, see P3, randomize Reputation for environmental responsibility Lowest bid Advertisements Referrals from friends and neighbors

Online reviews Professional website Length of time in business

CC4. When the carpet cleaner arrived to start work, was their vehicle marked with their business name?

Yes No Don't know *Skip to PW1*

CC5. How likely are you to hire a carpet cleaner in the next two years?

Extremely likely Very likely Somewhat likely Not very likely – skip to PW1 Not at all likely – skip to PW1

CC6. How important would the following factors be in hiring a carpet cleaner? Matrix, with

Likert scale for importance, see P3, randomize Professional website Lowest bid Advertising Online reviews Environmentally friendly Length of time in business Referrals from friends or neighbors

Pressure Washers

PW1. Have you hired a pressure washing contractor to clean your house exterior, driveways, decks, gutters or walkways in the last two years?

Yes No – skip to PW5

PW2. How did you find the pressure washing contractor you hired? randomize, 1 response only

Advertising on their vehicles, signs or local publications Discount coupons in the mail or online Referral from friends or neighbors Yellow pages Online web search Other - specify

PW3. How important were the following factors in your hiring decision? Matrix, with Likert

scale for importance, see P3, randomize Reputation for environmental responsibility Lowest bid Advertisements Referrals from friends and neighbors Online reviews Professional website Length of time in business

PW4. When the pressure washing contractor arrived to start work, was their vehicle marked with their business name?

Yes No Don't know *Skip to A1*

PW5. How likely are you to hire a pressure washing contractor in the next two years?

Extremely likely Very likely Somewhat likely Not very likely – skip to A1 Not at all likely – skip to A1

PW6. How important would the following factors be in hiring a pressure washer contractor?

Professional website Lowest bid Advertising Online reviews Environmentally friendly Length of time in business Referrals from friends or neighbors

Note: Awareness questions are near the end of the survey so as not to bias responses to the earlier questions. These questions will be asked of all survey respondents.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *matrix format, Likert scale of 5 points of agreeability, also include "don't know"*

A1. Putting carpet cleaning wastewater in a sink or toilet is acceptable if on a sewer system. Yes Completely agree Somewhat agree

Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Completely disagree Don't know

A2. Putting carpet wastewater in a driveway drain is OK when using green cleaning products. No

A3. Biodegradable & non-toxic cleaners used in pressure washing pose no harm to water quality. No

A4. Paint brushes should be cleaned indoors rather than outside on driveways or streets. Yes

The City is conducting this survey because contractors sometimes dispose of waste water that contains soaps, chemicals, and other contaminants into storm drains or into the street. This contaminated water can end up in local streams, lakes and other water bodies.

How likely would you be to ask contractors about practices that may impact water quality? Extremely likely Very likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

Demographics

What is your gender? Male Female

What is your age? 18 to 34 35 to 49 50 to 64 65+

Do you own or rent your home? Own Rent