

News / City Hall**Rob Ford tops list of this year's scandals for most negatively viewed by public**

A public relations firm's online survey of Canadians suggests Ford's transgressions topped Senate spending and the Ontario power plant scandal in the court of (negative) opinion.



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Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, shown at city hall in January, is now on a leave of absence while being treated for substance abuse at a Muskoka rehab centre.

By: Jessica McDiarmid News reporter, Published on Tue May 27 2014

Rob Ford 's crack smoking and drunken ranting topped the list of Canadian scandals of 2013, in terms of how negatively they were viewed by the public, edging out the Senate spending scandal, Ontario's \$1-billion gas-fired power plant cancellations and the disastrous Parti Quebecois values charter, says a StrategyCorp poll.

According to the public relations firm's online survey of 2,604 Canadians from across the country, Ford's multitude of transgressions were viewed as negative by 71 per cent of respondents, with 18 per cent characterizing their feelings as "neutral" and 10 per cent as "positive."

Runner-up on the infamy scale was the [Senate spending scandal](#) , which saw four members of the upper house investigated for improperly claiming expenses on the public dime. Senators have been ordered to pay back hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The scandal was viewed negatively by 68 per cent of respondents.

[Ontario's power plant controversy](#) , which cost taxpayers more than \$1 billion when the provincial government cancelled two planned gas-fired plants in Mississauga and Oakville, was perceived negatively by 64 per cent of respondents across Canada. When the results are narrowed to just those surveyed in Ontario, however, that percentage is 77 per cent.

Meanwhile, Quebec's former governing party's attempt to pass a "values charter" that would have banned the wearing of religious signs among the 600,000 people working in the province's public sector was viewed negatively by 60 per cent of Canadian respondents.

The move was meant to bolster the Parti Quebecois' election platform in the lead-up to [April's provincial poll](#) , but the Quebec Liberal party ousted the PQ — which had also touted the idea of another referendum on separating from Canada — to [win a majority government](#) .

The survey also questioned respondents about reputational upsets involving private companies BlackBerry, TransCanada Corp. and Lululemon, but none generated the negative responses government scandals did.

The online survey was conducted from Dec. 19 to Dec. 31, 2013. If it were truly random, it would have an estimated margin of error of 2.2 per cent, 19 times out of 20. However, the Market Research and Intelligence Association notes that margins of error shouldn't be drawn for online surveys, as the samples aren't random.