
Pennsylvania School Recycling Study

Summary Report

July 2020- June 2021

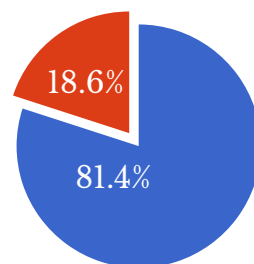




Overview

There were 2,713 public schools solicited for the School Recycling Study Survey in the 2020-2021 fiscal year. This was the first year of the survey and there was a 7.34% return on the surveys.

Schools were asked to complete a brief survey, providing details on their current recycling programs and practices. Several schools noted the COVID-19 Pandemic effected their recycling programs throughout the fiscal year.

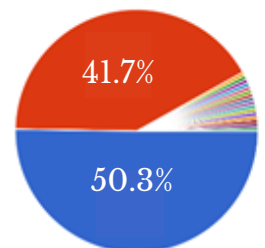


Does the school recycle?

Yes

No

81.4% of the schools that responded recycle and of those 50.3% have a recycling awareness program within the school.



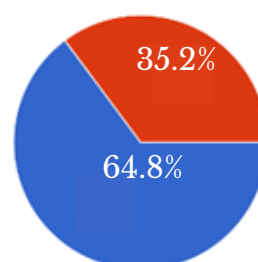
Does your school have a recycling awareness program?

Yes

No

Other

Cost is a barrier for 64.8% of the schools that responded, for either implementing existing or additional recycling efforts.



Is cost a barrier?

Yes

No



Survey Statistics

31%

OF SCHOOLS DON'T RECYCLE

There are 44.9% that are single stream and 39.4% that are source separated.

School Districts that marked they don't recycle include:

- Allegheny-Clarion Valley SD
- Allentown SD
- Armstrong SD
- Blue Mountain SD
- Cranberry Area SD
- Eastern Lancaster County SD
- Fannett Metal
- Carbondale Area SD
- Forest Area SD
- Forest City Regional SD
- Fort LeBoeuf SD
- Franklin Area SD
- Frazier SD
- Hampton Township SD
- Hempfield Area SD
- Mercer Area SD
- Oil City Area SD
- Spring Grove SD
- Urban Pathways
- Warren County SD

83.1%

LIST CORRUGATED CARDBOARD AND OFFICE PAPER AS THEIR MOST RECYCLED ITEMS

followed by plastic bottles/jars, mixed paper, aluminum, glass bottles/jars, steel cans, ink/toner, electronics, batteries, and light bulbs.

There are several schools that would like more information on the source separated list of items.

35.2%

OF SCHOOLS FEEL THAT 50% OF PAPER/CARDBOARD IS RECOVERED FOR RECYCLING

None - 13.6%

25% - 25.1%

50% - 35.2%

75% - 16.1%

Over 75% - 10.1%



67.4%

OF SCHOOLS DO NOT COMPOST ORGANIC MATERIALS

Out of the 12.6% that do compost; 21 compost food, 7 compost leaves, and 10 compost yard waste.



Survey Statistics

71.4%

OF SCHOOLS HAVE RECYCLING BINS IN THE CLASSROOMS

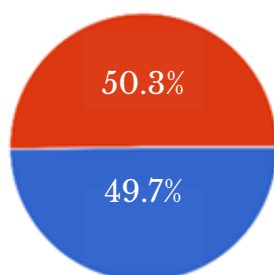
The other primary areas for recycling bins include the cafeteria, copy areas and offices.

Hallways, Library, Auditorium, Gym, Lobby, and Stadiums are areas that account for 17% or less in most schools for having recycling bins.

50.3%

OF SCHOOLS STATE THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH RECYCLING BINS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Over half of the schools that responded do not have enough recycling bins on the school property.



Does your school currently have enough recycling bins on school property?

Yes

No

124

SCHOOLS LISTED THE JANITORIAL/CUSTODIAL STAFF AS WHO COLLECTS RECYCLABLES

Janitorial/Custodial - 62.3%

Faculty/Teachers - 30.7%

Students - 30.2%

Volunteers - 4.5%

Others included cafeteria workers, the public, and an outside agency.

55.8%

OF SCHOOLS HAVE A CONTRACTED WASTE HAULER WHO PICKS UP THEIR RECYCLABLES

Contracted Waste Hauler - 55.8%

Recycling Vendor - 16.1%

Janitorial Staff - 10.6%

Faculty - 9.5%

Paper Shredding Company - 11.1%

Several of the schools use a few vendors to pick up recyclables depending on the items. Other schools work with their local boroughs, conservation districts, or have an on-site food/waste composting system.



Survey Statistics

48.7%

OF SCHOOLS HAVE RECYCLING
PICKED UP ONCE PER WEEK

Other options for pick up include daily, once per month, once every other week, bi-weekly, once every three weeks, twice per week, twice a month, every couple of months, once a year, two to three times a year, and as needed.

48.2%

OF SCHOOLS USE RECYCLING
CONTAINERS AT THEIR
CENTRALIZED LOCATION

Roll-off containers are used by 24.6%, Toters are used by 16.6%, and the remaining schools either don't know or use some other kind of container. Out of the other containers used garbage bags was the most concerning listed.

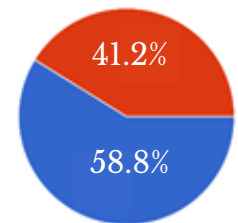
41.2%

OF SCHOOLS STATED THEY DID NOT
HAVE ENOUGH CONTAINERS AT
THEIR CENTRALIZED LOCATION

Does your school
currently have enough
outside recycling
containers/dumpster at
the school's centralized
collection area?

Yes

No



CHALLENGES AND OBSERVATIONS

School assistance in general was listed as one of the two biggest challenges, whether it was custodial staff or administrative staff. Cost was the second.

Other challenges include but are not limited to time, contamination, COVID-19, educating & motivating staff & students, consistency, starting a recycling program/not having one at the school, trash being thrown into recycling bins, having someone oversee the recycling program, and not having enough collection bins.