

# Half of voters see 'pee-gate,' Tory candidate controversies as sign of deeper problems: poll

By [MARK BURGESS](#) | Sept. 12, 2015

What was probably the worst week to date of the Conservative campaign may be over but the controversy over two dismissed candidates may not be so easily washed away, a new survey suggests.

The Conservatives dismissed two candidates early last week—Jerry Bance, running in Scarborough-Rouge Park, Ont., after old footage from an episode of CBC's *Marketplace* surfaced showing him peeing into a coffee mug while repairing an appliance at a client's home (leading to a [#peegate](#) hashtag on Twitter), and Tim Dutaud, running in Toronto-Danforth, Ont., for posting videos on [YouTube of prank calls](#) he had made mocking people with disabilities.

Liberal candidate [Joy Davies also resigned as a candidate](#) in South Surrey-White Rock, B.C., last week for comments about marijuana use.

The two Conservative dismissals led to some outcry within the party, with insiders complaining about the vetting process and a lack of leadership in the Tory campaign.

Sixty per cent of respondents to an online Innovative Research survey conducted Sept. 4 to 10 had heard about the Conservative candidate controversy, and 51 per cent said they thought it was a symptom of deeper problems in the party.

Four in 10 said the candidates represented unique problems unlikely to be repeated.

Most core and soft Conservative supporters didn't see the controversies as a bigger problem, but 55 per cent of unaligned voters did. This includes 35 per cent of Time for Change Tories—those critical voters who say it's time for a change but that the Conservatives are best able to run government.

"That's a problem for the Tories," Innovative Research pollster Greg Lyle said.

The controversies didn't affect voting intentions for most: 56 per cent said it made no difference, eight per cent were somewhat less likely to vote Conservative, and 30 per cent were much less likely to.

The survey shows opinions are solidifying after six weeks of campaigning, with half of voters saying they've heard all they need to make up their minds this election, up from 43 per cent at the end of August.

Among decided voters, the Innovative survey showed the NDP continuing to lead, for the third consecutive month, at 31 per cent, with the Liberals closing in at 30 per cent and the Conservatives at 28 per cent.

The online survey of 2,121 Canadians is weighted to reflect overall population. A margin of error can't be calculated as online surveys aren't random probability-based samples.

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