

# **Supplement:** Emmet County Materials Management County Engagement

March 1, 2023

PREPARED BY:



COMMISSIONED BY:



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Working together with Networks Northwest and member communities, RRS completed a comprehensive set of tasks that fulfills the objectives of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Materials Management Community Engagement (MMCE) grant and lays the groundwork for regional collaboration in materials management planning among member communities.

The MMCE grant process is intended to help counties in the transition to materials management and begin to identify partnership within regions and counties, understand current materials management deficiencies and opportunities, highlight future changes to the planning process, and outline steps that can occur now at the county and regional levels to assist with the development of future materials management programs and infrastructure.

Key improvements and recommendations for counties within Networks Northwest are found in the respective sections in the report. RRS identified forty (40) recommendations that are categorized into seven areas which form the basis for a robust materials management system:

- Community Access
- Facilities and Infrastructure
- Robust Markets, including Materials of Focus
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Supportive Policy
- Education and Outreach
- Regional Planning

Specific to Emmet County and as required by the EGLE grant, RRS identified the top five needs and the top three materials management projects that Emmet County should consider.

## TOP FIVE NEEDS:

1. Expanded food waste collection points
2. Partnerships to extend programs to public spaces – events, downtown districts, Pellston airport, parks
3. Hub-and-spoke collections for key materials that provide expanded access to a Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM)
4. Partnerships with property managers to grow commercial and multifamily recycling and promotion of other programs.
5. More frequent and more locations for household hazardous waste collection

## TOP THREE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PROJECTS:

Based on the top five needs above, RRS recommends Emmet County focus on three projects that could have significant impact on accessibility, awareness, and sustainable funding for programs and services.

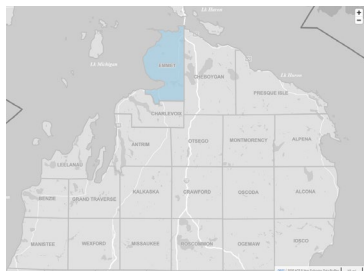
1. Engage County and municipal leaders (inside and outside the county) in conversations about materials management solutions in light of changes in state law.
2. Evaluate the funding and infrastructure needed to regularly or periodically collect additional materials, including more frequent household hazardous waste events, mattresses, food waste, and other difficult to recycling items.
3. Continue to grow partnerships to show shared benefits of materials management strategies.

# STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholder list was developed in collaboration with each county recycling contact to determine priority county, municipal, and other invested stakeholders. Perspectives were sought from either direct interview (in person or via phone) or through a set of questions distributed via email. Emails were sent at least twice seeking feedback.

First	Last	Organization	Primary Stakeholder Type	Contact Type
Andi	Tolzdorf	Emmet County Department of Public Works	county official	primary
Mark	Bevelhymer	GFL/American Waste	hauler	in-person
Tammy	Doerenburg	Emmet County Planning and Zoning	municipal official	email
Doug	Fuller	Emmet County DPW	board member	email
Toni	Drier	Emmet County	county official	email
Neil	Ahrends	Emmet County	county official	email
Charlie	MacInnis	Emmet County	county official	email
Mike	Wargel	Emmet County	county official	email
Dave	Bachelor	Emmet County	county official	email
David	White	Emmet County	county official	email
Matt	Koontz	Emmet County	county official	email
Greg	Babcock	Village of Alanson	municipal official	email
Denny	Keiser	Bear Creek Township	municipal official	email
Bill	Dohm	Little Traverse Township	municipal official	email
Jim	Bartlett	West Traverse Township	municipal official	email
Jen	Schaap	Groundworks	non-profit	email
Liv	Rollinger	Groundworks	non-profit	email
David	Emmel	Northern Lakes Economic Alliance	non-profit	email
Nikki	Devitt	Petoskey Chamber	chamber	email
Bonnie	Kulp	Harbor Springs Chamber	chamber	email
Sara	Ford	Petoskey & Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation	non-profit	email
Jason	Keiswetter	Petoskey Plastics	business owner	email
John	Damoose	Michigan House of Representatives	elected official	email
Jen	Buchanan	Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council	non-profit	email
Madeline	Walstrom	United by Water	non-profit	email
Sarna	Salzman	SEEDS	community organization	in-person
Lindsay	Hall	Little Traverse Conservancy	community organization	email
Caroline	Moellering	Little Traverse Bay Band (Emmet)	tribal	call

# EMMET COUNTY - GAPS



Population:	34,112
Square Miles of Land Area:	467.5
Households:	14,197
Employer Establishments:	1,534
Countywide Curbside Trash:	NO
Countywide Curbside Recycling:	NO
Countywide Curbside Organics:	NO
Countywide Drop-off Trash:	YES
Countywide Drop-off Recycling:	YES
Countywide Drop-off Organics:	YES
Countywide Drop-off HHW:	YES

**Community Access:** Every household and business in a community needs convenient access to effective programs. This access can be through curbside collection, drop-off site locations, or a combination of the two. Material diversion and recovery needs to be as convenient as waste disposal as a first step sustainable materials management.

- Emmet County offers twelve (12) access points for drop-off of recyclables, averaging one for every 39 square miles (1:39).
- Most, but not all, Emmet County residents are offered curbside recycling.
- HHW days are offered three (3) times per year. Some hazardous waste is accepted six days/week at one (1) location.
- A countywide food waste collection program is offered at three (3) locations (seasonally) and yard waste at one (1) location.
- Residents in apartments and other multifamily dwellings have access to recycling at their complex through Emmet County, but it is at the discretion of the property manager to opt in to the program.

**Processing Facilities:** The material collected at the home and business needs to be processed before reaching the end market. It is crucial for the County to own or have access to processing facilities conveniently located, technologically advanced, and with enough capacity to handle the population's current and future material streams. These facilities act as the "middleman" between the local government and the end market.

- Emmet County owns and operates a solid waste transfer station, a dual stream MRF, and a windrow compost facility.

**Robust Markets:** The success of end markets that receive the recyclables that are collected leads to success in growing a sustainable circular economy that ultimately allows material to be diverted from landfills over the long term. By increasing demand, Networks Northwest creates a 'pull' for additional materials that in turn, drives supply.

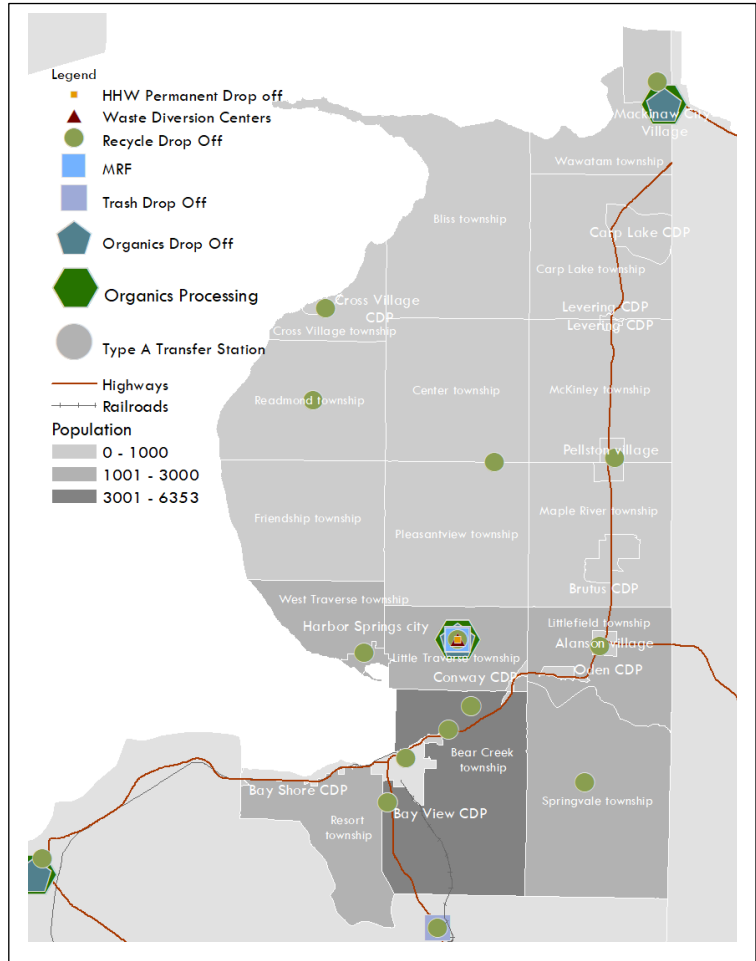
- Within Emmet County there are two (2) identified markets for recovered materials: Petoskey Plastics and Harbor Springs Excavating.

**Public/Private Partnerships:** The business community and Networks Northwest will need to work closely together to find success. These partnerships can be found through funding opportunities with private companies, shared owner/operator agreements for MRFs and composting facilities, marketing and educational campaigns, and everything in between. Many retailers and packaging companies are realizing that local governments are responsible for the end of life for their products, thus leading to the sustainability of their product. Therefore, the benefits of public/private partnerships are becoming more apparent and accessible.

- There are no identified partnerships.

**Supportive Policy:** To reach high landfill diversion goals, policy will need to be crafted to ensure responsible recovery of material is the standard practice throughout the community, not just the best practice. A variety of policy approaches can be explored for Networks Northwest that have found success in other parts of the country and the globe.

- Harbor Springs requires a single waste hauler.
- County ordinance 11-04 implements flow control and pay-as-you-throw requirements.



**Education and Outreach:** Once a strong infrastructure is in place, all citizens and businesses will need to know how to handle material in their home and at work. Recycling systems continue to evolve as material composition changes and technologies change. Thus, information needs to be put in front of the citizens of your community on a regular basis in many different ways to feed MRFs and end markets with good quality material, while continuing to decrease the material buried in landfills.

- Emmet County Recycling is a brand that identifies Emmet County's involvement in materials management across all programs that they offer. The icons, colors, and style that is used is consistent across the outreach materials they use, helping bring recognition and cohesiveness to their message.

# SURVEY

Over 1,650 individuals across the Networks Northwest region took the survey that included questions about current participation in recycling-related activities as well as future needs and demographic information to inform trends. 237 people from Emmet County participated in the survey.

This survey was not intended to meet statistical minimums. Rather, it was intended to be a snapshot to inform the current usage and future needs of the region. The set of questions that were asked was purposefully restricted to reduce the chance of survey fatigue, wherein participants close the survey prior to completing it.

The survey was intended to take no more than 10 minutes to complete, with participants being told in the introduction that it should take no more than 5-8 minutes. The survey was distributed by community recycling coordinators and Networks Northwest via social media and press release. Survey logic was built into the flow of questions to ensure that the appropriate type of question was asked based on previous responses. As such, participation rates in each question varied. The majority of survey respondents are current recyclers and is the result of the way the survey was distributed. Further studies to understand reasons for non-participation may be needed.

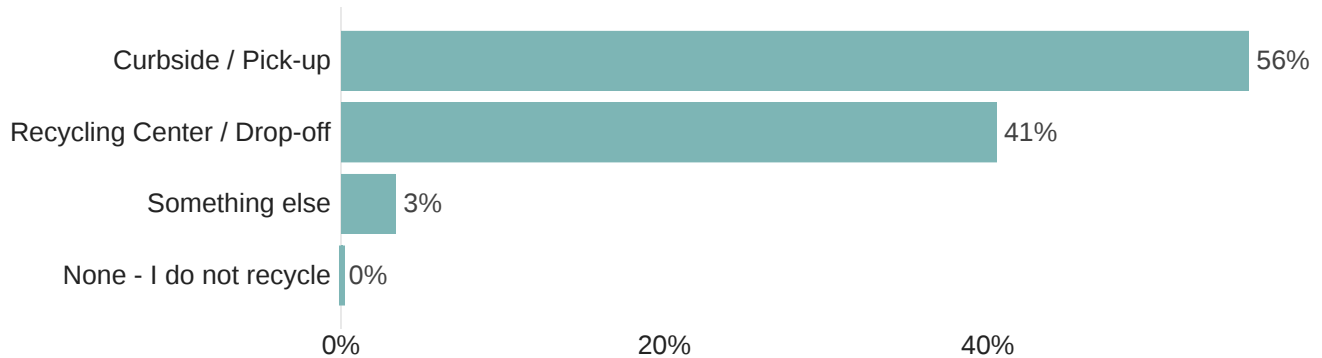
The full survey results for Emmet County are on the following pages.

\*Grey boxes stating, "No data found - your filters may be too exclusive," indicate questions with without responses from respondents as a result of low base size and/or non-required survey questions.

## Q2 - What type of recycling services do you most often use, not including bottle returns?

**SUMMARY** - Over half of residents take advantage of Curbside Pick-up recycling services while 41% use Drop-off centers most often.

237 Responses



## Q2 - What type of recycling services do you most often use, not including bottle returns? Text responses

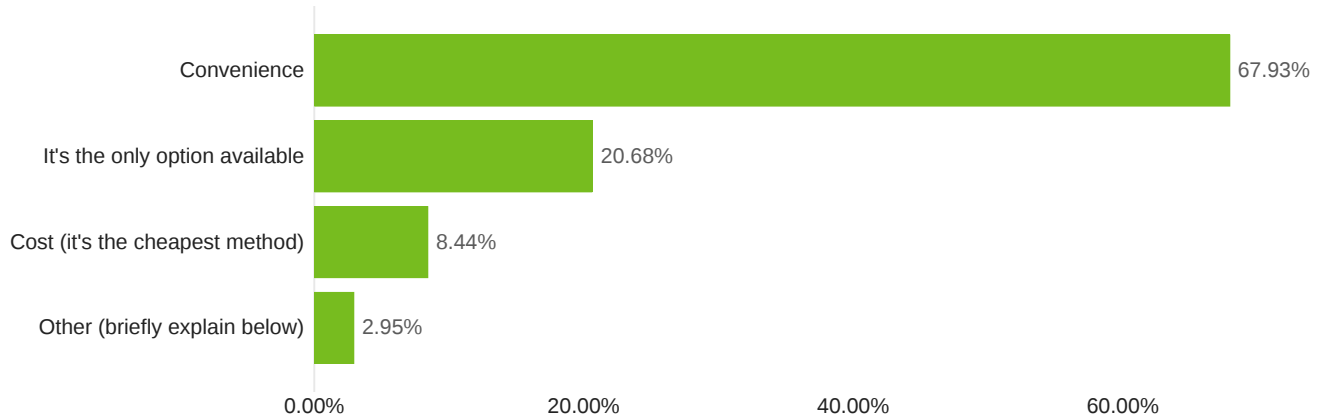
6 Responses



### Q3 - What is the most important reason you choose to recycle this way?

**SUMMARY** - A majority of residents use curbside because of its convenience. They also see it as a cheaper method to recycle. Those who chose "It's the only option available" are predominately individuals who have access to only Drop-off recycling services.

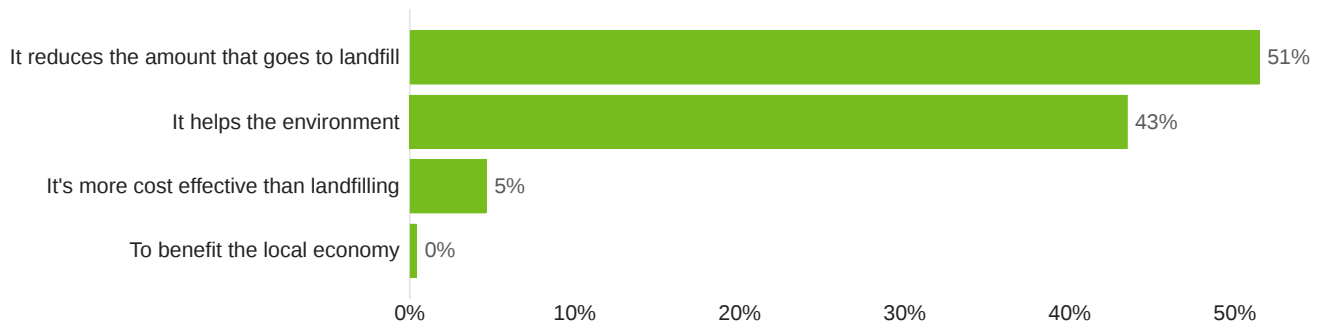
237 Responses



### Q4 - Why do you recycle?

**SUMMARY** - Yet, very few (none) recycle for economic reasons. Instead, they associate recycling as reducing the amount of waste headed to landfills or as an environmentally sound decision.

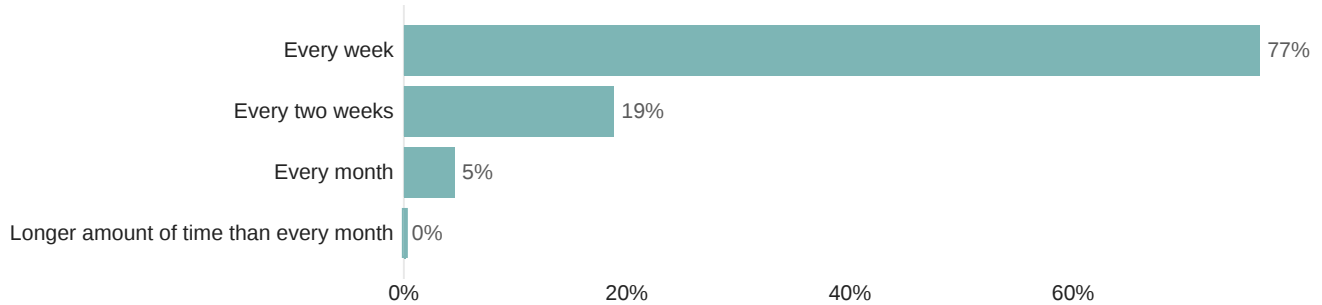
237 Responses



## Q5 - How often do you recycle using curbside / pick-up?

**SUMMARY** - Of those who are offered Curbside Pick-up services, 77% use the service every week.

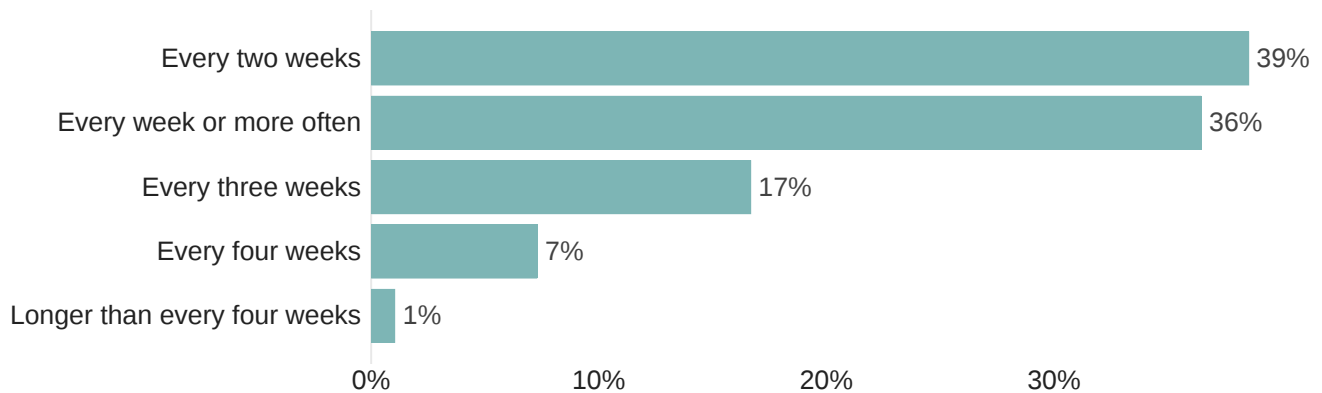
133 Responses



## Q6 - How often do you recycle using a Recycling Center or drop-off?

**SUMMARY** - Those with access to Drop-off recycling services to are likely to use the service either every week or every other week.

96 Responses



## Q7 - What is the most significant reason you do not recycle?

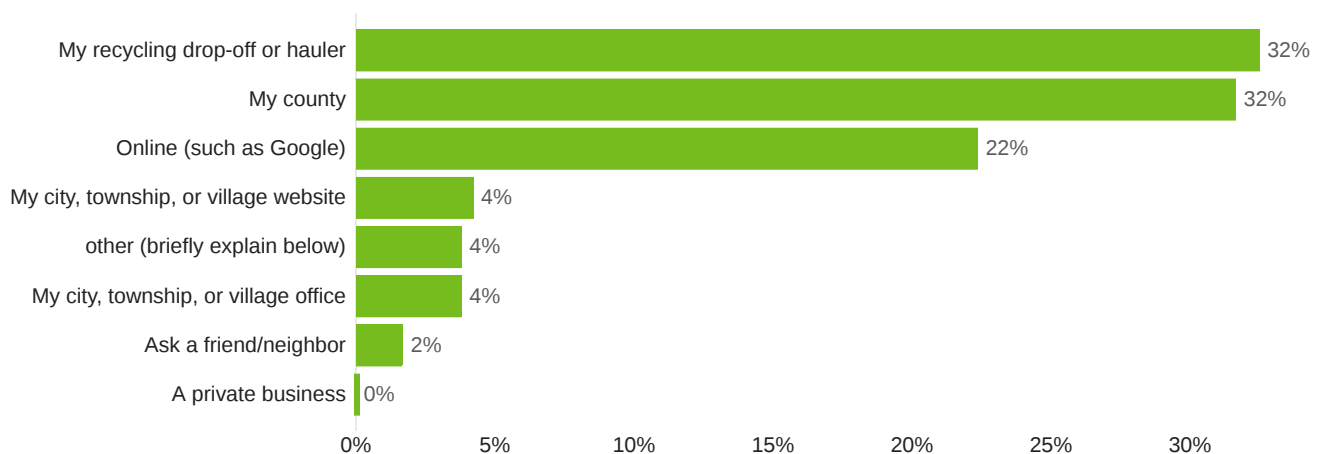
**SUMMARY** - N/A - no responses

No data found - your filters may be too exclusive!

## Q8 - If you had questions about recycling, where would you first seek out information?

**SUMMARY** - 72% first look towards their municipality and recycling providers to answer questions about recycling. While less than a quarter seeks information from Google and friends.

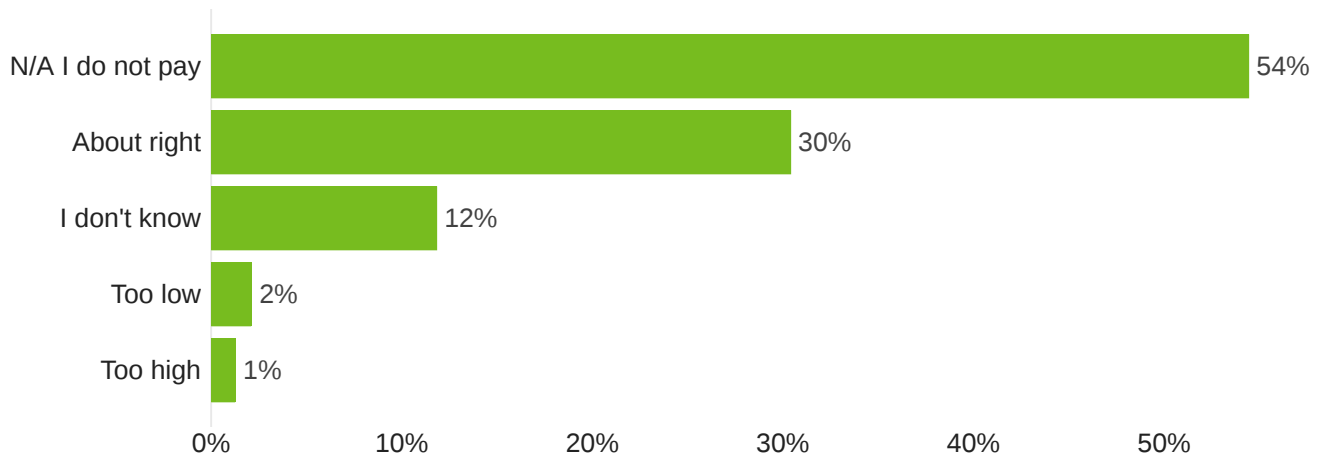
237 Responses



**Q9 - Do you think the cost of recycling is too high, about right or too low?**  
Please respond even if you do not recycle.

**SUMMARY** - 54% do not pay for recycling. While 30% feel that they don't know how much recycling should cost.  
**NOTE:** One potential problem with this question, is that the survey did not capture whether the respondent knows if the cost of recycling is bundled into the cost of their trash pickup.

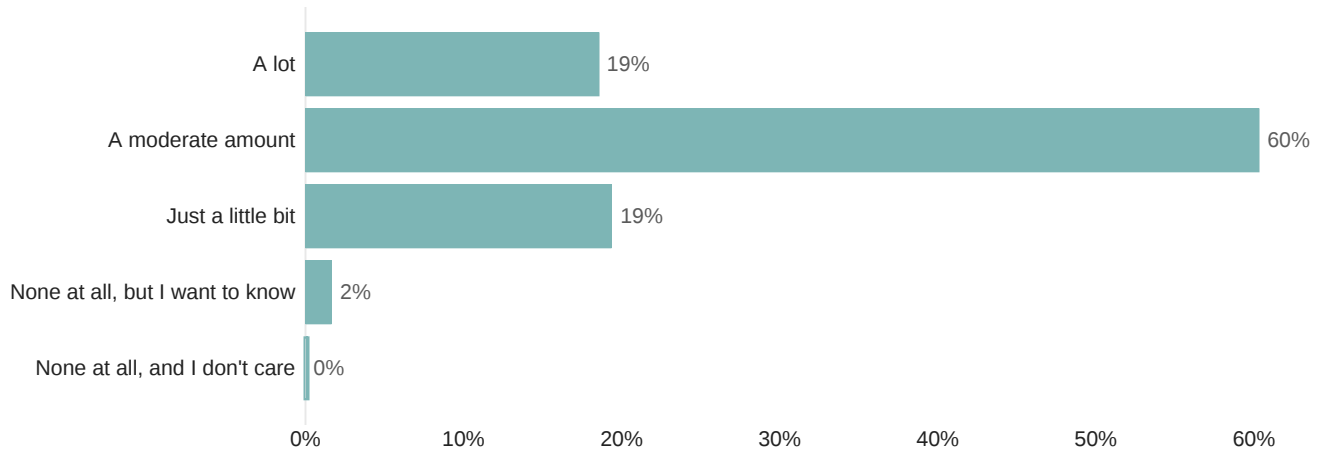
237 Responses



## Q10 - How much do you know about recycling, generally speaking?

**SUMMARY** - A majority feels they know a moderate amount about recycling. Whereas only 19% feels that they know a lot.

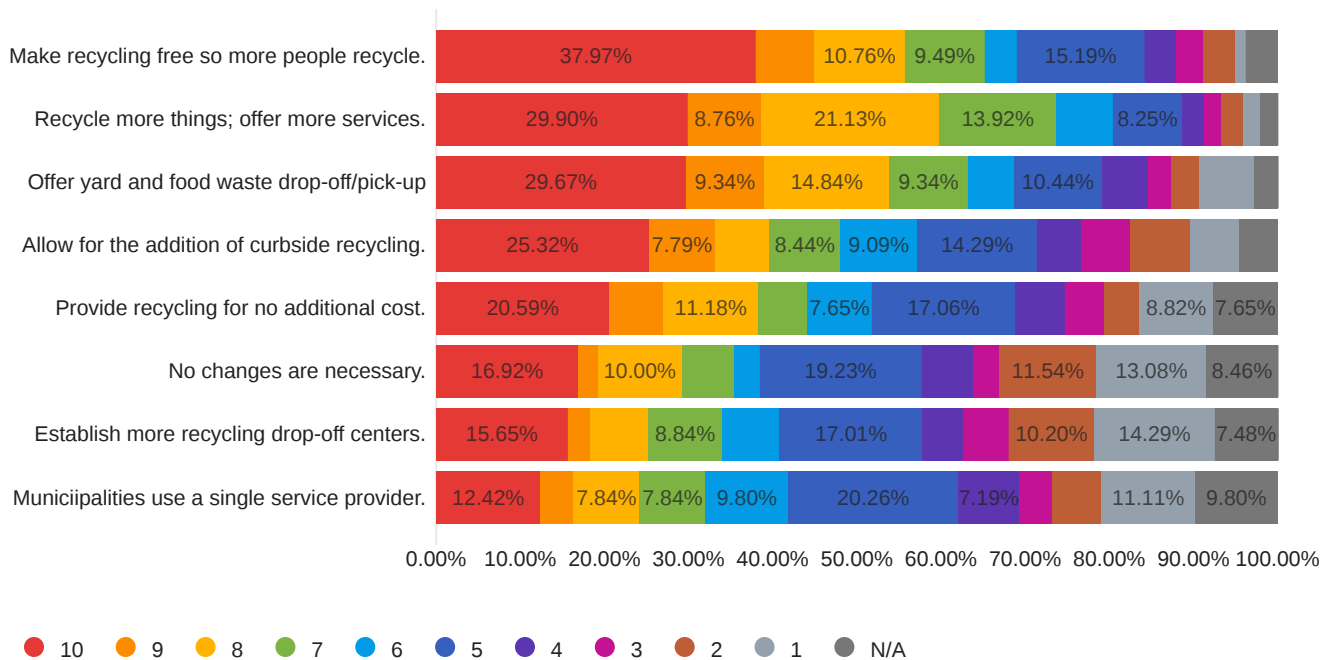
237 Responses



**Q11 - Leaders in Northwest Michigan are exploring ways to improve recycling and other waste management services offered to residents and businesses. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being VERY IMPORTANT and 0 being NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT, how important are each of the following potential improvements to you? If you already have access to an option, select 'not applicable'**

**SUMMARY -** Although residents who currently recycle feel that recycling costs little to nothing, they express the need for recycling to be completely free to allow for greater accessibility and participation from more people. As well, residents would like more recycling services to support the recycling of items not currently recycled in their areas, such as yard and food waste pick up.

#### 229 Responses

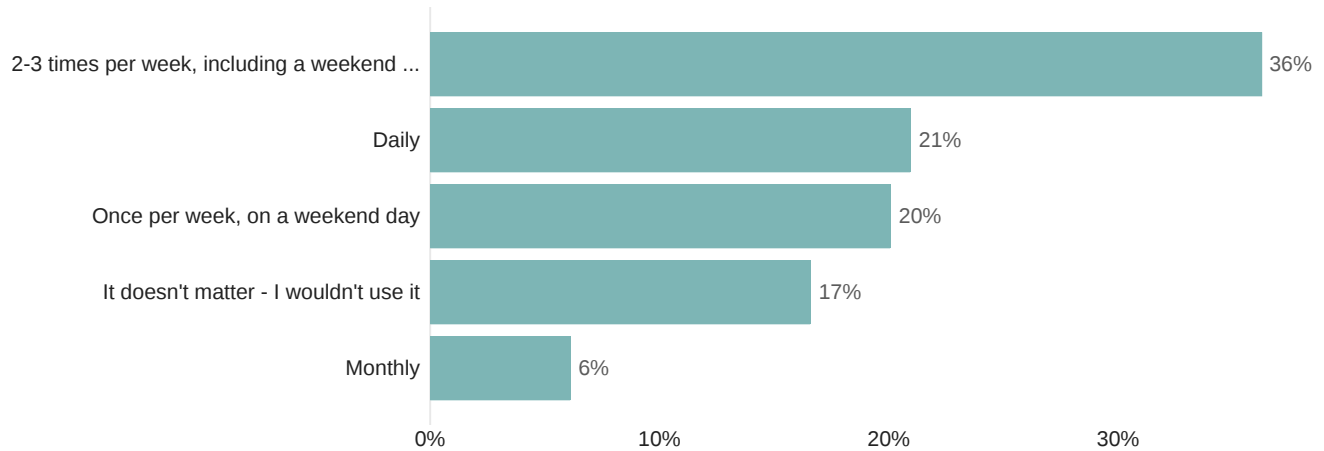


Select a field

## Q12 - If a convenient recycling or food waste drop-off site were available close to where you live, how often would you want it open?

**SUMMARY** - 56% of people would like a Drop-off site open at least once per week on the weekend day. About one-fifth would like Drop-off sites open daily.

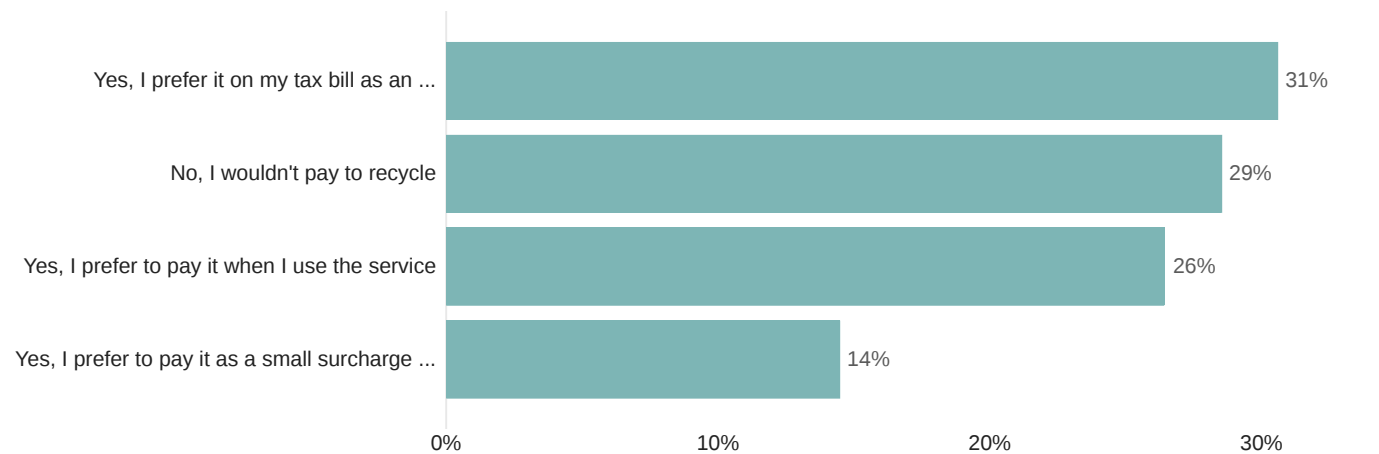
229 Responses



# Q13 - Would you be willing to pay a small fee to have convenient access to recycling or food waste collection?

**SUMMARY** - There is a near equal split between those who would prefer to pay for recycling or food waste collection through an assessment or fee on their tax bill and those who do not want to pay anything for recycling or food waste collection services.

237 Responses

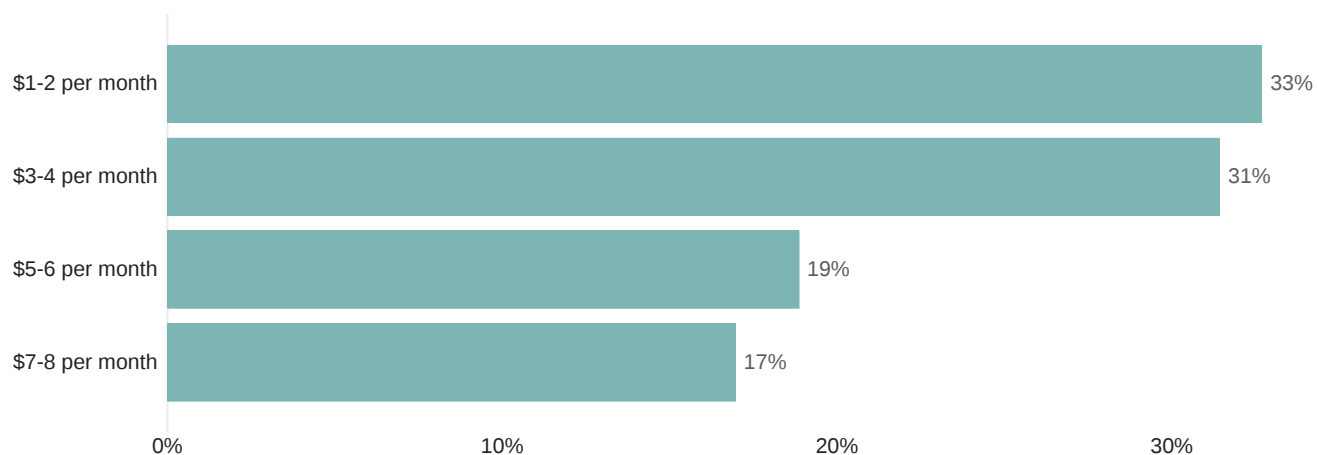


## Q14 - What would you be willing to spend to get convenient access to recycling or food waste collection?

**SUMMARY** - A sizeable fraction of respondents (29%) would not pay anything for convenient access to recycling or food waste collection. Of those willing to pay for recycling or food waste collection, 83% want to pay \$6 or less a month for recycling or food waste collection; \$1-2 per month is most preferred.

Note: 29% of respondents would not pay anything.

159 Responses



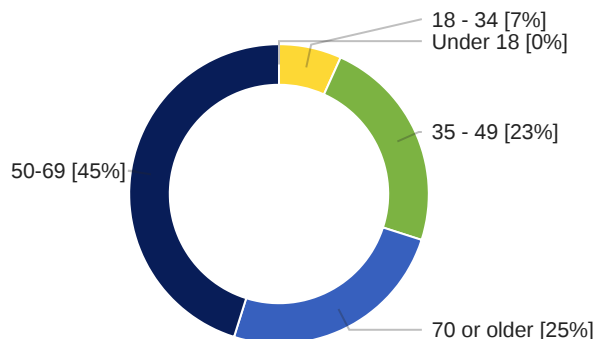
## Demographics and Background of Respondents

### SUMMARY:

- Respondents are primarily 50 years of age or older. Slightly less than a quarter, however, are ages 35-49.
- Respondents are predominately female.
- 92% have some college education or higher.
- 93% of respondents own the home that they live in.
- 93% live in Emmet County year around.
- Unsurprisingly, because of the higher age range of our respondents, 7% do not have children living at home who are school age or younger.
- 95% of respondents are white with little representation of other racial or ethnic groups.
- Median yearly household income falls around \$75,000 - \$100,000 per year.
- Of those who rent or lease their home, a majority has access to and uses on-site recycling services. However, over a quarter do not have on-site recycling available to them, but would like to have the option.

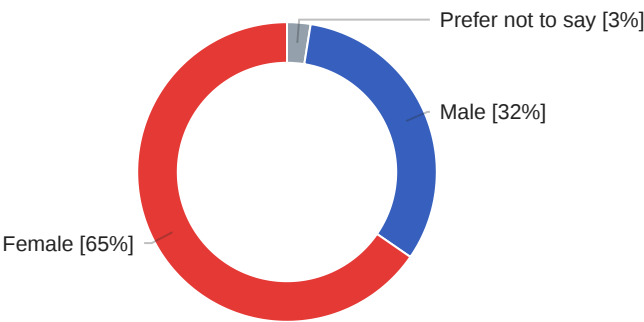
### Q16 - Which of these best fits your age?

237 Responses



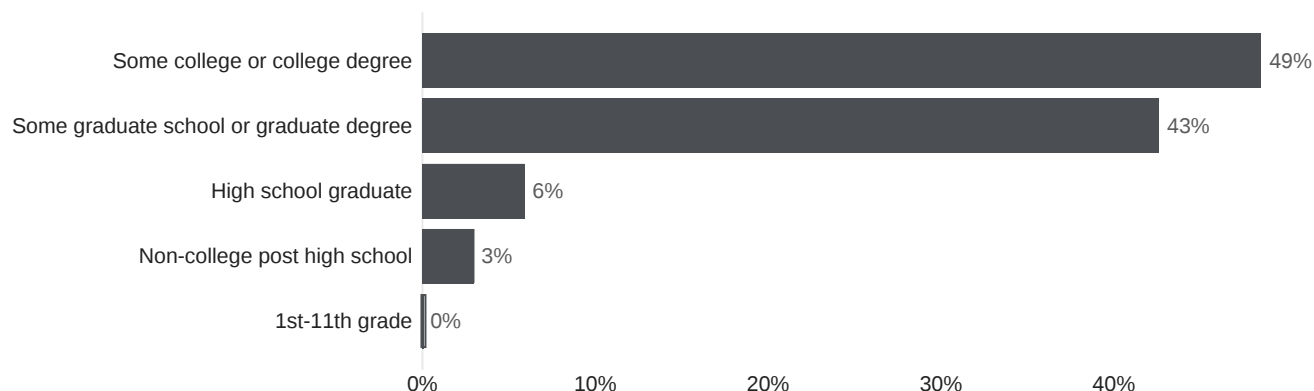
# Q17 - What is your gender?

237 Responses



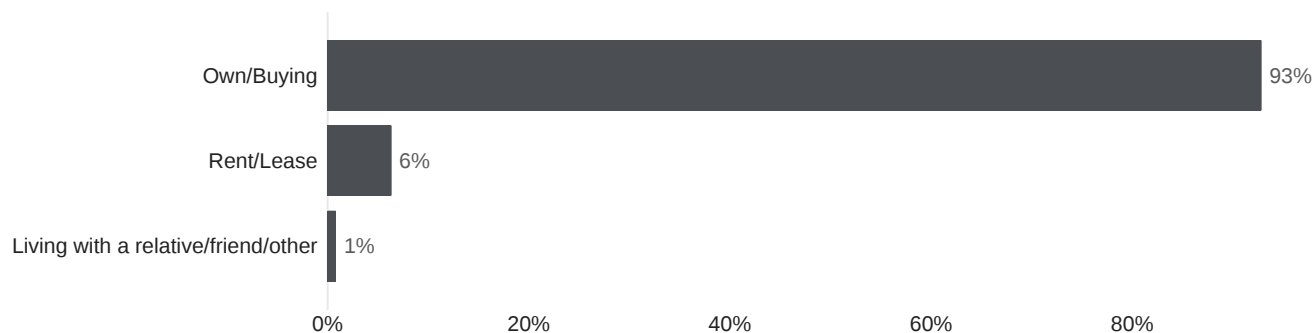
## Q18 - What is the last grade or level of schooling you completed?

237 Responses



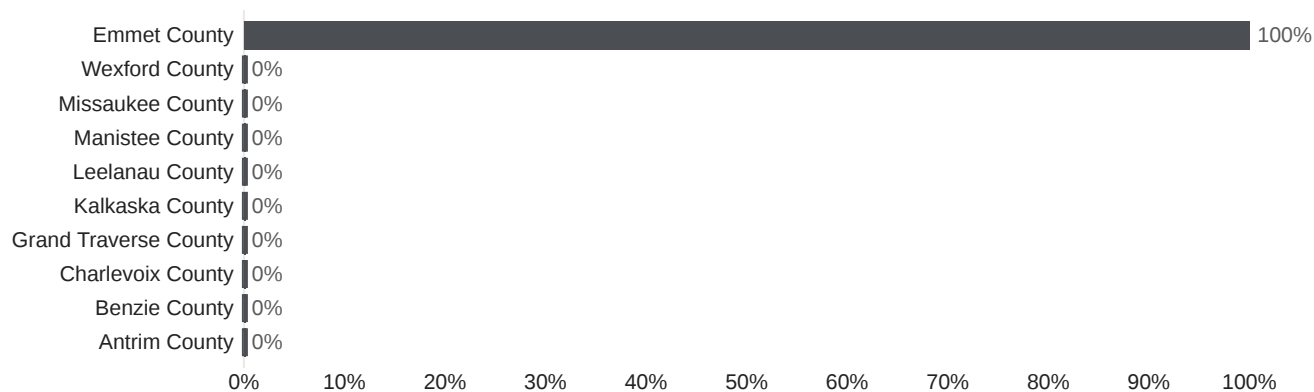
## Q19 - Do you own your own home, are you buying a home, or do you lease or rent where you live?

237 Responses



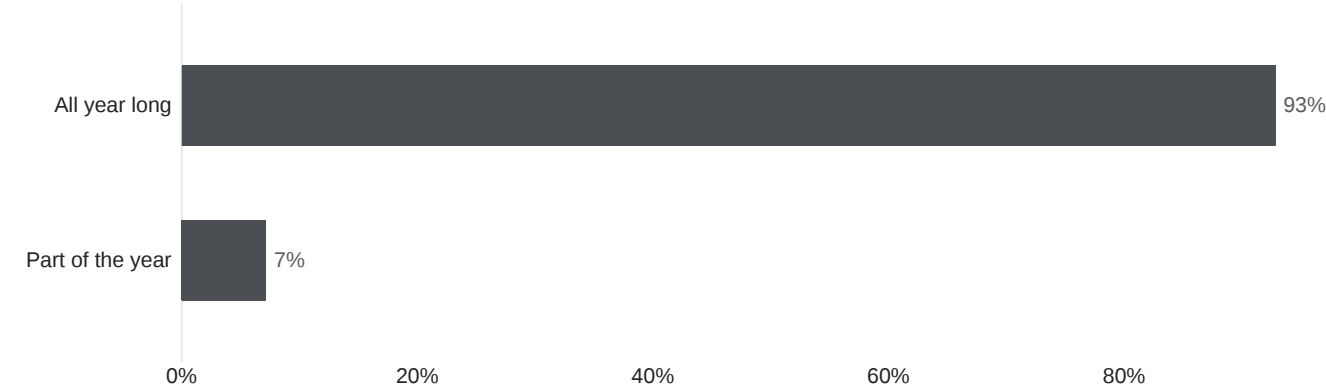
## Q20 - County

237 Responses



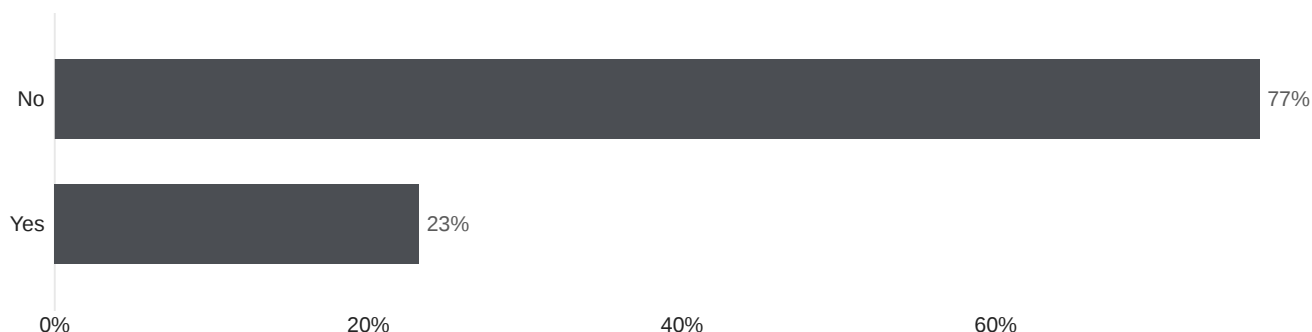
# Q21 - How much of the year do you live in this county?

237 Responses



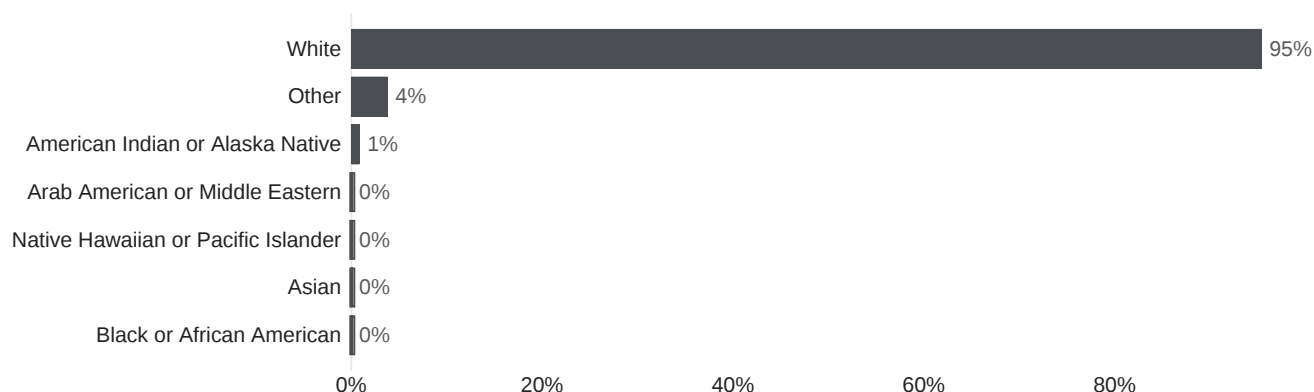
## Q22 - Do you have children living in your home who are school age or younger?

237 Responses



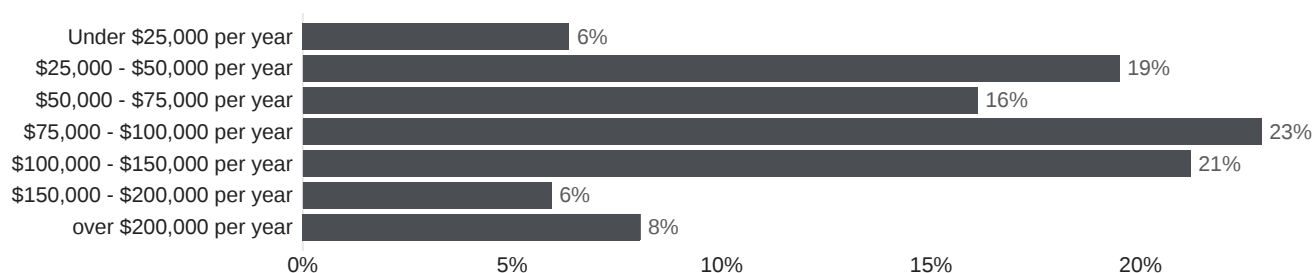
## Q23 - Which racial or ethnic group best describes you?

237 Responses



## Q24 - In which of the following categories does your total yearly household income fall, including everyone in the household? If retired, please select an income category based on retirement income.

236 Responses



# Q27 - As a renter/lessee, do you have recycling available on the property where you live?

14 Responses

