

Community Recycling Survey Results



Survey Methods

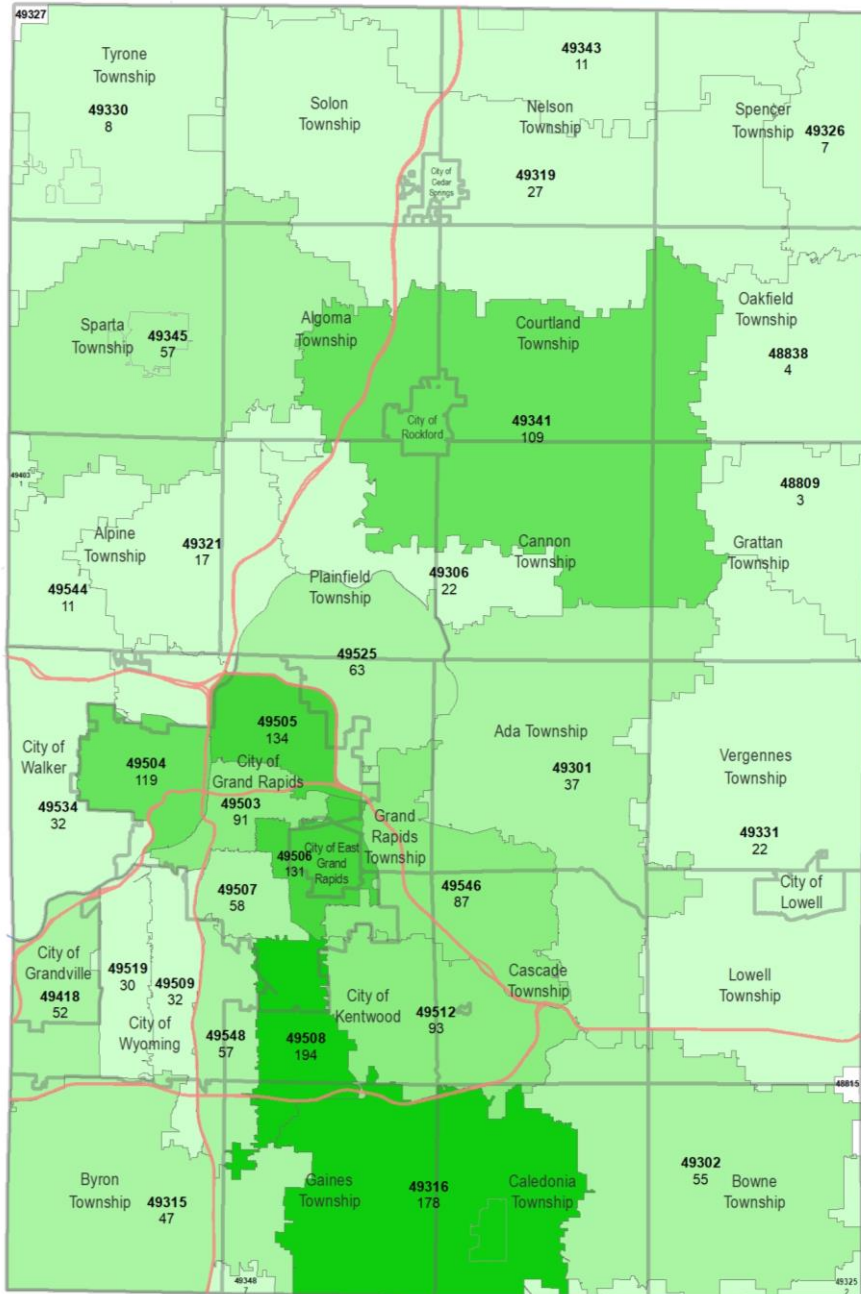
- Website
 - Pop-up
 - Directed phone calls and feedback to this link
- Social Media (Facebook)
 - Original posting reached almost 3,000 people
 - Boosted post reached over 900 people
 - Smaller posts with the survey link were posted in between
- Outreach Events
 - KCDPW Recycling Drop-Off Station Surveying
 - John Ball Zoo Area Neighborhood National Night Out
 - Kentwood Summer Concert Series
 - Cowpie Music Festival
 - Grand Rapids Symphony Picnic Pops
 - Movies on Monroe
 - Maranda Park Party



A big thank you goes to West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC) for their support and partnership on the Community Recycling Survey.

Another special thanks to our interns Sydney and Emma that assisted in the surveying and data analysis efforts.

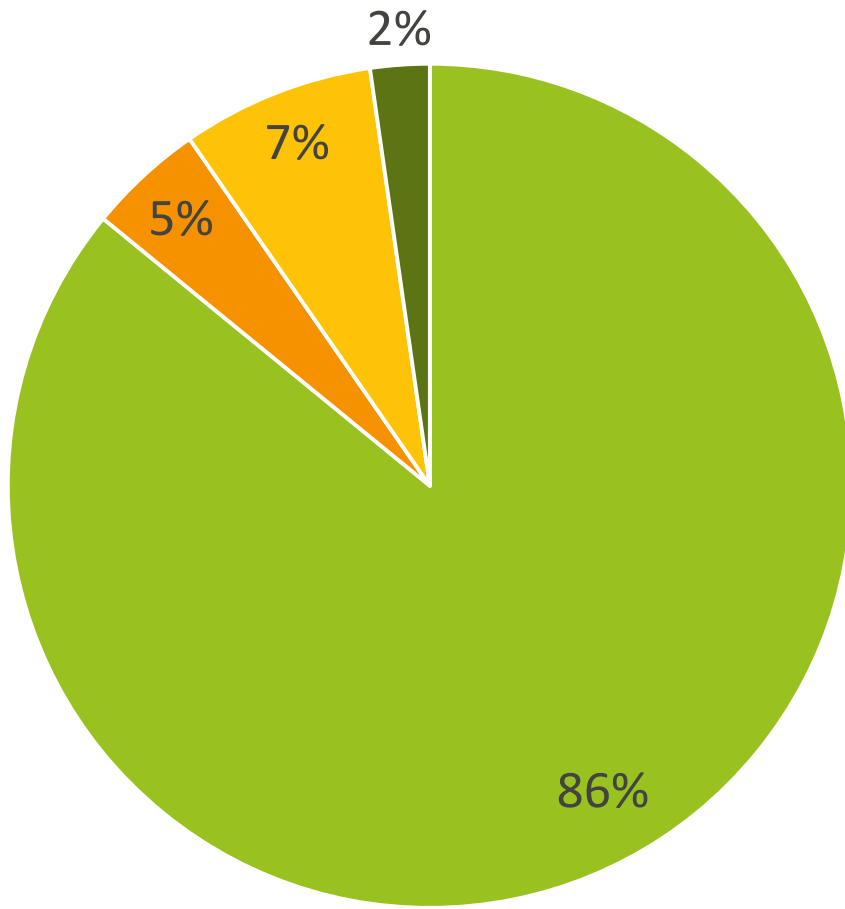




Survey Participation

- 2,115 participants from across Kent County (total of 2,696 participants)
- June 25 - August 13, 2019
- Ages of Participants
 - 18-25 5% (104 participants)
 - 26-35 19% (365 participants)
 - 36-45 22% (420 participants)
 - 46-55 19% (365 participants)
 - 56-64 18% (349 participants)
 - 65 or older 17% (337 participants)





PLEASE CHOOSE A DESCRIPTION THAT BEST FITS YOUR CURRENT RECYCLING STATUS AT HOME:

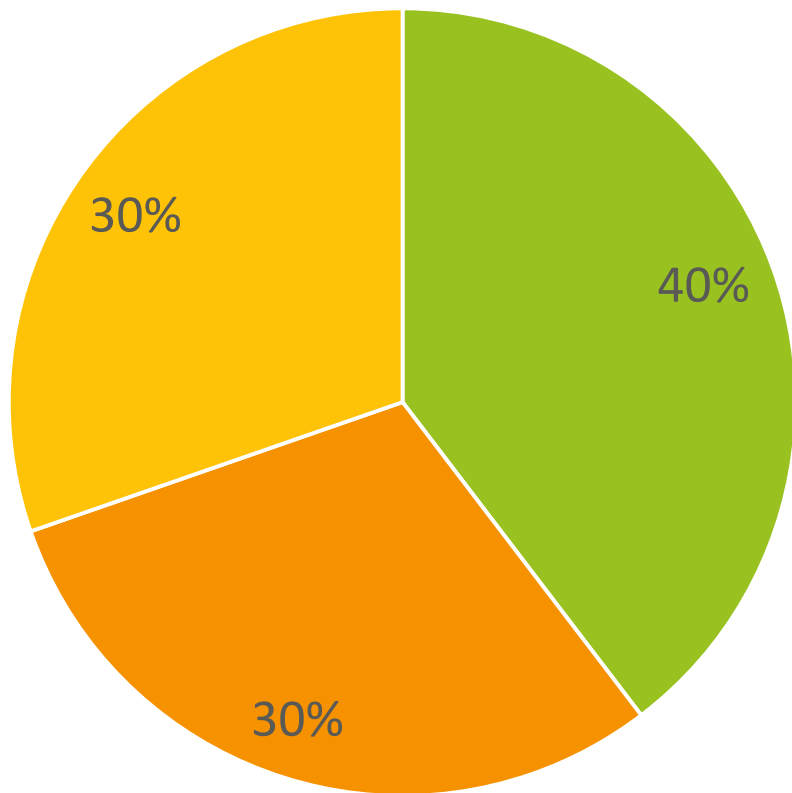
-  I currently recycle, and plan to keep recycling in the future
-  I currently recycle, but plan to stop recycling
-  I used to recycle, but no longer recycle and don't plan to in the future
-  I have never recycled, and don't plan to recycle in the future






PARTICIPANTS THAT RECYCLE

86% OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS





WHICH OF THESE RECYCLING SERVICES DO YOU USE MOST:

-  I pay for a service and my recyclables are collected at my home
-  I have free recycling service and recyclables are collected at my home
-  I take my recycling to a drop-off center

Why use the drop-off center instead of a service that collects it at your home?

- **41%** Curbside recycling costs too much or believe recycling should be free
- **29%** Curbside is not available where I live
- **10%** I don't have enough recycling to fill a cart on a regular basis
- **9%** I use the drop-off location for convenience
- **6%** Other Reasons
 - Their current trash hauler does not offer recycling services
 - Don't want an extra bin/no space for another bin
 - Without trash service, haulers won't offer just recycling services
 - Lack of trust for haulers to actually recycle and not throw the recyclables away
 - Looking into all of their options to find what fits them best
- **5%** I have too much recycling for a cart



What motivates you most to recycle?

- **38%** It's good for our planet and keeps plastics and other materials out of the oceans
- **27%** It keeps material out of our landfills
- **21%** It's good for West Michigan and helps protect our lakes, rivers, and groundwater
- **8%** It's good for our local economy and supports local jobs and local businesses that re-purpose materials
- **3%** It keeps our community and neighborhoods clean
- **2%** I see my neighbors doing it and want to do my part too
- **1%** Other Reasons
 - Cheaper to recycle/I receive better deals with my trash services/Free at drop-off stations
 - Morally obligated/religious obligations
 - Saves space in the trash
 - For future generations/children/grandchildren
 - Because their waste hauler gave me the bin
 - Recycle out of habit

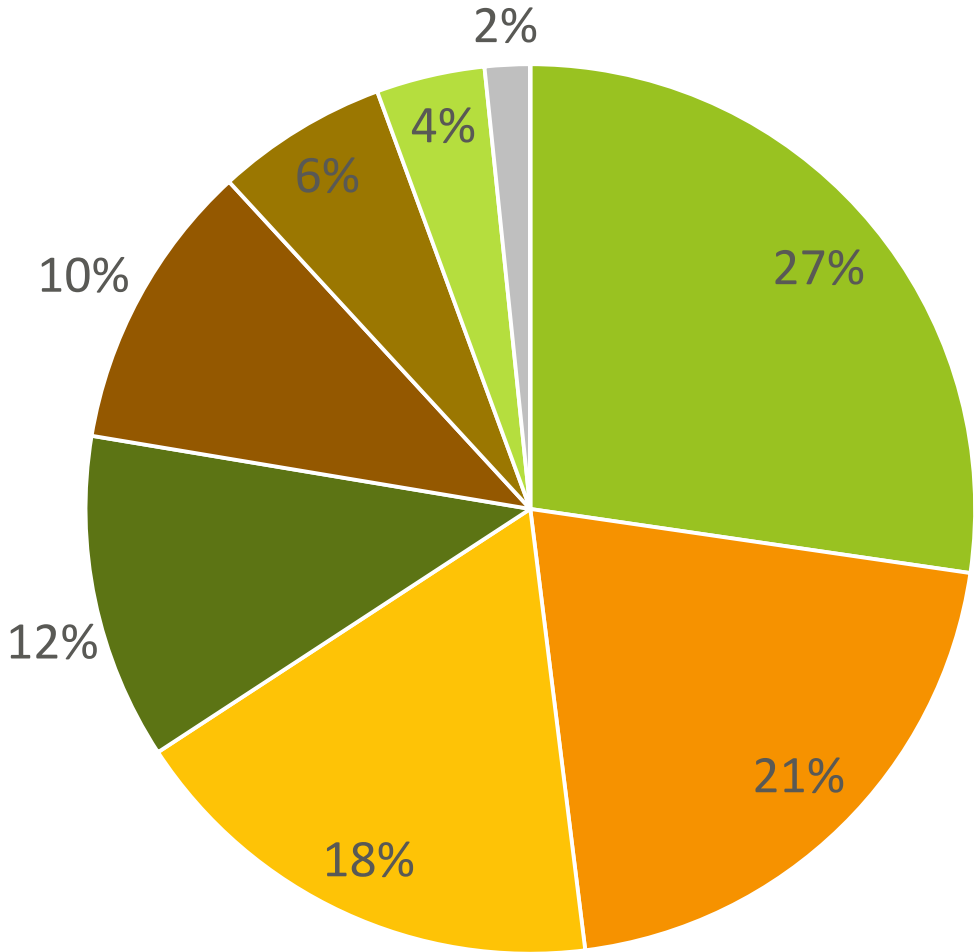


PARTICIPANTS THAT ARE NOT RECYCLING OR HAVE NEVER RECYCLED

14% OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



WHAT IS THE PRIMARY REASON YOU NO LONGER RECYCLE OR HAVE NEVER RECYCLED:



- Recycling services cost too much
- I think recycling should be free and I don't have that option in my community.
- I don't know what recycling options exist in my community.
- I don't believe the things I put in recycling goes to a processing facility and that it just ends up in a landfill anyway.
- Recycling is not available in my apartment/condo/mobile home park and I have no other option but to stop recycling
- It takes too much of my time and energy to recycle.
- Recycling is a scam and just a money maker for government and private waste haulers.
- Recycling uses more energy than just making something new from scratch.
- Recycling doesn't make any difference so why do it.



Below are some statements supporting recycling. Which is the most convincing argument that might make you consider starting recycling in the future?

- **29%** It's good for our planet and keeps plastics and other materials out of the oceans
- **26%** It's good for West Michigan and helps protect our lakes, rivers, and groundwater
- **21%** It keeps material out of our landfills
- **10%** It's good for our local economy and supports local jobs and local businesses that re-purpose materials
- **9%** Other Reasons
 - Individuals recycling make no difference without large entities also recycling
 - If recycling services were made available at low-cost/included in taxes/for free
 - Need to know/trust that recyclables are being recycled and not just dumped in the landfill
 - Reopen Kentwood Drop-Off
 - Concern for future generations
- **4%** It keeps our community and neighborhoods clean
- **1%** I see my neighbors doing it and want to do my part too



FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR KENT COUNTY DPW



The Kent County Department of Public Works is exploring several important opportunities to improve waste management for residents in the next decade.

Participants ranked from 1 (high priority) to 5 (low priority) the following improvements.

- 1** Require that all waste haulers offer both trash and recycling service to all residents as one bundled rate to increase availability of recycling county-wide.
- 2** Expand the number of cities that are required to deliver trash to the Waste to Energy facility and then invest in the facility to handle a greater volume of trash, generate more energy and save space in area landfills.
- 3** Expand the Recycling and Education Center to be able to handle more and different types of recycling materials.
- 4** Invest in PFAS treatment facilities at all active and inactive county-owned landfills to protect ground and surface water.
- 5** Recruit private businesses to separate trash heading to South Kent Landfill and turn it into compost, fuel, or other materials.

