



# 2024 Nevada Residential Recycling Knowledge and Perception Survey

*Identifying recycling knowledge gaps that exist in the public and what perceptions Nevada residents have towards recycling in their communities*



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# Executive summary

*The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) Bureau of Sustainable Materials Management (BSMM) conducted its first statewide residential recycling knowledge and perception survey in the summer of 2024 (June 4 – July 10).*

The purpose of this survey was to identify gaps in the public's knowledge about recycling and understand how Nevada residents perceive recycling in their communities. Additionally, BSMM used the survey results to identify key topic areas and target audiences, and these insights will inform the development of focused education and outreach initiatives. The survey was distributed via email using SurveyMonkey's Audience service and targeted Nevada residents aged 18 and older. A sample of 1,067 Nevada residents was analyzed to create the attached report. The following list is a high-level summary of the report findings:

- ***Most respondents think recycling is important.*** 82% of respondents said that recycling is either "Very" or "Fairly" important. Only 5% said that recycling is either of "Low Importance" or "Not Important at All."
- ***Those who often recycle usually do it for environmental concerns.*** 78% of respondents indicated they "Always" or "Usually" recycle. Of those that "Always" or "Usually" recycle, 74% said that they recycle for environmental concerns.
- ***The top reason for not recycling is not having access to services.*** 22% of respondents indicated they "Sometimes" or "Never" recycle. When asked why they recycle infrequently, 41% of these respondents cited a lack of access to recycling services.
- ***There is an educational opportunity to reduce the contamination of collected recyclable materials.*** Keeping non-recyclable items out of the recycling bin improves the efficiency and safety of the recycling process. Among respondents who use curbside recycling, 39% reported placing plastic shopping bags and plastic film in their recycling bins. 34% reported placing plastic straws/utensils in their recycling bins. 12% cited placing batteries in the recycling bins, and 10% included electronics.
- ***Respondents often reuse or repurpose plastic shopping bags.*** Over half (53%) of respondents said they reuse or repurpose plastic shopping bags.
- ***Respondents shared their interests in learning more about recycling. Respondents indicated an interest in the following:***
  - Learning how to recycle properly (e.g., what materials are acceptable to place in the bin)
  - Finding out where to take materials not accepted by curbside recycling services or drop-off locations
  - Understanding how the recycling process works and where materials go after collection
  - Learning about the impacts of recycling (e.g., is it making a difference?)

# Table of Contents

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....I
- GLOSSARY .....III
- INTRODUCTION..... 1
- METHODOLOGY .....4
- STUDY FINDINGS .....7
  - Demographic Profile of Respondents.....8
  - Respondents' Perceptions of Recycling..... 13
  - Respondents' Recycling Knowledge and Habits..... 20
  - Comparisons between Demographic Groups ..... 25
- DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....28
- SURVEY QUESTIONS .....33

# Glossary

<b>BSMM</b>	Bureau of Sustainable Materials Management
<b>MRF</b>	Material Recovery Facility
<b>NDEP</b>	Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
<b>UNLV</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas



# Introduction

*To better understand the public's knowledge and perception of recycling in the state, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) Bureau of Sustainable Materials Management (BSMM) conducted its first ever statewide residential recycling survey in the summer of 2024.*

# Surveying Nevada Residents about Recycling

*Recycling remains a priority for the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) Bureau of Sustainable Materials Management (BSMM).*

Recycling conserves our natural resources for future generations, saves energy by reprocessing materials instead of producing new ones, and has positive economic impacts on our communities. Nevada's recycling program began with the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 320 in 1991, which established three guiding principles:

- A goal to recycle 25% of the municipal waste generated in Nevada
- A preferential procurement policy for goods made with recycled materials
- A directive to NDEP to provide education and technical assistance concerning waste reduction and recycling

BSMM further committed to enhancing Nevada's recycling programs and opportunities when it developed the [2022 Nevada Sustainable Materials Management Plan](#).<sup>1</sup> As part of the Plan, BSMM conducted a needs assessment to identify key conditions essential for achieving a more sustainable management of materials and waste in the State. Two specific needs regarding recycling were highlighted: 1) the need to increase education and outreach efforts to encourage Nevadans to adopt and implement sustainable practices like recycling and 2) the need to improve access to recycling programs and distribute information about these programs. BSMM then came up with several objectives and recommended actions items to address those needs (which can be found in the "Objectives, Strategies, and Recommendations" section of the Plan).

Because effective education and outreach efforts are vital to addressing both needs, the Plan contains an entire objective dedicated to such efforts:

- Objective 3: Enhance and expand education and outreach efforts

More specifically under Objective 3 is Strategy 2: "Reduce public confusion about recycling and composting." However, in order to reduce confusion about recycling and determine where to focus education and outreach efforts, BSMM first needed a baseline understanding of existing knowledge gaps and residents' perceptions of recycling in their communities. To address this, BSMM developed and launched a statewide residential recycling survey via SurveyMonkey (email) in the summer of 2024 (June 4 - July 10).

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<sup>1</sup> Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. (December 2022). *2022 Nevada Sustainable Materials Management Plan*. <https://ndep.nv.gov/land/waste/solid-waste/solid-waste-management-plan>

## Purpose of Survey

The purpose of conducting a residential recycling knowledge and perception survey is to provide a baseline understanding of what knowledge gaps exist in the public and what perceptions Nevada residents have towards recycling in their communities. By understanding these gaps and perceptions, BSMM can determine which topic areas and target audiences to focus on when planning and developing education and outreach projects and events.

Also, this data will serve as a benchmark that can be compared to future email surveys after major education and outreach campaigns have been implemented.

## Objectives of Survey

- Collect baseline data on Nevada residents' knowledge and perceptions of recycling
- Based on the identified knowledge gaps and attitudes, determine specific target audiences and topic areas for future education and outreach efforts



# Methodology

*The survey was disseminated via email using SurveyMonkey's Audience service. The survey targeted Nevada residents who were 18 years or older.*

# Survey Methodology

Rather than using an online survey open to everyone in the public, BSMM conducted an email survey using SurveyMonkey's Audience service. This approach enabled BSMM to select specific demographic criteria, such as location, age, gender, and income, and then SurveyMonkey emailed the survey to individuals meeting these criteria. SurveyMonkey also balanced the selection of respondents so that the sample's demographic characteristics better reflected the actual Nevada population (as outlined by the U.S. Census). Therefore, this method enabled BSMM to obtain a more representative and randomized sample of Nevada residents compared to an open public survey.

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*Surveys that are open to the public often suffer from self-selection bias. This bias arises when participants volunteer to take the survey rather than being randomly selected. As a result, the sample may not accurately represent the entire population, because those who choose to respond might have different characteristics or opinions compared to those who do not participate. Additionally, open surveys are more likely to attract individuals with strong, potentially extreme opinions—such as passionate advocates or staunch opponents of a particular issue—which can further skew the results. BSMM wanted to limit this bias.*

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## Audience Selection Criteria

The following audience criteria were chosen through SurveyMonkey:

- Location: Nevada
- Gender: All genders
- Age: 18+
- Household income: \$0 - \$200,000+

*Note: Gender and age were balanced to get a representative online sample according to the US Census distribution.*

## Sample Size

The survey was fully completed by 1,103 respondents. However, 36 of those responses indicated a zip code outside of Nevada; so, these responses were removed. A total of 1,067 respondents fully met the selection criteria and completed the survey. 1,067 responses represented a 3% margin of error (95% confidence level).

Minimizing the margin of error improves the precision of the survey results. For example, if 60% of the sample says that they recycle “usually.” We can then say that we’re 95% confident that the true/real percentage of the entire Nevada population that admits to recycling “usually” is between 57% - 63%.

# Anticipated Limitations

Prior to conducting the email survey, it was anticipated that some demographic groups may not be fully represented in an email survey. Therefore, demographic questions were included in the survey in order to identify demographic groups that were not fully captured through this SurveyMonkey approach. Such information will provide insight on what additional survey methods should be used in the future.



# Study Findings

*Respondents were asked questions about how they perceived recycling and what they knew about recycling. Respondents were also asked about demographic information.*

# Demographic Profile of Respondents

The survey captured a range of respondent demographic data, including age, level of education, household income, race/ethnicity, zip code, and presence of children under 18 in the household. Respondents' zip codes were used to identify their counties of residence. This information helped assess whether the geographic distribution of respondents aligned with the actual distribution of the Nevada population (see Table 1).

Overall, the geographic distribution of respondents closely matched that of the actual Nevada population – with the exception of Clark County, which was slightly overrepresented beyond the  $\pm 3\%$  margin of error. It is important to note that none of the counties have enough responses on their own to be representative of their individual county. Rather, the geographic distribution of the sample by county matches the Nevada population's distribution by county (with the exception of Clark County). This is what would be expected of a random sample of Nevada's population.

**Table 1: Geographic Distribution of Respondents by County vs Actual Nevada Population Distribution**

County	Survey Respondents	% of Total Respondents	Actual Population % Breakdown (US Census)*	Survey Sample % vs Actual Population %
Carson City	15	1.41%	1.89%	Within the margin of error.
Churchill County	14	1.31%	0.82%	Within the margin of error.
Clark County	833	78.07%	72.97%	Clark County Overrepresented
Douglas County	10	0.94%	1.59%	Within the margin of error.
Elko County	9	0.84%	1.73%	Within the margin of error.
Esmeralda County	0	0.00%	0.02%	Within the margin of error.
Eureka County	1	0.09%	0.06%	Within the margin of error.
Humboldt County	5	0.47%	0.56%	Within the margin of error.
Lander County	0	0.00%	0.18%	Within the margin of error.
Lincoln County	0	0.00%	0.14%	Within the margin of error.
Lyon County	10	0.94%	1.91%	Within the margin of error.
Mineral County	2	0.19%	0.15%	Within the margin of error.
Nye County	18	1.69%	1.66%	Within the margin of error.
Pershing County	0	0.00%	0.21%	Within the margin of error.
Storey County	10	0.94%	0.13%	Within the margin of error.
Washoe County	139	13.03%	15.67%	Within the margin of error.
White Pine County	1	0.09%	0.29%	Within the margin of error.
<b>Total</b>	1067	100%	100%	-

\*Note : Nevada population and county data from the 2020 U.S. Census:

<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/nevada-population-change-between-census-decade.html>

Table 2 below compares the respondent demographics to the U.S. Census American Community Survey. The sample is representative of Nevada’s gender composition. Regarding race/ethnicity, “African American or Black” and “White, non-Hispanic” groups were overrepresented, while the “Hispanic/Latino” group was underrepresented. Additionally, households with income less \$75,000 were overrepresented, whereas households with income over \$100,000 were underrepresented.

**Table 2: Respondent Demographics vs Census Data**

Categories	Survey	Census Data	Representation
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	48.41%	50.52%	Within the margin of error.
Female	51.59%	49.49%	Within the margin of error.
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
African American or Black	16.59%	9.80%	Overrepresented
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.91%	1.40%	Within the margin of error.
Asian	7.50%	8.80%	Within the margin of error.
White, non-Hispanic	56.23%	51.20%	Overrepresented
Hispanic/Latino	10.97%	28.70%	Underrepresented
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.03%	0.80%	Within the margin of error.
Prefer not to answer	1.97%	-	N/A
Other	2.81%	-	N/A
<b>Age*</b>			
18-24	12.37%	10.80%	Within the margin of error.
25-34	17.06%	18.58%	Within the margin of error.
35-44	15.93%	17.44%	Within the margin of error.
45-54	17.24%	16.41%	Within the margin of error.
55-64	14.43%	15.96%	Within the margin of error.
65+	22.96%	20.85%	Within the margin of error.
<b>Household Income</b>			
Under \$25,000	20.81%	15.20%	Overrepresented
\$25,000 - \$49,999	26.43%	19.00%	Overrepresented
\$50,000 - \$74,999	23.81%	17.60%	Overrepresented
\$75,000 - \$99,999	11.81%	13.60%	Within the margin of error.
\$100,000+	13.03%	34.60%	Underrepresented
Prefer not to answer	4.12%	-	N/A
<b>Presence of Children Under 18 in the Household</b>			
Yes	32.99%	29.39%	Overrepresented (barely outside margin of error)
No	67.01%	70.61%	Underrepresented (barely outside margin of error)

Table 2 Notes:

Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Gender data from US Census:

<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?g=040XX00US32&tid=ACSST5Y2022.S0101>

Race/Ethnicity data from US Census: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/nevada-population-change-between-census-decade.html>

Age data from US Census:

<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?g=040XX00US32&tid=ACSST5Y2022.S0101>

Household income data from US Census: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S1901?g=040XX00US32>

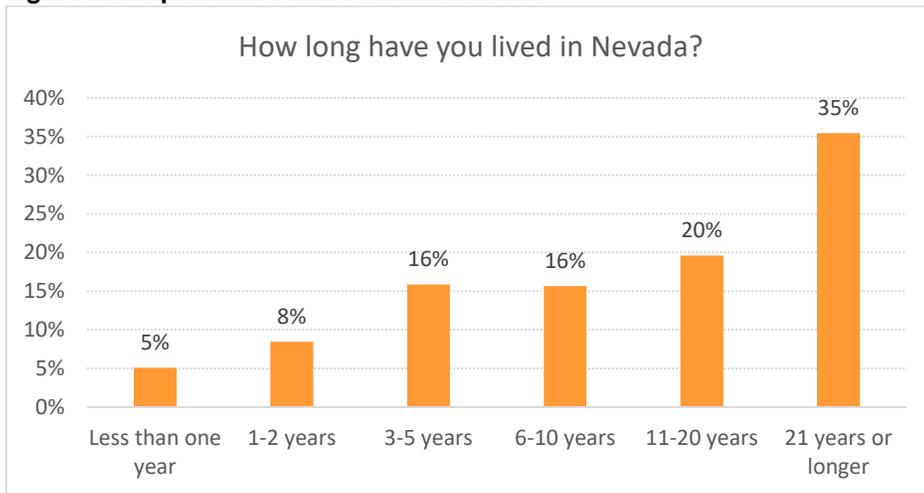
Children in household data from US Census: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP1Y2022.DP02?g=040XX00US32>

\*Note: Age percentages for the Census column were calculated by taking the total number of people in that age group divided by the total number of Nevadans over the age of 18 (2,414,125 Nevadans were 18 or older).

## Respondent Tenure within Nevada

Survey respondents shared how long they have lived in Nevada (Figure 1). Over half of the respondents (55%) have lived in Nevada for more than 10 years. Tenure was inquired because of the significant migration of people to Nevada. From 2010 to 2019, Nevada’s population increased by 14%, and two-thirds of this population growth occurred due to net migration.<sup>2</sup> Most of this net migration came from other states, such as California, where recycling rules are different.

Figure 1: Respondent Tenure within Nevada

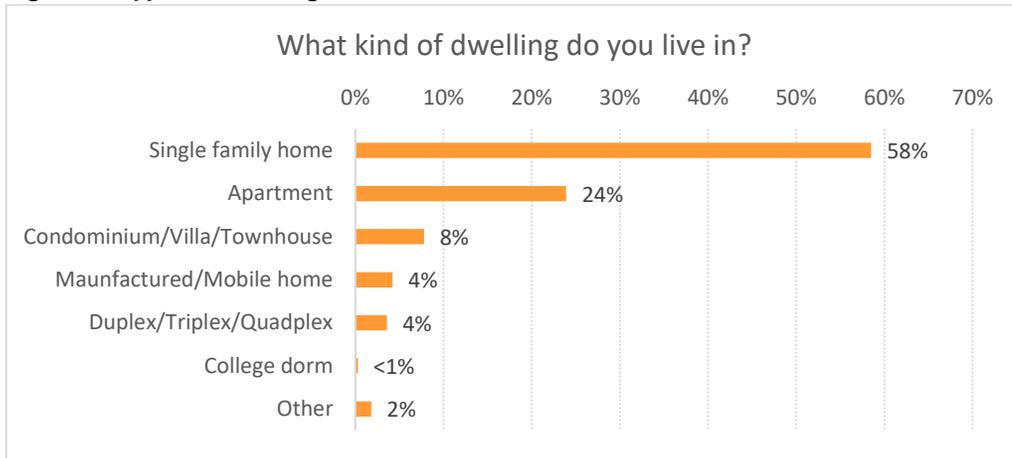


## Type of Dwelling

Respondents provided information on the type of dwelling they live in (Figure 2). Over half (58%) of respondents reside in single-family homes. 24% live in an apartment, 8% in a condominium, villa, or townhouse, and 4% in a duplex, triplex, or quadplex. Less than 1% live in a college dorm.

<sup>2</sup> Nevada Housing Division. (2020, August 13). Nevada components of population change. <https://housing.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/housingnewnv.gov/Content/Programs/HDB/HDB214NVComponentsOfPopulationChange20200813.pdf>

**Figure 2: Type of Dwelling**

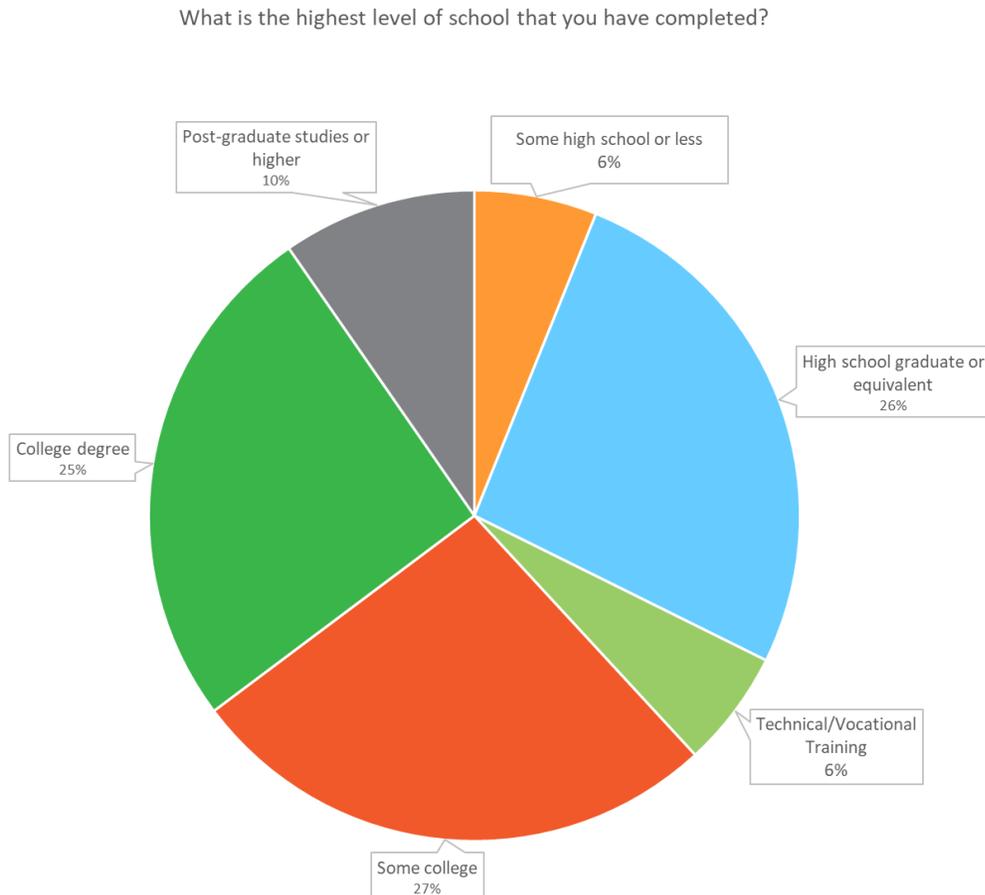


Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

## Respondent Education Levels

Respondents provided information about the highest level of education they have completed (Figure 3). 6% have had some high school or less, and 26% have a high school diploma or equivalent. 6% have completed vocational or technical training, 27% have some college, and 35% have a college degree or higher.

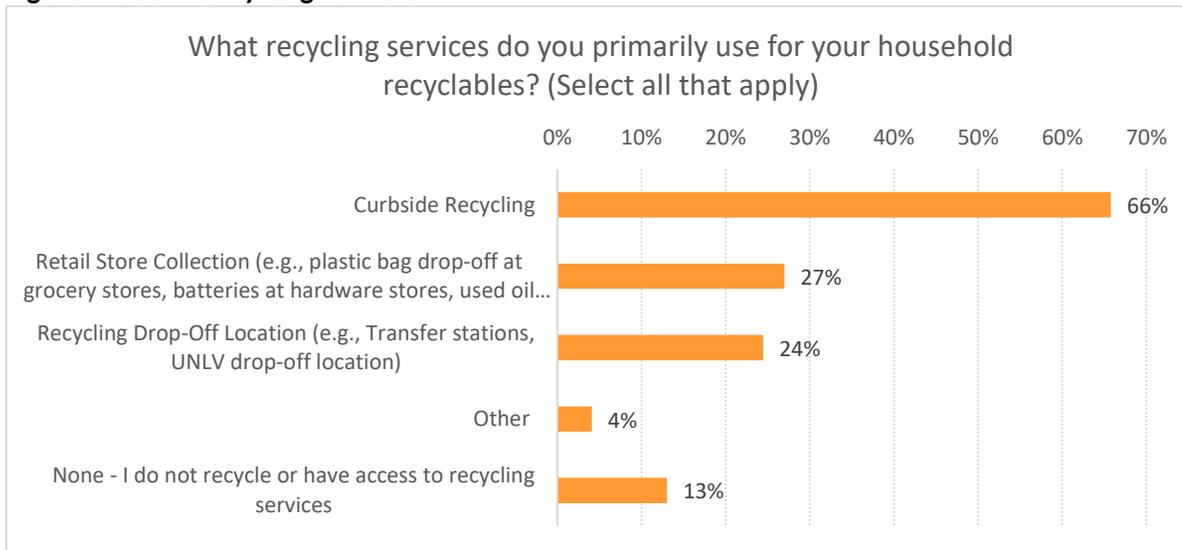
**Figure 3: Respondent Education Levels**



## Use of Recycling Services

Respondents were asked about the type of recycling services they primarily use for their household recyclables (Figure 4). Respondents could select more than one type of service. 66% of respondents said they utilize curbside recycling services. 27% said they drop off recyclables at retail stores that offer collection of certain items (e.g., plastic bags or batteries). 24% cited using recycling drop-off locations, such as recycling drop off at Transfer Stations or at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) community drop-off location. 13% said they do not recycle or have access to recycling services. Some specified “Other,” and those responses included: recycling center, scrapyard, apartment complex recycling bin, donation center, and reuse of items.

**Figure 4: Use of Recycling Services**

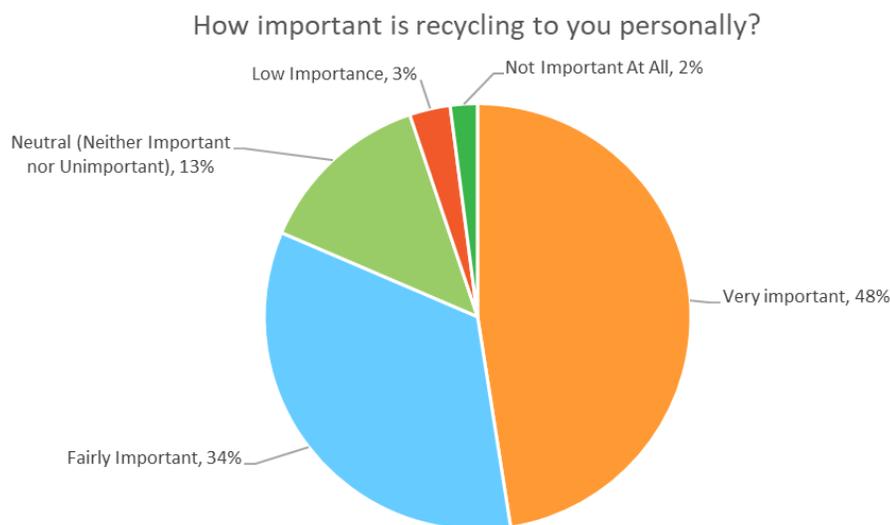


# Respondents' Perceptions of Recycling

## Importance of Recycling

Overall, most respondents indicated that recycling is important to them (Figure 5). Almost half of the respondents (48%) said that recycling is "Very Important." 82% of respondents said that recycling is either "Fairly" or "Very" important. Only 5% said that recycling is either of "Low Importance" or "Not Important at All." 13% of respondents claimed a neutral stance towards recycling.

**Figure 5: Importance of Recycling**

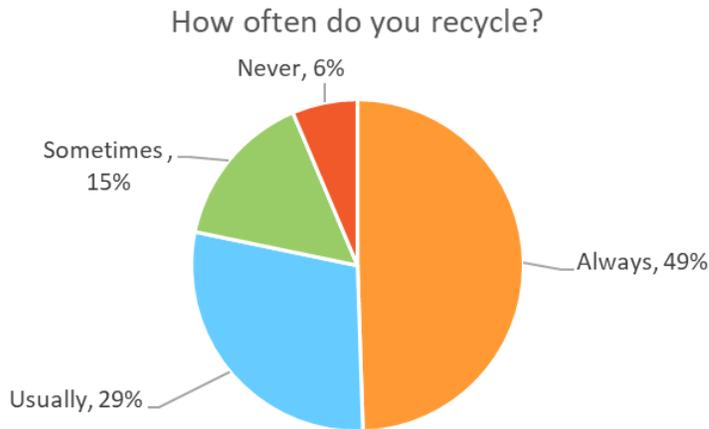


## Recycling Frequency and Reasons for Indicated Frequency

Respondents were asked about their recycling frequency (Figure 6). Almost half (49%) of respondents claimed to "Always" recycle. 29% said they "Usually" recycle, 15% said they "Sometimes" recycle, and 6% said they "Never" recycle.

There appears to be a discrepancy between the responses to this question "How often do you recycle?" and a previous question "What recycling services do you primarily use?" 13% said they do not use a recycling service because they either do not recycle or do not have access to recycling, whereas only 6% said they never recycle. It is possible that those that do not have access may "Sometimes" recycle when given the opportunity.

**Figure 6: Respondents' Indicated Recycling Frequency**



Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

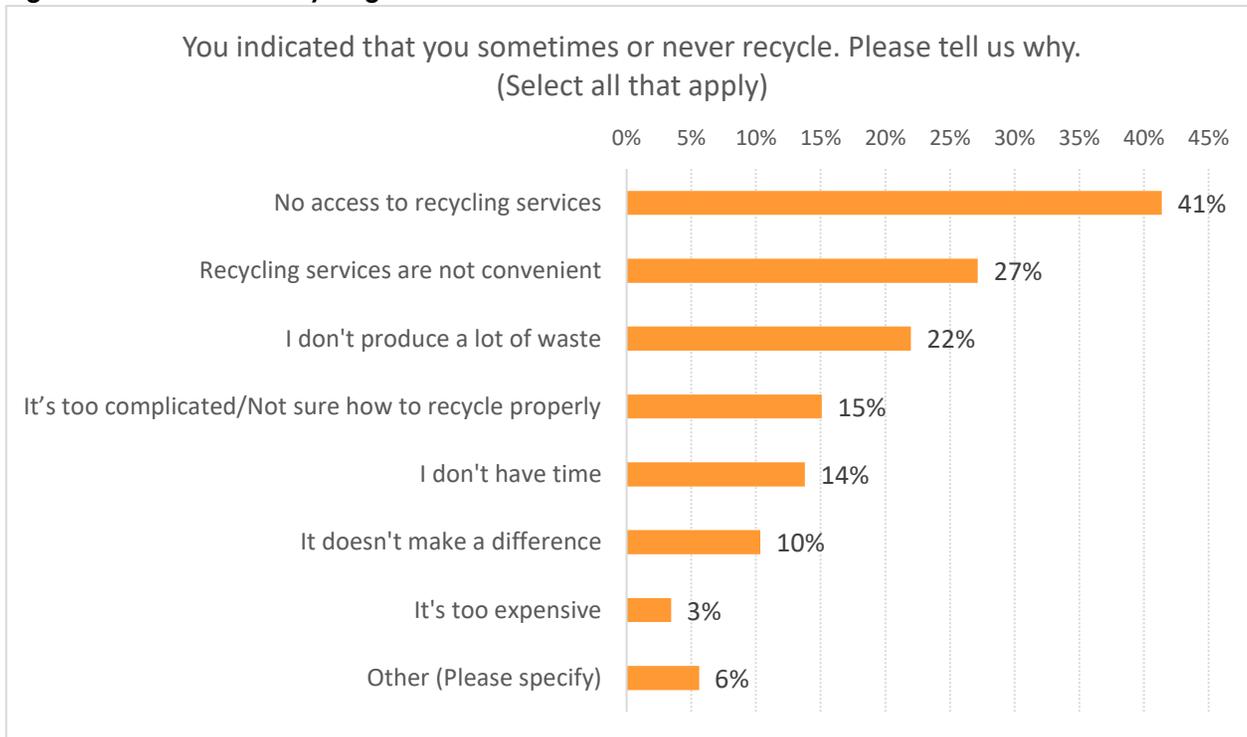
835 respondents (78% of total respondents) indicated they “Always” or “Usually” recycle. These respondents were then asked why they recycle (Figure 7). Respondents could select more than one answer. 74% of those that “Always” or “Usually” recycle said that they do it for environmental concerns. 54% said they do it for personal or community values, and 53% said they do it out of personal habit. 3% marked “Other.” “Other” specified responses included reasons such as: for cash/income, convenience or because service/bin was provided, or lowers the amount of trash generated.

**Figure 7: Reasons for Recycling “Always” or “Usually”**



232 respondents (22% of total respondents) indicated that they “Sometimes” or “Never” recycle. These respondents were asked why they only sometimes or never recycle (Figure 8). Respondents could select more than one answer. 41% of these respondents said they have no access to recycling services. 27% said that recycling services are not convenient. 22% said they do not produce a lot of waste. 15% said that recycling is too complicated. 14% said they do not have time to recycle. 10% said that recycling does not make a difference. 3% said it is too expensive. 6% marked “Other” and specified reasons such as forgetting to recycle, recycling not paying enough, or someone else in the household handles the recycling.

**Figure 8: Reasons for Recycling “Sometimes” or “Never”**



## Open-Ended Questions Related to Perception

Respondents were asked three (3) open-ended questions related to the perception of recycling. Using SurveyMonkey’s word cloud feature and the ability to search the 1,067 responses for specific keywords, common themes and keywords could be subjectively identified. ***Some responses contained more than one theme or keyword. Also, some responses were either gibberish (e.g., a string of random letters) or unclear in meaning. These were categorized as “Unclear” or “Non-Answer.”***

### *When you think about recycling, what words or phrases come to mind?*

Respondents were asked what words or phrases come to mind when they think about recycling (Table 3). Over 100 responses to this question listed materials that are recyclable (e.g., plastic, cans, glass, paper, cardboard). Some variation of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” occurred in almost 14% of the responses. Also, the phrase “save the planet/earth/environment” was common in responses (12% of responses included the

phrase). “Clean” was also a common keyword, occurring in almost 10% of responses (e.g., clean the environment, clean planet). Overall, responses had a positive sentiment. About 5% had a negative sentiment (e.g., it’s a waste of time, it’s a scam, it’s difficult). Themes with a more negative sentiment are highlighted in red in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Words and Phrases Respondents Related to Recycling**

Theme/Keyword(s)	Instances*	% of Total
Environment / Environmental (word somewhere in response)	163	15.28%
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (or similar variation)	145	13.59%
Plastic	131	12.28%
Save the Planet/Earth/Environment	106	9.93%
Clean (word somewhere in response)	102	9.56%
Planet (word somewhere in response)	82	7.69%
Less Trash in Landfill / Reduce Waste	82	7.69%
Earth (word somewhere in response)	70	6.56%
Benefits / Good for Environment	63	5.90%
Helping the Environment/Planet/Earth	61	5.72%
Cans	53	4.97%
Green	49	4.59%
Bottles	46	4.31%
Paper	42	3.94%
Sustainable / Sustainability	37	3.47%
Glass	36	3.37%
Protect the Environment/Planet/Earth	31	2.91%
Eco-Friendly / Environmentally-Friendly / Eco	30	2.81%
Dishonest / Scam / Lie / Waste of Time	25	2.34%
Recycling Bins	22	2.06%
Separating / Sorting	22	2.06%
Cardboard	22	2.06%
Difficult / Hard Work	20	1.87%
Aluminum	19	1.78%
Climate Change / Global Warming	18	1.69%
Protect Oceans/Turtles	17	1.59%
Necessary	17	1.59%
Money	15	1.41%
Future Generations	15	1.41%
Responsibility	12	1.12%
Reduce Pollution	11	1.03%
Save Resources	10	0.94%
Health / Healthy	9	0.84%
Other Topic	8	0.75%
Easy	4	0.37%
Availability or Lack of	3	0.28%
Political / Extremist	3	0.28%
Unclear / Non-Answer / “Nothing”	83	7.78%

\*Note: Some responses contained more than one theme/keyword/phrase. Rows highlighted in red indicate a more negative sentiment.

*Do you have any concerns about recycling? Please explain.*

Respondents were asked if they had any concerns about recycling (Table 4). Approximately 58% said they had no concerns. However, it is challenging to determine whether their reported lack of concern genuinely indicates no issues, or if it reflects indifference, disinterest, or simply a desire to provide a quick and easy response to the survey question. About 5% of the responses were tagged as “Unclear/Non-Answer.”

**Skepticism:** Over 14% of the responses contained some language or sentiment related to skepticism. About 10% of responses were skeptical of the recycling process (e.g., Do recyclables actually get recycled? Are recyclables just dumped in a landfill? Recycling is a scam). About 2% were skeptical about the effectiveness of recycling (e.g., Is it worth it? Does it help?), and about 1% were skeptical about the environmental impacts (e.g., questioning if recycling was beneficial or harmful to the environment). Just under 2% of respondents were worried that haulers and recyclers were more concerned about profits than properly recycling.

**Engagement and Ease:** Almost 6% of respondents reported concerns with the recycling participation rate (e.g., concerned that not enough people recycle). 4% were concerned about the difficulty of recycling, such as finding it confusing or inconvenient, and 3% were concerned about having limited or no access to recycling services in their area.

**Saving the Environment and Plastics:** About 3% of respondents were concerned about the environment being at stake if people do not recycle. 2% were concerned about plastic recycling and its associated environmental impacts.

**Table 4: Concerns Related to Recycling**

Concern-Related Themes	Instances*	% of Total
Skepticism – Recycling Process (e.g., does it actually get recycled? Are recyclables just dumped in a landfill? Recycling is a scam)	102	9.56%
Not Enough People Recycle	63	5.90%
Recycling is Confusing / Not Easy	43	4.03%
No Access to Recycling / Limited Recycling Options	36	3.37%
Environment is at Stake if We Don't Recycle	31	2.91%
Concerns about Plastics	24	2.25%
Skepticism – Effectiveness of Recycling (e.g., is it worth it? Is it helping?)	22	2.06%
Concerns about Cost / Economy	18	1.69%
Skepticism – Big Companies & Corporations Making a Profit	17	1.59%
Skepticism – Environmental Impact of Recycling (e.g., is it more harmful than helpful?)	12	1.12%
What Actually Happens to Recyclables?	12	1.12%
Lack of Awareness / Recycling is Not on People's Minds	12	1.12%
There is No Compensation / Reward / Incentive to Recycle	11	1.01%
Contamination of the Recycling Stream	10	0.94%
Recycling Should Be Mandatory / Required	9	0.84%

Wish More Things Were Recyclable	8	0.75%
Recycling of Batteries	5	0.47%
Cleanliness of Recyclables / Attracting Vectors	5	0.47%
Producing Too Much Waste	5	0.47%
Recycling of Glass	4	0.37%
Export of Recyclables to Foreign Nations	3	0.28%
No Concerns	617	57.83%
Non-Answers / Not Able to Determine Meaning	56	5.25%

\*Note: Some responses contained more than one theme/keyword/phrase.

### *How do you think recycling in your community could be improved?*

Respondents were asked about ideas for improving recycling efforts in their communities (Table 5). Approximately 12% said that they did not know how it could be improved or that they thought recycling efforts were good enough. About 23% of the responses were unclear or difficult to interpret.

**Provide Access or Have More Recycling Options:** Approximately 15% of respondents suggested that recycling could be improved by increasing access to recycling services or by offering more recycling options and locations

**Educate and Inform:** Approximately 15% of respondents said that recycling efforts could be improved through better education and outreach efforts. Several respondents suggested advertisement campaigns, mailers, and flyers to promote recycling. Additionally, many respondents expressed a desire for more information about what can and cannot be recycled, as well as details about what actually happens to recyclables after collection.

**Table 5: Ideas for Improving Recycling Efforts**

Improvement-Related Themes	Instances*	% of Total
Have more options/locations/bins or Provide access	161	15.09%
Provide more education/information (e.g., what can and can't be recycled; what really happens to recyclables? - do more campaigns, ads, mailers, flyers)	158	14.81%
More people need to recycle / Improve people's motivation	143	13.40%
Provide incentives, rewards, or credits to trash bill	63	5.90%
Make it convenient and easy to do	28	2.62%
Providing recycling bins in public areas	27	2.53%
Make it mandatory	24	2.25%
Improve the recycling system efficiency	22	2.06%
Provide recycling bins/services to apartments/condo complexes	21	1.97%
Recycle more types of materials	19	1.78%

Schedule more pickups	18	1.69%
More transparency about recycling process	14	1.31%
Provide curbside recycling services	13	1.22%
More special waste services (e.g., electronics, batteries)	9	0.84%
More recycling at businesses and casinos	7	0.66%
Host recycling events / pop-up stations	6	0.56%
Provide organic waste services	6	0.56%
Increase involvement of schools / youth clubs	5	0.47%
We can't improve it / Don't like recycling	5	0.47%
Unclear Response / Non-Answer	247	23.15%
Don't Know / Efforts Good Enough	132	12.37%

*\*Note: Some responses contained more than one theme/keyword/phrase.*

# Respondents' Recycling Knowledge and Habits

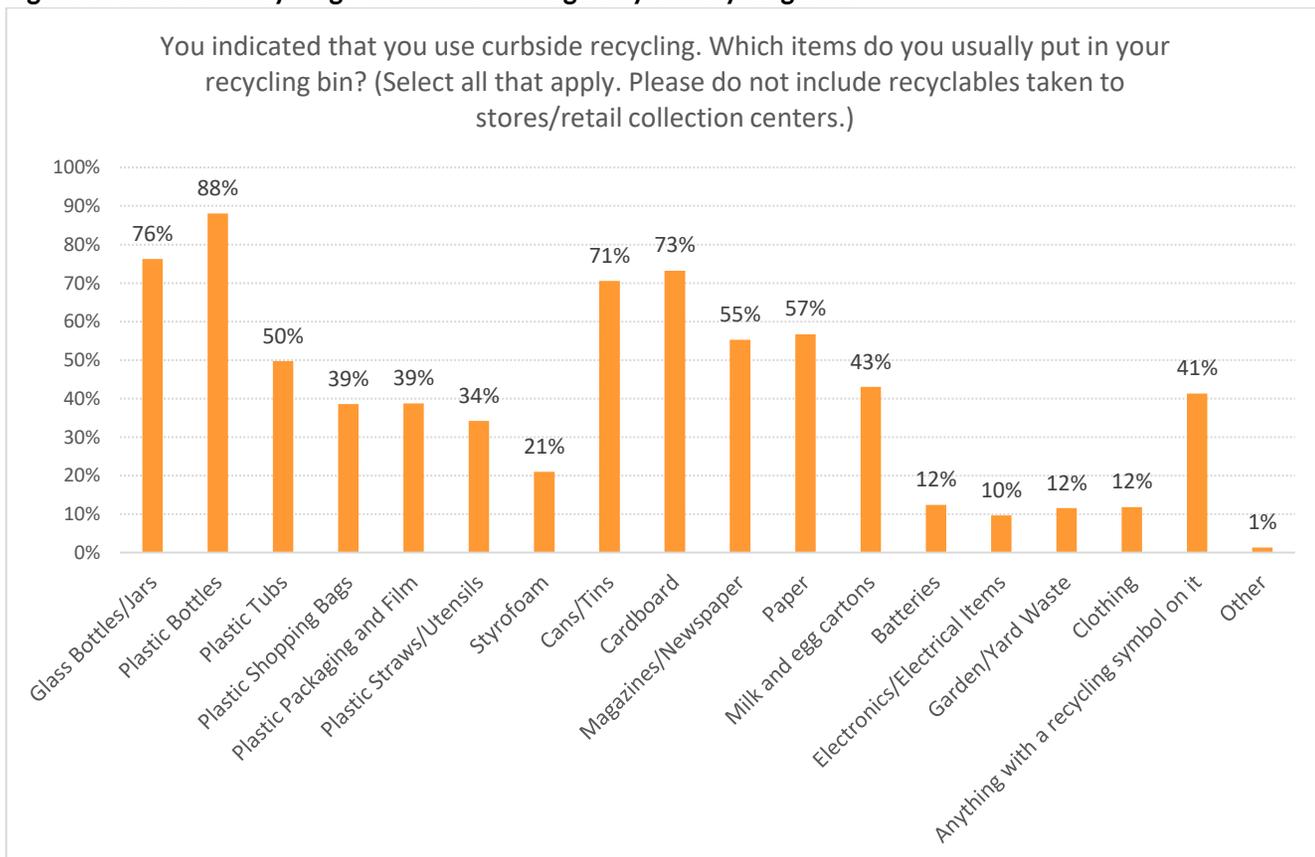
## Curbside Recycling Habits

702 respondents (66% of total) indicated that they use curbside recycling. These respondents were asked to identify the items that they normally put in their recycling bins (Figure 9). This question was asked to gain a better understanding of potential incorrect recycling habits. Based on BSMM's discussions with waste and recycling haulers, Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) frequently encounter contamination in their recyclable material streams from items that either cannot be recycled or pose hazards to machinery and workers. Common contamination items include lithium batteries, electronics, plastic film, and plastic bags.

Of particular note, 39% of curbside recycling respondents said they put plastic shopping bags and plastic packaging and film in the recycling bin. 34% said they place plastic straws and utensils in the recycling bin. 12% said they put batteries in the recycling bin, and 10% said electronics/electrical items. 41% said they put any item with a recycling symbol in the recycling bin. 12% said they put clothing in the recycling bin.

It is important to note that responses to this question may be influenced by respondents' shopping and consumption habits. For instance, someone who does not use or purchase magazines is not likely to list "magazines" as a common item they recycle.

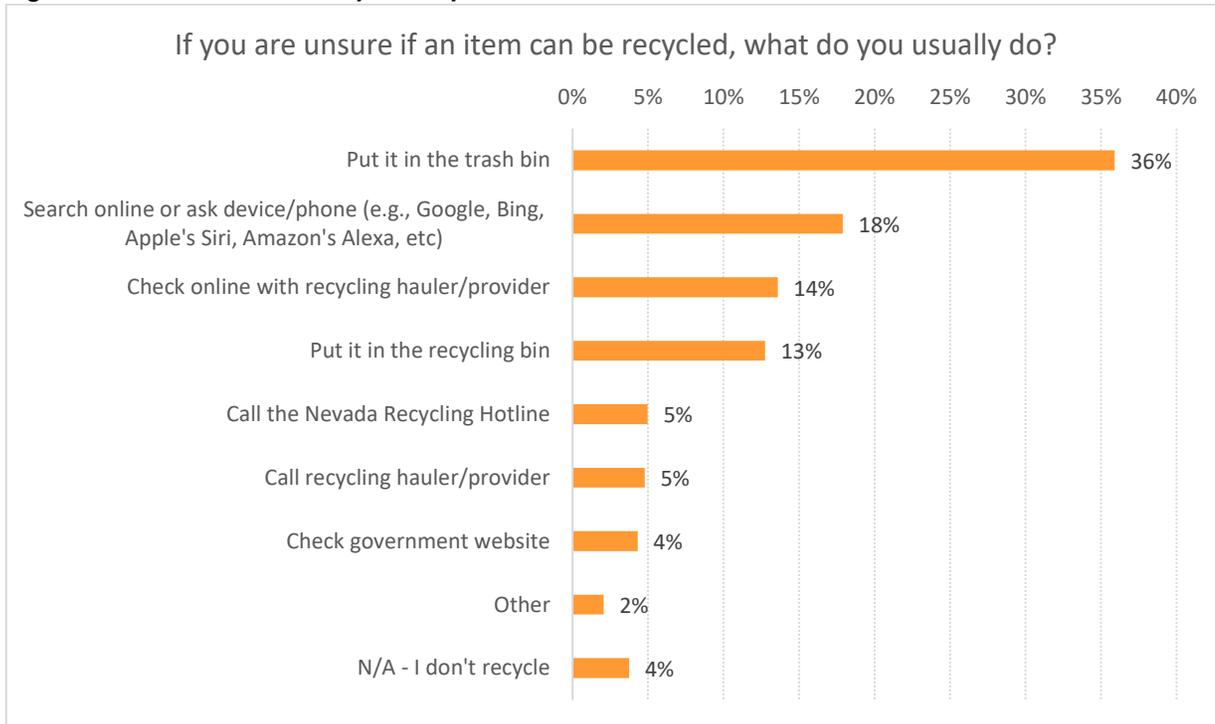
**Figure 9: Curbside Recycling - Items Placed Regularly in Recycling Bins**



## Uncertainty Regarding an Item's Recyclability

All respondents were asked what actions they typically take when they are unsure if an item can be recycled (Figure 10). 36% of the respondents said they would throw the item away in the trash bin. 18% said they would go to a search engine like Google or Bing or would ask their phone or device. 14% would check the recycling hauler's website. 13% would put the item in the recycling bin. Calling the Nevada Recycles hotline (5%), calling a service provider (5%), and checking a government website (4%) were less common responses.

**Figure 10: Unsure on the Recyclability of an Item**



*Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding*

## Plastic Shopping Bags

All respondents were asked about their typical practices for handling plastic grocery or shopping bags (Figure 11). Of note, over half (53%) said they reuse or repurpose plastic shopping bags. 16% put them in the recycling bin. 14% put them in the trash bin. 12% bring them to a collection site, such as a grocery store. Only 4% say that they don't use plastic shopping bags, but instead use re-usable bags. Only 2% say that they don't use plastic shopping bags, but instead use re-usable bags.

**Figure 11: Fate of Plastic Grocery/Shopping Bags**



Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Note: Figure 9 shows that 39% of respondents with access to curbside recycling regularly put plastic shopping bags in the recycling bin. Figure 11 shows that 16% of all respondents normally put plastic shopping bags in the recycling bin. Additionally, respondents could only select one answer for Figure 11. It is possible that after re-using a plastic shopping bag, it is later put in the recycling bin.

## Open-ended Questions Related to Knowledge and Habits

Respondents were asked two (2) open-ended questions related to their recycling knowledge and habits. Using SurveyMonkey's word cloud feature and the ability to search the 1,067 responses for specific keywords, common themes and keywords could be subjectively identified. **Some responses contained more than one theme or keyword. Also, some responses were either gibberish (e.g., a string of random letters) or unclear in meaning. These were categorized as "Unclear" or "Non-Answer."**

**Please complete the following statement: "I would recycle more if..."**

Respondents were asked to complete the following statement: "I would recycle more if..." (Table 5). Common themes included availability and access to recycling, having more items to recycle, being compensated for recycling efforts, making recycling easier and more convenient, and having more knowledge about recycling.

**Availability and Access:** The most common response to this survey question involved having access to recycling services. 15% of respondents said they would recycle more if they had access or if recycling services were available to them.

**More Items to Recycle:** Almost 14% of respondents said they would recycle more if they had more stuff to recycle, produced more waste, or if their recycling services accepted a wider

range of materials. Additionally, several respondents mentioned they would recycle more if they had access to places that collected items such as electronics and batteries.

**Compensation:** Approximately 11% of respondents said they would recycle more if they were paid for their efforts or if they were compensated in some other way (e.g., credits or discounts towards trash bill).

**Convenience and Ease:** 10% of respondents said they would recycle more if it was more convenient (e.g., closer drop-off locations) or if recycling was free. 6% said they wished recycling was easier and simpler (e.g., confusing labeling or plastic bottles that require the removal of labels to be recyclable).

**Knew What and Where to Recycle:** Over 5% of respondents said they would recycle more if they knew what materials were recyclable or where they could take recyclables.

**Knew Recycling Made a Difference and Was Actually Being Done:** 4% of respondents said they would recycle more if they knew it was making a positive impact. Another 4% said they would recycle more if they knew recyclers were actually recycling the materials.

**Table 5: “I would recycle more if...”**

Theme/Keywords	Instance*	% of Total
It was available/ I had access	164	15.37%
Used more items that were recyclable / Had more stuff to recycle / Hauler accepted more items /More things were recyclable	145	13.59%
Got paid for it / Was compensated or rewarded	117	10.97%
If it was convenient/nearby / It was free	108	10.12%
It was easier / It was simple and easy	67	6.28%
Knew how to, where to, what to recycle / Understood it more	57	5.34%
It made a difference / It was impactful	47	4.40%
Had time or energy / Was not so busy	46	4.31%
If recycling was actually being done / Knew what happens to recyclables / Knew it actually got recycled	45	4.22%
If others around me did it / Everyone did it / More people did it	38	3.56%
More space or bins / Had bigger bins	38	3.56%
Already recycle everything I can	23	2.16%
If I was reminded / If I remembered / Was more disciplined	22	2.06%
More bins in public/community	19	1.78%
If curbside was available	17	1.59%
If I was required to / Had reason to / Cared to	17	1.59%
I had help	14	1.31%
Had more resources	10	0.94%
Unclear / Non-Answer	106	9.93%
Don't Know	11	1.03%
No Intention of Recycling	4	0.37%

\*Note: Some responses contained more than one theme/keyword/phrase.

*Is there anything about recycling that you wish you knew more about? Please explain.*

Respondents were asked if there were any aspects of recycling that they would like to learn more about (Table 6). Common themes included wanting to know how the recycling process works, how to properly recycle, how much is actually recycled, and the impact of recycling. Approximately 53% said there was nothing they wanted to know more about, and 9% of respondents gave unclear answers.

**Recycling Process:** Almost 14% of respondents wanted to know more about the recycling process. They had questions such as: how does recycling work, where do the materials go after collection, how are materials sorted and processed, and what do the recyclables become?

**Recycling Properly:** About 10% of respondents wanted to know more about how to recycle properly. They had questions such as: which items are recyclable, what do the labels mean, and what items can and cannot go in the recycling bin? Several respondents mentioned wanting a list of acceptable items on their bin.

**How Much is Actually Recycled:** 4% of respondents wanted to know how much of the collected recyclable material is actually recycled and how much is landfilled. Overall, the sentiment of these responses involved wanting more transparency around what happens to the materials and the viability and effectiveness of recycling.

**Impact:** About 3.5% of respondents wanted to know the impact of recycling. Some wanted to know more about whether or not recycling makes a difference. Some wanted to know if there were negative impacts of recycling.

**Table 6: “Wish I Knew More About...”**

Wish I Knew More – Themes	Instances*	% of Total
How the recycling process works	147	13.78%
How to properly recycle	108	10.12%
How much is actually recycled	43	4.03%
Recycling’s impact (good or bad)	37	3.47%
Plastics	23	2.16%
Cost of recycling & recycler profits	20	1.87%
Where I can recycle	16	1.50%
Recycling problematic materials (e.g., e-waste, batteries)	16	1.50%
How to recycle more	15	1.41%
Getting access to recycling or more services	11	1.03%
Recycling participation rate (residential and businesses)	9	0.84%
How to get paid for recycling	5	0.47%
Composting / Organic waste management	4	0.37%
No / Nothing	564	52.86%
Unclear / Non-Answer	99	9.28%

\*Note: Some responses contained more than one theme/keyword/phrase.

# Comparisons between Demographic Groups

Recycling perceptions and habits were also compared between different demographic groups. Statistically significant differences between different groups are highlighted in the next few sections. Statistically significant comparisons were identified by SurveyMonkey's analytical tools.

## Households with Children Under 18 vs Households without Children

Households with children under 18 were more likely to say recycling is "Very Important" compared to households without children (52.84% vs 44.90%). Although, there was not a statistically significant difference between the two groups for the other responses of "Fairly Important," "Neutral," "Low Importance," and "Not Important at All."

Households with children that have access to curbside recycling were more likely to report that they put plastic bags in the recycling bin (45.12% vs 35.09%). This difference may be due to different shopping and consumption patterns between the two groups.

When asked how often they recycled, both types of households responded similarly. However, households that have children and indicated they "sometimes" or "never" recycled were more likely to say they do not frequently recycle because they do not have time (22.39% vs 10.30%). Additionally, households without children that indicated they sometimes/never recycle were more likely to say they do not recycle because they have no access to recycling services (46.06% vs 29.85%). Households without children may not have access to recycling due to the type of dwelling they live in. Approximately 56% of households without children said they live in single family homes versus 63% of households with children that live in single family homes. Single family homes in cities often have better access to recycling in Nevada compared to apartments and other similar dwellings. This is because apartments and condominiums in Nevada are not required to provide recycling services to tenants

Households with children were less likely to put recyclables in trash if they were unsure on the item's recyclability (28.98% vs 39.30%). They were more likely to check online with their recycling hauler (17.33% vs 11.75%) and were more likely to search online (e.g., Google, Bing) or ask a device/phone (e.g., Alexa, Siri) (22.73% vs 15.52%). There was no significant difference between the two groups' response rates for saying they would just put the item in the recycling bin (13.07% vs 12.59%). This raises the question: why do households with children seem more likely to make an effort to determine whether an item is recyclable?

## Male vs Female Respondents

Compared to male respondents, female respondents who reported recycling "usually" or "always" were more likely to cite environmental concerns as a reason for their recycling practices (78.77% vs 69.85%). Female respondents who reported recycling "sometimes" or

“never” were more likely to attribute their lower recycling frequency to a lack of time (17.80% vs 7.55%).

When unsure whether an item was recyclable, female respondents were less likely to dispose of it in the trash (33.09% vs 39.07%). However, female respondents were more likely to mark “Other” method for dealing with such an item (3.06% vs 1.01%). Some of the “other” specified responses from female respondents included: asking a friend or family member, checking for the recycling symbol, and looking at the list of acceptable items on their recycling bin.

Female respondents were more likely to use re-usable shopping bags (4.68% vs 2.23%), less likely to put plastic bags in the trash (10.43% vs 16.80%), less likely to put plastic bags in the recycling bin (11.51% vs 20.65%), and more likely to re-use/re-purpose the bags (59.71% vs 46.15%).

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*These differences between female and male responses pose interesting questions for further research: How much of these differences are due to differing shopping and consumption habits? Do female heads of households typically take primary responsibility for recycling in the homes?*

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## Access to Recycling Services vs No Access/No Recycling

Because the survey asked respondents what recycling services they use, differences between the following three groups could be identified: 1) access to curbside recycling, 2) access to drop-off locations, and 3) no services (either they didn't have access or just don't use recycling services).

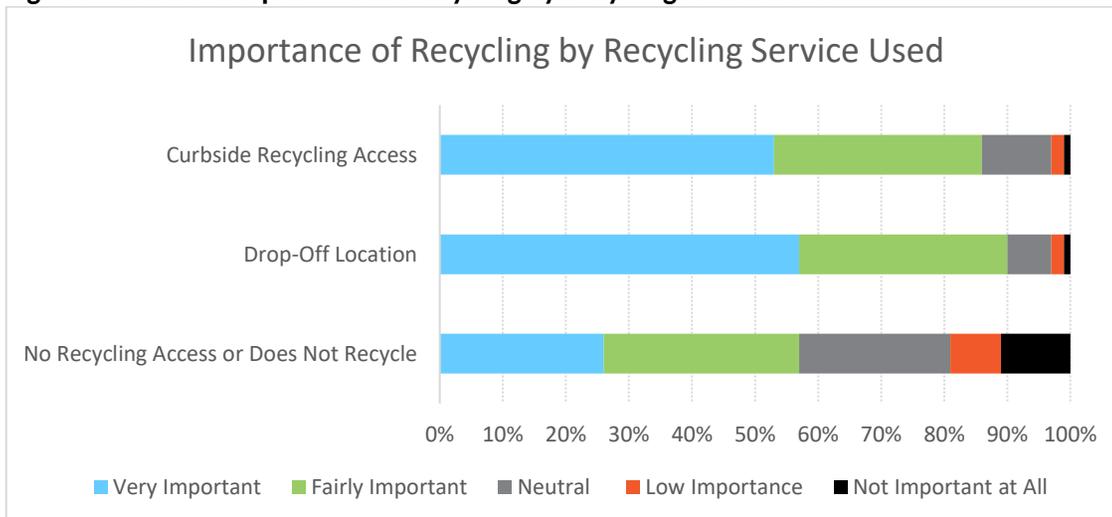
Those with access to either curbside or a drop-off location were more likely to say recycling was “Very Important” (Figure 12). Those without access to recycling or just don't recycle were more likely to say recycling was neither important nor unimportant (neutral), had low importance, or was not important at all.

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*This difference in perception raises important questions: Does having access to recycling help improve the perception of recycling? Or does having a poorer view of recycling lead to fewer recycling initiatives? Or are both situations contributing?*

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**Figure 12: Viewed Importance of Recycling by Recycling Service Used**



When comparing those who use curbside recycling versus those who use drop-off locations, respondents that use curbside recycling were more likely to say that they “always” recycle (62.96% vs 48.66%).

Among those using curbside services who reported recycling “sometimes” or “never,” the primary reason for infrequent recycling was that they do not generate much waste (cited by 33.97% of these respondents). The second most common reason was that recycling is perceived as too complicated or that they are unsure how to recycle properly (24.19%).

For those who use drop-off locations and reported recycling “sometimes” or “never,” the top reason for infrequently recycle is due to inconvenient recycling services (42.86% of those who use drop-off locations). Other common reasons included not producing a lot of waste (40% of these respondents), and recycling being too complicated (31.43%).

## Age Group Differences

Younger age groups are more likely to use drop off locations compared to those over 55. The older the respondent, the more likely the respondent was to mark “no access to recycling services” as a reason for not usually recycling. Compared to older respondents, younger respondents were more likely to say they don’t usually recycle because it is too complicated, or they are not sure how to recycle properly. Additionally, younger age groups that don’t usually recycle were more likely to say they “don’t have time” to recycle.

Also, younger respondents were more likely to search online or ask their device/phone about the recyclability of an item. Older generations were more likely to just put the item in the trash bin if they were unsure if an item could be recycled.

## Household Income Differences

Households with income under \$25,000 had the highest rate indicating that they do not have access to recycling or do not recycle. The higher the level of income, the more likely they were to have access to curbside recycling. Households with less than \$25,000 were more likely to say they live in an apartment. Since apartments in Nevada often lack access to recycling services, this most likely explains why such households said they do not have access to recycle or do not recycle.

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*Apartments and condominiums in Nevada are not required to provide recycling services to tenants; however, construction and renovation permits must incorporate space for recycling containers. Waste haulers providing recycling services in the area must also service apartments and condominiums should landlords opt in to participate.*

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## Tenure Differences

Those who lived in Nevada less than a year were more likely to use a government website to determine the recyclability of an item compared to those who lived in Nevada longer. This means there is an opportunity to connect with new residents through the NDEP website and other local government websites.



# Discussion and Recommendations

*Based on the identified knowledge gaps, attitudes towards recycling, and limitations of the survey, BSMM determined topics for education and outreach efforts and future research ideas.*

# Putting it all together

This statewide survey set out to accomplish the following objectives:

- Collect baseline data on Nevada residents' knowledge and perceptions of recycling
- Based on the identified knowledge gaps and attitudes, determine specific target audiences and topic areas for future education and outreach efforts

In addition to these two objectives, it was anticipated that some demographic groups may not be fully represented in the survey. Therefore, demographic questions were included in the survey to identify demographic groups that were not fully captured through this SurveyMonkey approach. The following sections address these two objectives and the demographics limitations.

## Baseline Data Collection

The survey results presented in the Study Findings section of this report provide a record of baseline data about Nevada residents' knowledge of and perception towards recycling. If a similar survey is conducted in the future after performing a significant education and outreach campaign, certain variables can be compared (e.g., does the view of recycling's importance change, do less people put plastic bags in the recycling bin, do more people claim to "usually" or "always" recycle, etc.).

## Demographic Profile of Respondents and Gaps

As mentioned earlier, any statewide survey will skew more towards the population centers (i.e., Clark and Washoe County). However, except for a slight overrepresentation from Clark County, this survey method achieved a nearly random sample of Nevada residents from a geographic perspective. This can be seen by the geographical distribution of the sample compared to the actual distribution of the Nevada population. Should BSMM want more representative answers from the rural counties, it should conduct a survey specifically focused on rural residents. However, at the time of this survey, SurveyMonkey did not have the capability of only targeting specific counties.

Additionally, it was determined that this SurveyMonkey service overrepresented and underrepresented certain racial/ethnic groups. White, non-Hispanics and African Americans/Blacks were overrepresented while Hispanics/Latinos were underrepresented. A different survey approach (e.g., telephone, mail, or different email survey service) will be needed to better understand the knowledge gaps and perceptions of Hispanics/Latinos, and that survey should be offered in Spanish and English.

Also, households with income under \$75,000 were overrepresented, while households with income over \$100,000 were underrepresented. This outcome does make sense given the nature of SurveyMonkey's respondent lists. Respondents are paid to take surveys, and such an activity may not be of interest to those with higher household incomes.

# Applying the Survey Results and Providing Recommendations for Education and Outreach Efforts

## *What residents want to know about recycling*

After reviewing the open-ended questions, several common themes emerged related to residents' knowledge gaps and perceptions towards recycling. After analyzing these common themes, it is recommended that BSMM's residential education and outreach efforts focus on addressing the following topics through a variety of channels and media:

- How to properly recycle depending on location (e.g., what items are acceptable to put in a recycling bin or bring to a drop-off location, what items must not go into the recycling bin, what happens when improper items make it into the recycling stream, how clean do items really need to be)
- Where to take materials not accepted by curbside recycling services or drop-off locations (e.g., plastic bags, electronics and e-waste, batteries, and paint)
- Demystifying the recycling process (e.g., how the recycling process works, how materials are sorted and processed, what happens after materials are collected, how much is actually recycled, what factors impact the recyclability of materials)
- What are the impacts of recycling (e.g., positive impacts, negative impacts, ways to mitigate negative impacts, a focus on tradeoffs between recycling, reuse, disposal, and other alternative methods using the sustainable materials management lifecycle assessment approach)

*Most Nevadans already think recycling is important. They really want to make sure they are doing it right and are making a difference.*

74% of those that "Always" or "Usually" recycle say they recycle due to environmental concerns (e.g., reduce waste, tackle climate change, preserve natural resources). Additionally, regarding the question "what words/phrases come to mind when thinking about recycling," many responses involved the theme of saving or preserving the environment/planet/earth and its natural resources and keeping our world clean. Therefore, messaging that emphasizes how recycling benefits the environment might resonate with this audience.

## Improving the Contamination Issue

Contamination of the recycling stream by items such as trash, cords, plastic bags, packaging film, electronics, batteries, and other hazardous wastes is a common occurrence in Nevada and the nation. Contamination reduces the effectiveness and efficiency of the recycling process. Plastic bags, plastic film packaging, and cords easily get tangled in the sorting equipment and require material recovery facilities (MRFs) to shut down the sorting process to clean out equipment. Additionally, lithium batteries pose fire risks to MRFs and their workers.

Per the survey, 39% of respondents who use curbside recycling said they put plastic bags and plastic packaging film into their recycling bin. 34% said they put plastic straws and utensils in the recycling bin. 12% put batteries in the recycling bin, and 10% put electronics. Therefore,

there is a big opportunity to improve contamination rates by educating the public about recycling properly. Since contamination is common throughout Nevada's recycling communities, a unified outreach campaign can be used. Even if the campaign just focused on keeping plastic bags and plastic film out of the recycling bin, a significant reduction in contamination could occur.

In addition to teaching what goes in the recycling bin and what does not, it is important to emphasize the mentality "When in doubt, throw it out." Also, it is important to have easily accessible information on where to take these problematic items (e.g., plastic bags to participating grocery stores, batteries to participating hardware stores, etc.)

Additionally, BSMM and waste/recycling haulers should include information around why it is important to keep contamination low. Many residents probably do not understand that the sorting machinery can get damaged from these items and that certain batteries can cause fires. Elaborating on the negative impacts of contamination may help curb "wishcycling" (i.e., the well-intentioned but incorrect belief that an item is recyclable when it really is not – often leading to placing incorrect materials in the recycling bin).

## Building Transparency and Addressing Skepticism

Recycling is a complex process that is dependent on a wide variety of factors, including trends and changes within the volatile domestic and international commodity markets – i.e., markets for selling primary (virgin) and secondary (scrap and recyclable) materials.

Due to this complexity as well as misinformation or misinterpretation of information, many residents have legitimate doubts regarding the recycling process. Concerning this survey's question of "I would recycle more if...", 4.40% of respondents said they would recycle more if they knew it made a difference, and 4.22% said they would recycle more if they knew materials were actually being recycled. Therefore, there is an opportunity for BSMM and recyclers to provide more transparency and build trust in the recycling process. This will be beneficial to all residents, even if they do not explicitly express skepticism or doubt.

One way BSMM can provide more transparency is collecting more specific data around where recyclers and haulers in Nevada send their collected materials. Each year, BSMM collects recycling tonnages from recyclers in Nevada. It also collects data on whether the recyclables are sent to a processor in Nevada or out of state. The main use of this data is to determine the flow of recyclable materials. BSMM should collect more specific location data on where collected recyclables go when they leave the state. If this information was collected, it could be communicated to the public in an aggregated manner to improve transparency.

## Reaching Nevadans Digitally

When uncertain about an item's recyclability, 36% of respondents reported primarily using the internet to find out (i.e., 18% use a search engine or ask a device, 14% search the service provider's website, and 4% check government website). Since this is a large portion of the population, BSMM should continue to ensure that its webpages about recycling are up-to-date and are being displayed on the major search engines (e.g., Google and Bing). BSMM should devote resources to Search Engine Optimization (SEO) tactics to determine how to develop and bolster its web content so that 1) BSMM is creating web content that people are

actually searching for and using and 2) Google and Bing are displaying this content high in the search results when people search for the content's topics. Additionally, BSMM should expand and strengthen the Nevada Recycles brand's presence on social media. Social media can be a great tool for increasing awareness and directing people to digital resources.

Other communication and outreach methods should be considered and used as well. Several respondents mentioned wanting lists of acceptable items. Such lists can be created in various physical formats (e.g., stickers on the recycling bins, magnets for the fridge, mail or flyers/pamphlets).

## Future Research and Surveys

This study found that those who had access to recycling were more likely to say recycling was "Very Important." Those without access to recycling or just don't recycle were more likely to say recycling was neither important nor unimportant (neutral), had low importance, or was not important at all. This difference in perception raises important questions: Does having access to recycling help improve the perception of recycling? Or does having a poorer view of recycling lead to fewer recycling initiatives? Or does a positive view lead to more recycling initiatives? Or are all these factors contributing in some way? A potential future study could look at the relationship between access to recycling and perception of recycling in more detail.

Additionally, several different recycling habits were identified between male and female respondents. These differences between female and male responses pose interesting questions for further research: How much of these differences are due to differing shopping and consumption habits? Do female heads of households typically take primary responsibility for recycling in the homes?

Also, differences in recycling habits were observed between households with children under 18 and those without. Further research into consumption and shopping behaviors could help clarify these variations. Additionally, exploring why households with children appear more diligent in determining the recyclability of items could provide valuable insights. Do households with children receive recycling education and guidance from sources that are not utilized or accessible to households without children (e.g., schools, family/child-focused books or media channels and programming, etc.)?

Finally, if a future email survey is used again, it is recommended that more than 1,100 responses are collected. During this survey's data cleaning process, several respondents were deleted due to irrelevant data – specifically because they reported a zip code outside of Nevada. Also, it is recommended that fewer open-ended questions are used next time. Respondents are more likely to provide useful responses with fewer open-ended questions. Additionally, if the questions appear to be touching on a similar topic (even if the question is asking for something different), respondents may say "see answer to previous question" or not give a thoughtful answer.

# Survey Questions

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## Nevada Residential Recycling Survey

Welcome to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) survey about recycling in your community! We're curious to know **what you think and what you know about recycling**. Your answers will help us identify what kind of information people need in order to know more about recycling. The survey should take **about 20 minutes**, and your responses are **completely anonymous**.

**Instructions:** As you fill out this survey, think about the stuff you recycle from your home trash. We want to know about your own recycling habits. If you do not currently recycle, please use the survey to let us know why.

We really appreciate your input!

1. How important is recycling to you personally?
  - Very Important
  - Fairly Important
  - Neutral (Neither Important nor Unimportant)
  - Low Importance
  - Not Important at all
2. When you think about recycling, what words or phrases come to mind?
3. What recycling services do you primarily use for your household recyclables? (Select all that apply)
  - Curbside Recycling
  - Recycling drop-off location (e.g., transfer stations, UNLV drop-off location)
  - Retail store collection (e.g., plastic bag drop-off at grocery stores, batteries at hardware stores, used oil at automotive center, electronics to retail stores, etc.)
  - Other – please specify
  - None – I do not recycle or have access to recycling services
4. [If respondent selected “Curbside Recycling” to question 3]You indicated that you use curbside recycling. Which items do you usually put in your recycling bin? (Select all that apply. Please do not include recyclables taken to stores/retail collection centers.)
  - Glass bottles/jars
  - Plastic bottles
  - Plastic tubs
  - Plastic shopping bags
  - Plastic packaging and film
  - Plastic straws/utensils

- Cans/Tins
- Cardboard
- Magazines/Newspaper
- Batteries
- Clothing
- Paper
- Styrofoam
- Electronics/Electrical items
- Garden/yard waste
- Milk and egg cartons
- Anything with a recycling symbol on it
- Other – Please specify

5. How often do you recycle?

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

6. [If respondent selected “Always” or “Usually” in question 5] You indicated that you usually or always recycle. Please tell us why you recycle. (Select all that apply)

- Environmental concerns (e.g., reduce waste, tackle climate change, preserve natural resources)
- Personal/community values (e.g., I feel obligated/It is important to recycle)
- Personal habit (e.g., It’s just something I’ve always done)
- Other – Please specify

7. [If respondent selected “Sometimes” or “Never” in question 5 – Randomized choice order] You indicated that you sometimes or never recycle. Please tell us why. (Select all that apply)

- No access to recycling services
- Recycling services are not convenient
- It’s too complicated/Not sure how to recycle properly
- I don’t have time
- I don’t produce a lot of waste
- It doesn’t make a difference

- It's too expensive
- Other – Please specify

8. Please complete the following statement: “I would recycle more if...”

9. [Randomized choice order] If you are unsure if an item can be recycled, what do you usually do?

- Put it in the trash bin
- Put it in the recycling bin
- Check online with recycling hauler/service provider
- Call recycling hauler/service provider
- Check government website
- Call the Nevada Recycles hotline
- Search online or ask device/phone (e.g., Google, Bing, Apple's Siri, Amazon's Alexa)
- Other – Please specify

10. [Randomized choice order] What do you normally do with plastic grocery/shopping bags?

- Put them in the trash
- Put them in the recycling bin
- Bring them to a collection site, such as a grocery store
- Re-use or re-purpose plastic grocery/shopping bags
- Other – Please Specify
- N/A – I mainly use re-usable bags

11. Do you have any concerns about recycling? Please explain.

12. Is there anything about recycling that you wish you knew more about? Please explain.

13. How do you think recycling efforts in your community can be improved?

### **Demographic Questions**

The demographic data will help us better understand the recycling needs of our communities. Your responses are completely anonymous.

14. Please indicate your age range.

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54

- 55-64
- 65+

15. How do you identify?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

16. What kind of dwelling do you live in?

- Single family home
- Duplex/Triplex/Quadplex
- Apartment
- Manufactured/mobile home
- Condominium/Villa/Townhouse
- College dorm
- Other – Please specify

17. What is the highest level of school that you have completed?

- Some high school or less
- High school graduate or equivalent
- Technical/Vocational Training
- Some college
- College degree
- Post-graduate studies or higher

18. What would you consider yourself as?

- African American or Black
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White, non-Hispanic
- Prefer not to answer
- Other – Please specify

19. What is your household income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000+
- Prefer not to answer

20. Are there children under the age of 18 living in your household?

- Yes
- No

21. What is your zip code?

22. How long have you lived in Nevada?

- Less than one year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 years or longer

### **Additional Data Provided by SurveyMonkey**

1. Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

2. Age

- a. <18
- b. 18-29
- c. 30-44
- d. 45-60
- e. >60

3. Device Type

- a. IOS Phone / Tablet
- b. Android phone / Tablet
- c. Other phone / Tablet
- d. Windows desktop/laptop

e. MacOS desktop/laptop

f. Other

4. Household income

a. \$0-\$9,999

b. \$10,000-\$24,999

c. \$25,000-\$49,999

d. \$50,000-\$74,999

e. \$75,000-\$99,999

f. \$100,000-\$124,999

g. \$125,000-\$149,000

h. \$150,000-\$174,999

i. \$175,000-\$199,999

j. \$200,000+

k. Prefer not to answer



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