



Strategic Planning Survey Results 2020

Background and Objectives

- Ontario County's Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management is in the beginning stages of developing its next strategic plan.
- Community input is essential to the development of the County's plan for waste management and diversion.
- Causewave Community Partners has been commissioned to help Ontario County develop and communicate this initiative to residents, as well as facilitate the strategic planning process.
- Causewave developed a county-wide survey to help learn more about resident attitudes and current behaviors regarding recycling, as compared to baseline results captured in a similar survey issued in 2017.
- Causewave developed the survey in partnership with representatives from the Dept. of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management, programmed and hosted it, and created an analysis of the results.



Methodology

- Design and analysis were developed and prepared by Causewave Community Partners in consultation with Ontario County.
- The survey conducted online from February-May 2020.
- 1,319 respondents completed the survey.
- The study included Ontario County residents, aged 18 or older. All surveys were gathered online due to COVID-19 and “Stay at Home” protocols.
- The survey was distributed via the following channels: Ontario County employees, Ontario County’s library system, Facebook advertising to Ontario County residents, individual Town distribution, Ontario County website & via other community partners.
- *Percentages on some questions may add to more or less than 100 due to the ability to select multiple responses.



Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Key Findings

Current Attitudes Towards Waste Management/Recycling

- Concerns remain high about waste management issues which is consistent with 2017 responses.
- 64% of respondents say that increasing the amount of items they recycle at home is a critical issue.
- 83% of respondents say that plastic bags can't be recycled in the household bin, up from 64% in 2017.

Current Waste Management/Recycling Behaviors

- Food scraps are still most commonly disposed of in the regular trash, with ~40% saying they compost in their backyard.
- Hazardous waste disposal such as paint and chemicals and disposal of electronics are more likely to occur through participation in County/Casella collection events than in 2017.
- When asked why household hazardous waste was put in the regular trash, 16% less people said it was because they are not always sure what household hazardous waste is, and 36% less people said it was because they didn't know where hazardous waste collection events are.



Executive Summary

Key Findings

Barriers and Enablers to Recycling

- While most residents currently say they are doing a good job at recycling, they are less likely to say they are going a good job of “reducing” or “reusing.” In particular, they feel they could improve upon “reducing” the number of resources they are using.
- Residents say that they would do more if they knew more about where to take non-standard items, if there were more recycling events in their town, and if they had a better sense of what was recyclable.
- Saving landfill space is still seen as the top benefit of reducing, reusing, and recycling products, followed by reducing their individual carbon footprint.
- Residents want to learn more about recycling topics such as how to properly dispose of hazardous waste, and which materials they can put in the recycling bin (up 11% since 2017).
- 93% of respondents say that would be willing to drive to a permanent facility located in Ontario County where they could drop-off Electronic Waste, Household Hazardous Waste, Confidential Paper Shredding or Residential Tires more than twice a year.
- Half of respondents say they’ve participated in one of the county funded/hosted collection events, and of that group, nearly everyone said the event was valuable to them.
- 42% compost in their backyard, citing it being good for their yard and the environment as top motivators. The lack of equipment is the top reason for not composting, and over half would compost if they were provided the necessary equipment.



Executive Summary

Key Findings

Communications and Marketing

- The Ontario County website is a more popular resource to learn about issues affecting Ontario County than in 2017, and radio and print publications are less likely to be places to learn about issues affecting Ontario County.
- Many people would do an Internet search to look for information on recycling. Nearly a third of respondents would go to Ontario County’s website, up from 50% of respondents in 2017.
 - 21% more people say they’ve gone to Ontario County’s website looking for information on recycling than in 2017 and the majority of people say they were able to find the information they needed.
- Nearly 50% rated Ontario County as “Excellent” or “Good” in terms of how well they communicate what can and cannot be recycled, up from 27% in 2017.

Opinions on Future Planning

- The majority of respondents believe the County should explore only accepting Ontario County generated waste as the top way to prepare for ongoing and future disposal needs.
- Ideas for improving recycling and waste diversion in Ontario County include making guidelines simple, increasing communications with residents, and limiting the amount of waste accepted from outside the area. Reducing the odor the landfill produces was also noted.



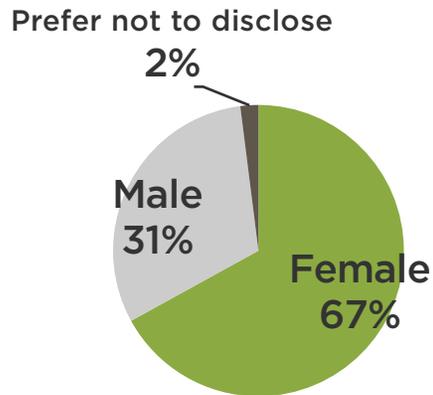
Who took the survey?

Q: What is your gender identity?

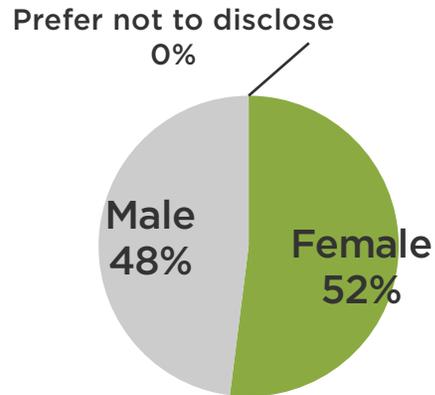
2020: 1,310

2017: 867

2020



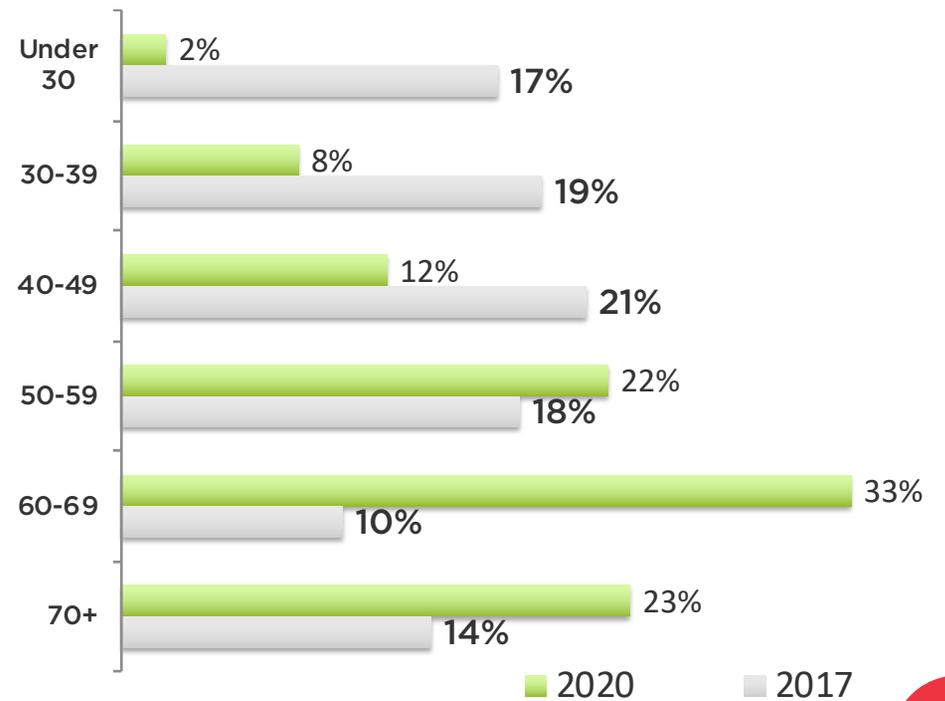
2017



Q: Please select your age range.

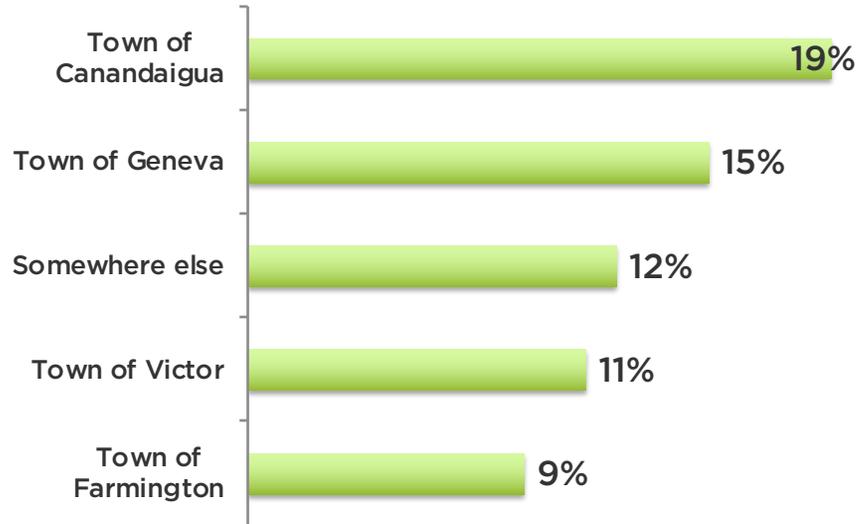
2020: 1,312

2017: 867



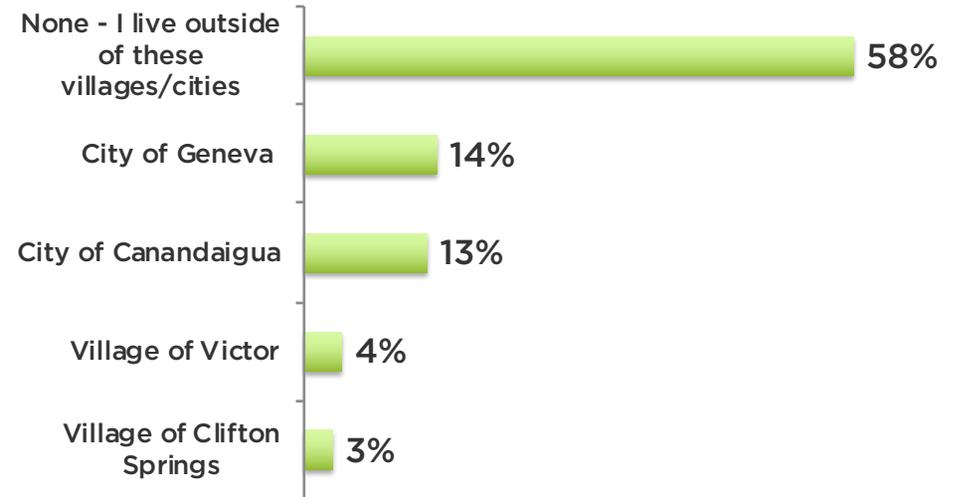
Q: Which of the following Town(s) do you live in for at least part of the year?

2020: 1,266



Q: Which of the following cities/villages do you live in for at least part of the year?

2020: 1,279



Current Attitudes

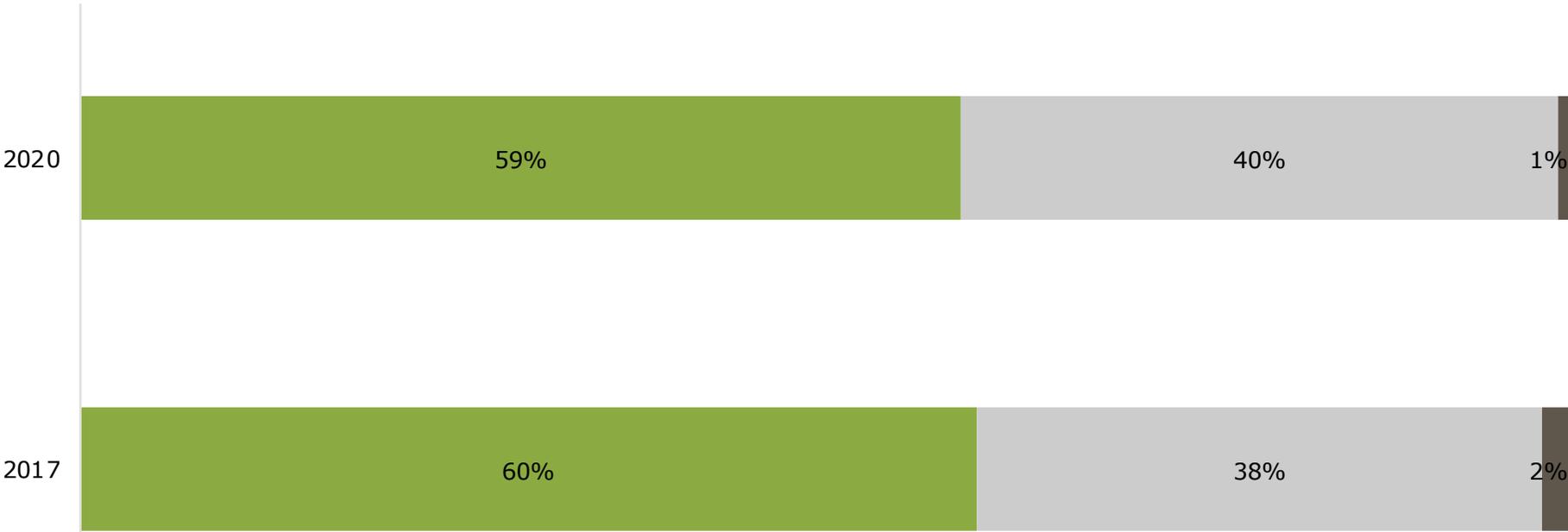
Q: Below is a list of environmental issues. How much does each concern you personally?

2020: 1,285

2017: 866

Effectively managing landfill waste in Ontario County.

■ This is a critical issue to me ■ This issue is important but not critical to me ■ This issue doesn't matter to me



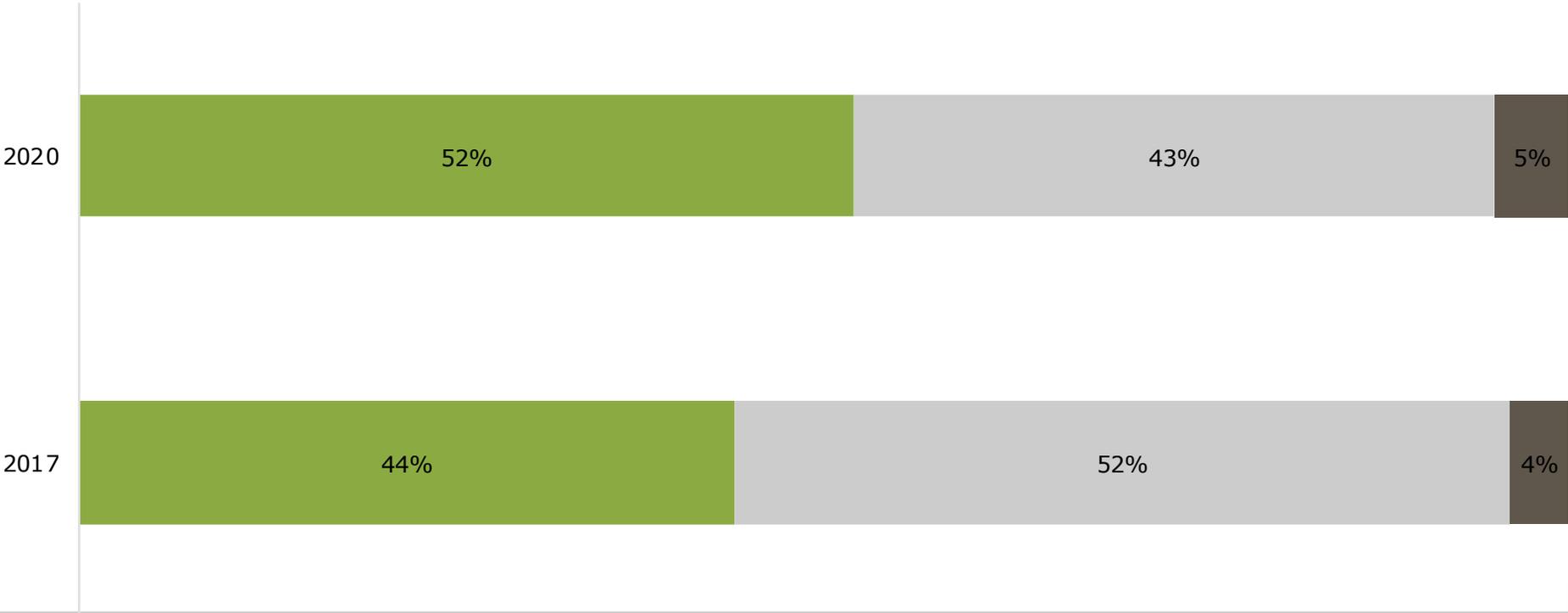
Q: Below is a list of environmental issues. How much does each concern you personally?

2020: 1,285

2017: 866

Reducing the amount of garbage my household produces.

■ This is a critical issue to me ■ This issue is important but not critical to me ■ This issue doesn't matter to me



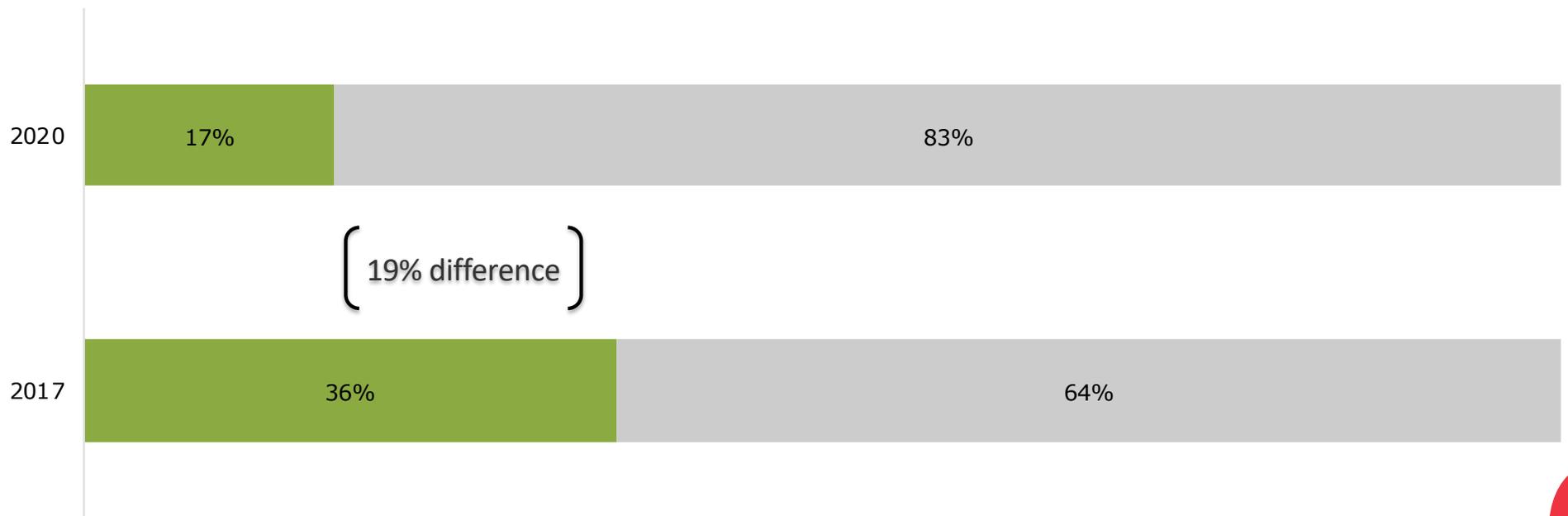
Q: Please indicate if you feel the following statements are true or false.

2020: 1,272

2017: 867

Plastic bags can be recycled in the household recycling bin.

■ TRUE ■ FALSE

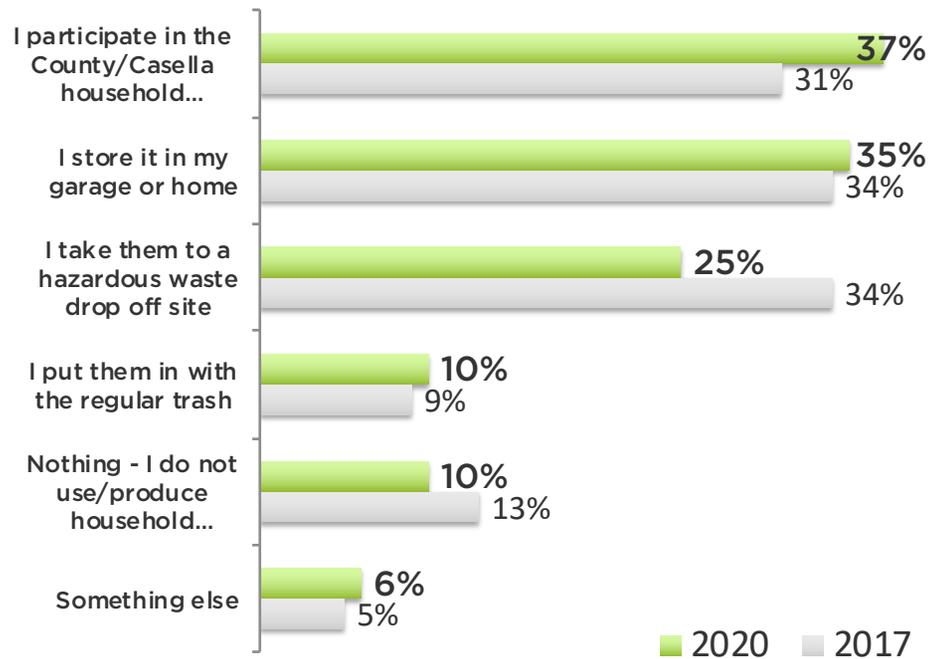


Current Behaviors

Q: What do you typically do with household hazardous waste, such as paint and chemicals?*

2020: 1,164

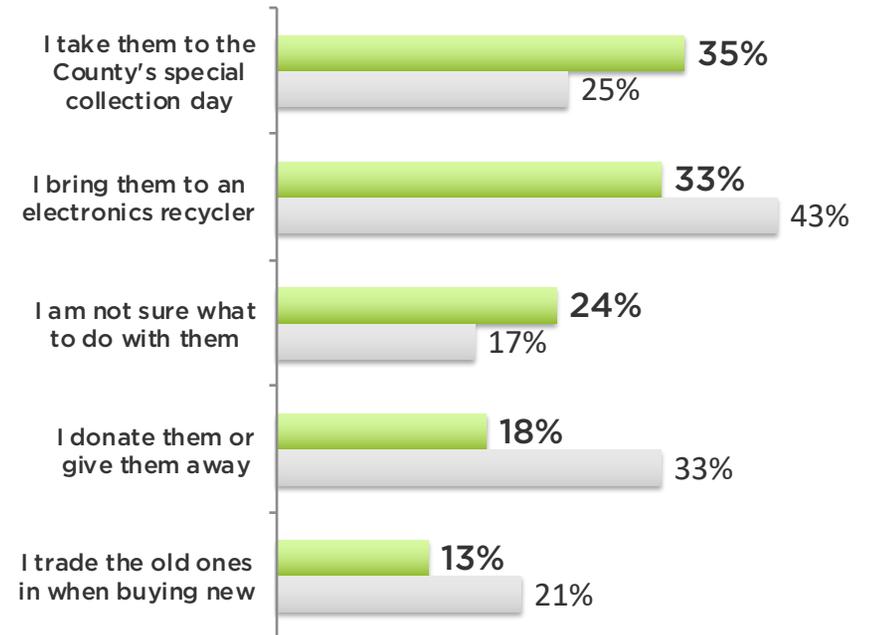
2017: 866



Q: How do you dispose of electronics, such as telephones, cell phones, and computers (E-Waste)?*

2020: 1,169

2017: 866

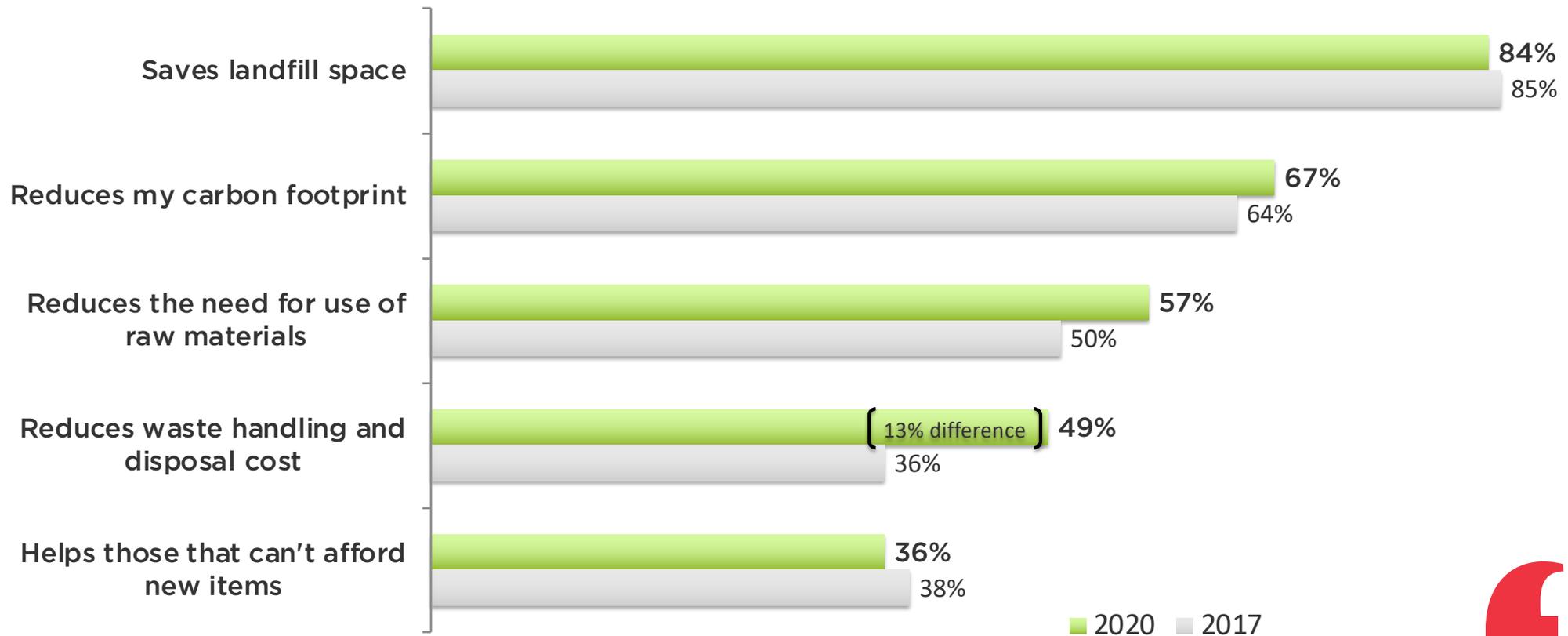


Barriers & Motivators

Q: Below are some benefits of reducing, reusing, and recycling products. Why do you try to reduce, reuse, and recycle?*

2020: 1,233

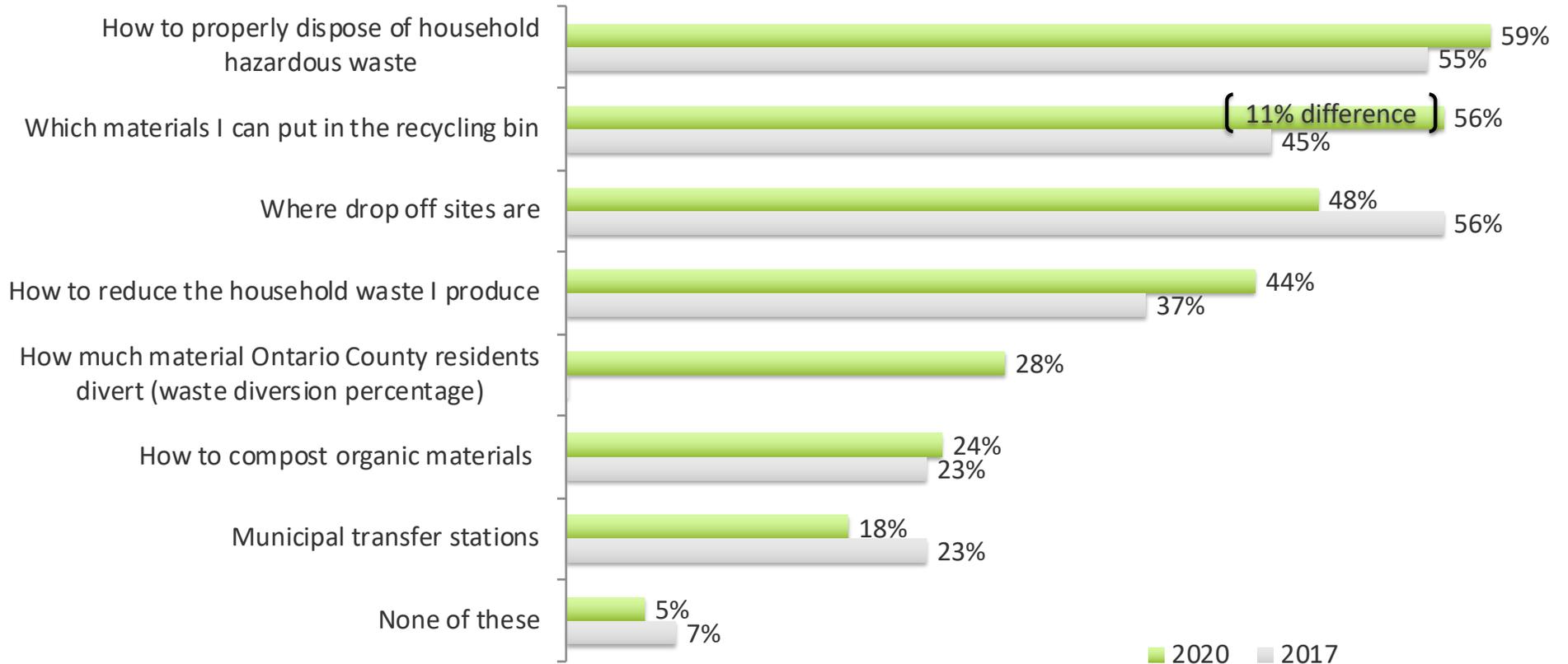
2017: 866



Q: Below are topics relating to recycling and waste diversion. Which of these do you feel you should know more about?*

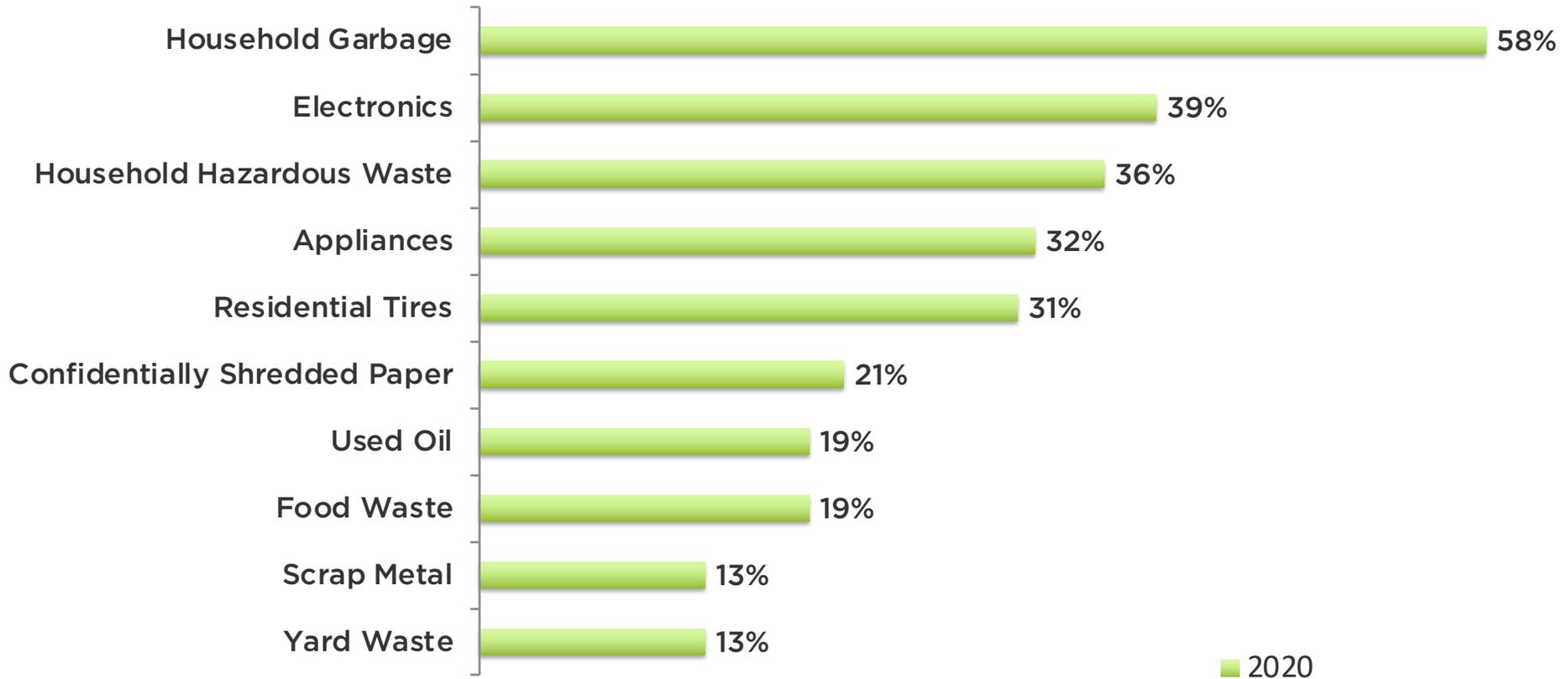
2020: 1,215

2017: 864



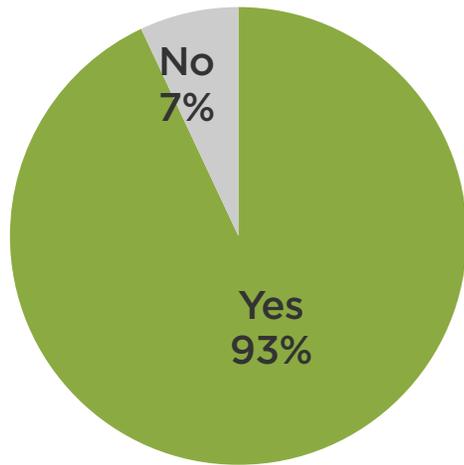
Q: Which of the following materials do you, or would you pay to dispose of or recycle?*

2020: 1,042



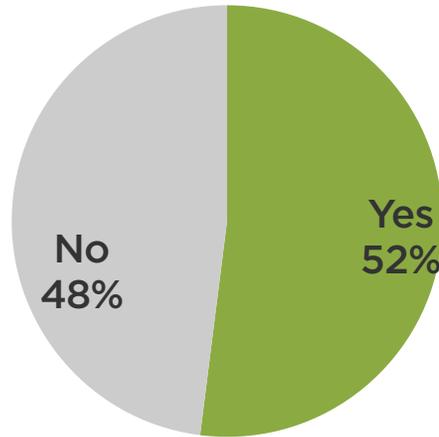
Q: Would you be willing to drive to a permanent facility located in Ontario County where you could drop-off Electronic Waste, Household Hazardous Waste, Confidential Paper Shredding or Residential Tires more than twice a year?

2020: 1,159

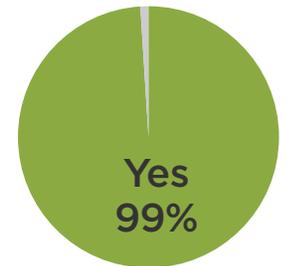


Q: Have you participated in one of the county funded/hosted Electronic Waste, Household Hazardous Waste, Confidential Paper Shredding or Residential Tires collection events?

2020: 1,167

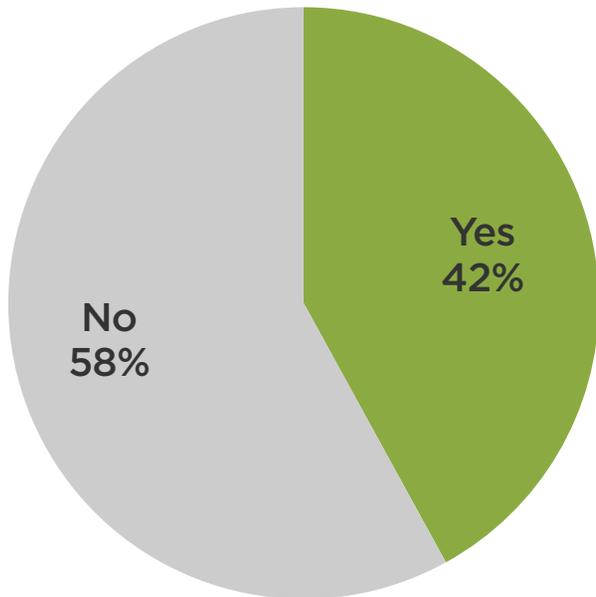


Q: For those who've participated in a collection event; did you find the event(s) valuable? N= 608



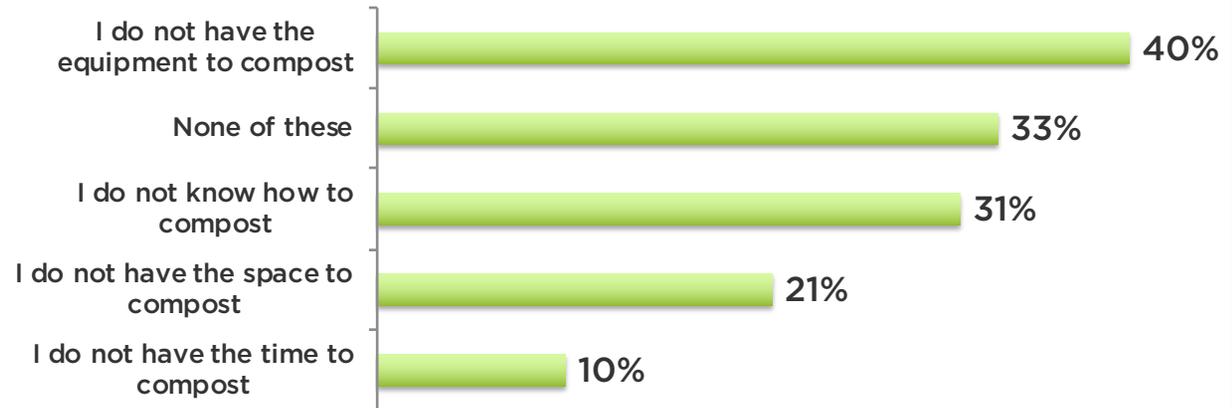
Q: Do you compost in your backyard?

2020: 1,157



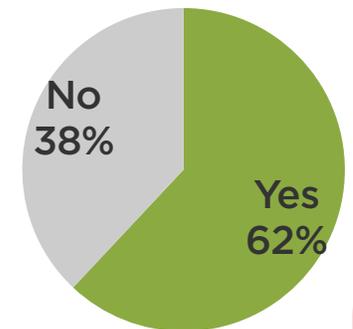
Q: Which of the following prevents you from composting in your backyard?*

2020: 665



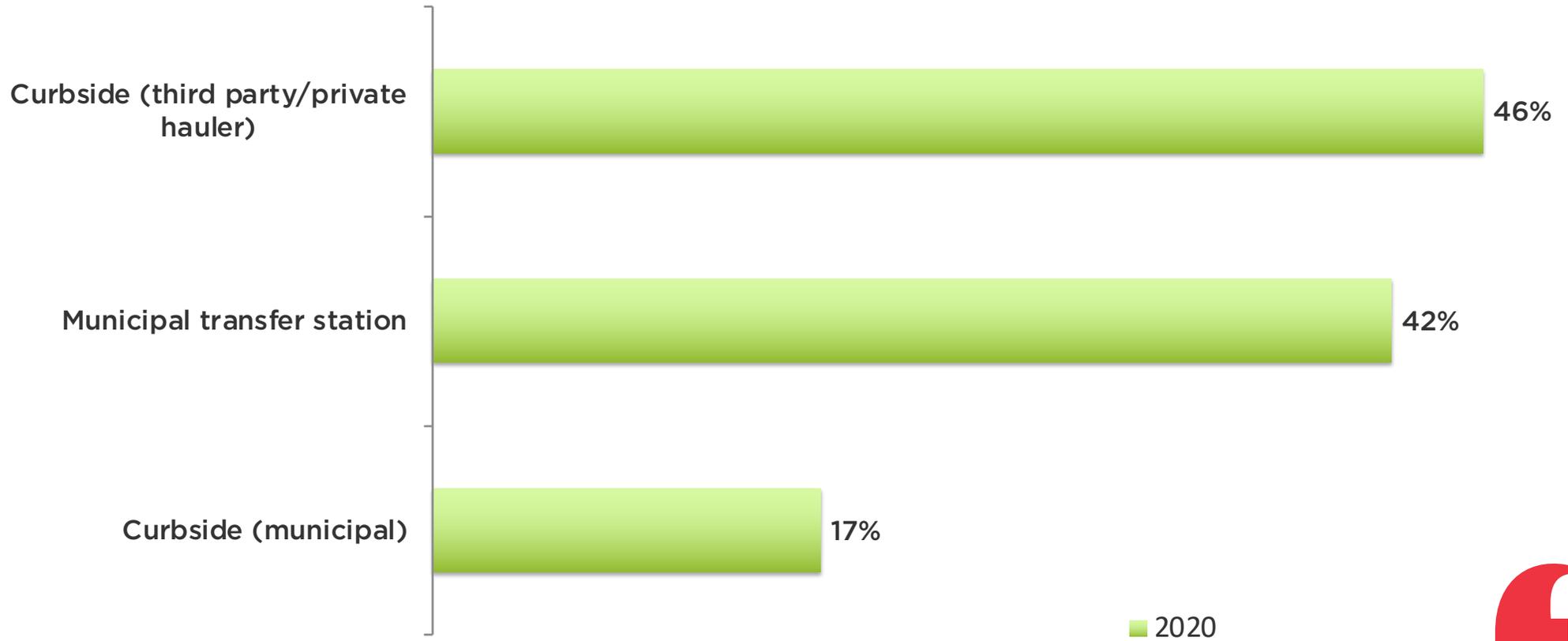
Q: If you were provided with all of the necessary equipment, would you be willing to compost in your backyard?

2020: 653



Q: Please indicate how you currently dispose of waste?*

2020: 1,138





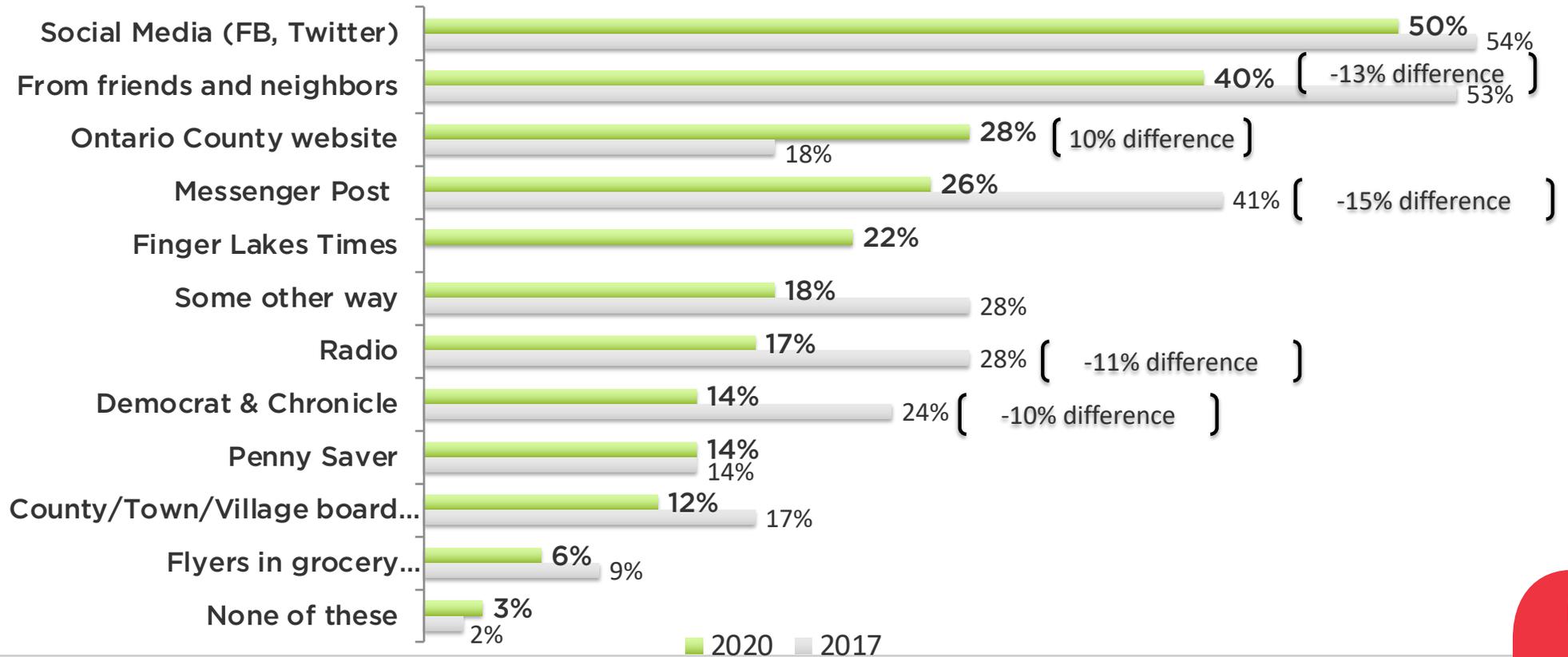
Communication & Marketing



Q: How do you typically learn about issues affecting Ontario County?*

2020: 1,315

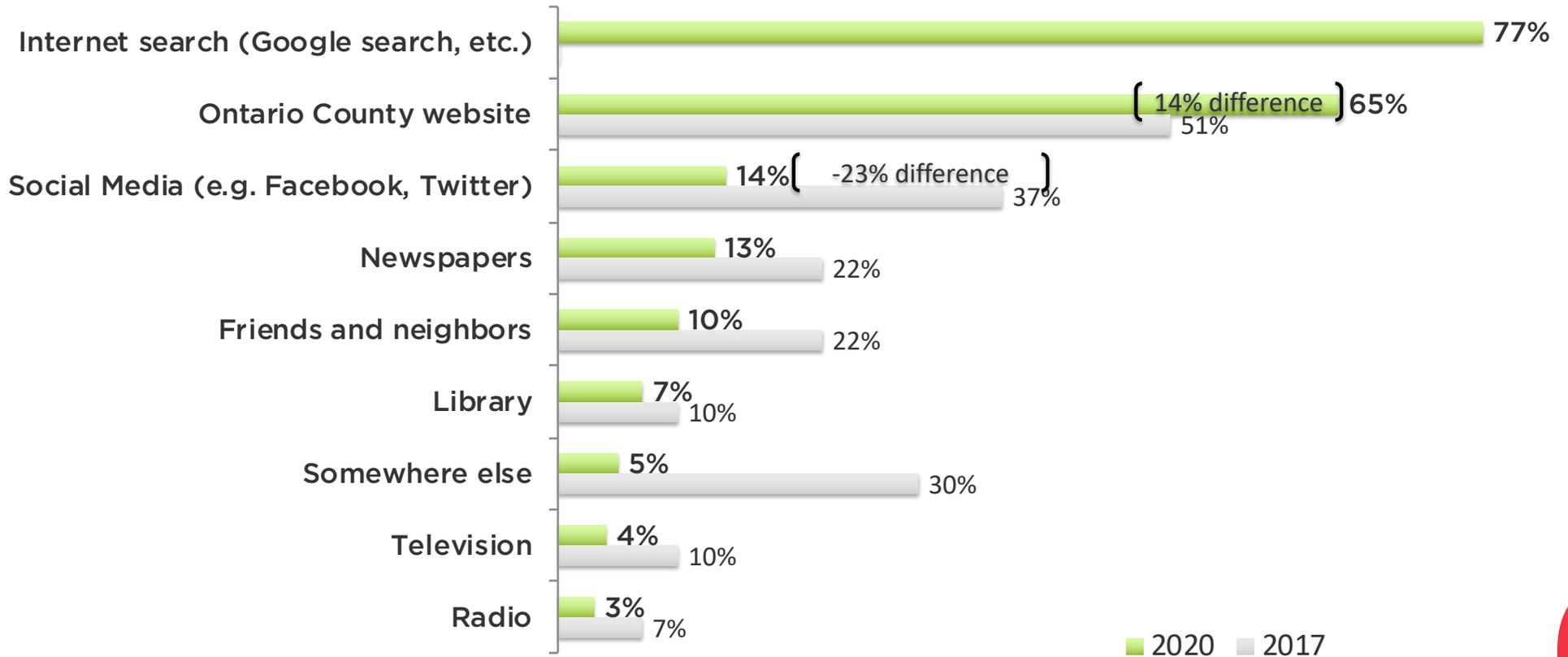
2017: 866



Q: If you wanted to learn more about recycling, where would you go?*

2020: 1,215

2017: 864



■ 2020 ■ 2017

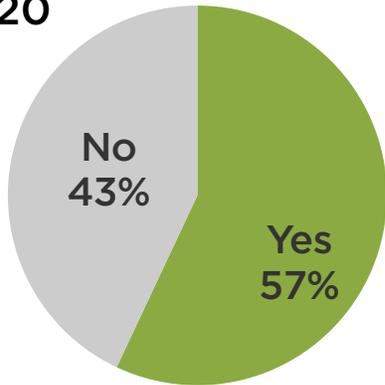


Q: Have you ever gone to Ontario County's website to look for information on recycling?

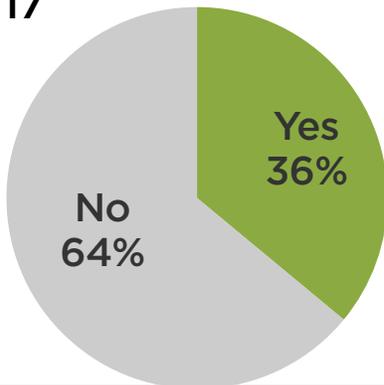
2020: 1,205

2017: 866

2020



2017



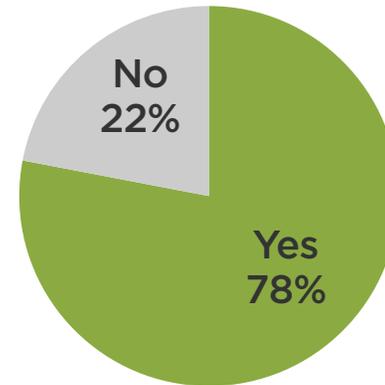
(21% increase)

Q: Were you able to find the information you needed when you went to the Ontario County's website to look for information on recycling?

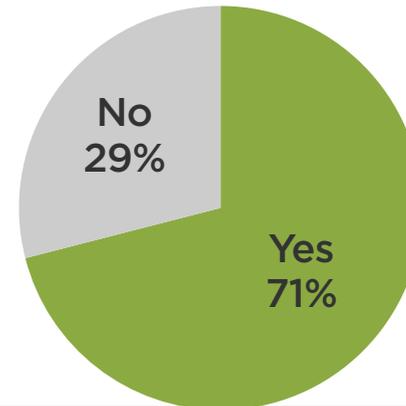
2020: 692

2017: 319

2020



2017



Q: How would you rate Ontario County for how well they communicate what can and cannot be recycled?

2020: 1,201

2017: 852

■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Fair ■ Poor ■ Very Poor

2020



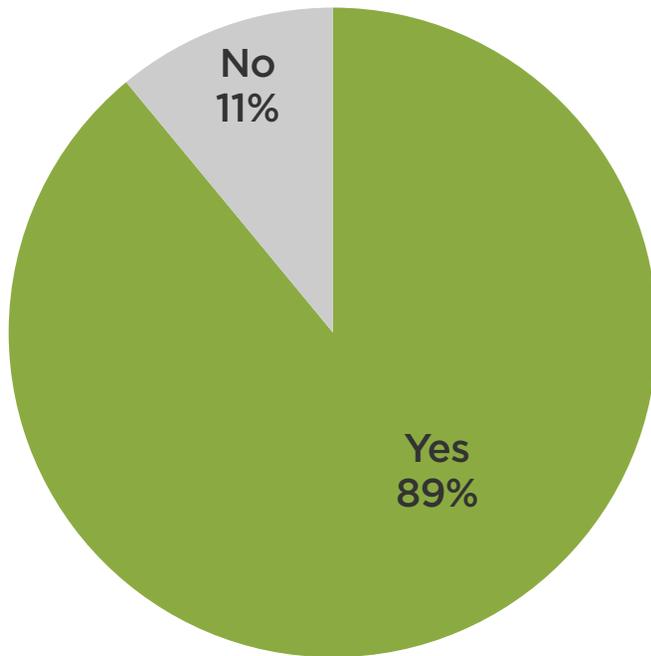
(17% difference)

2017



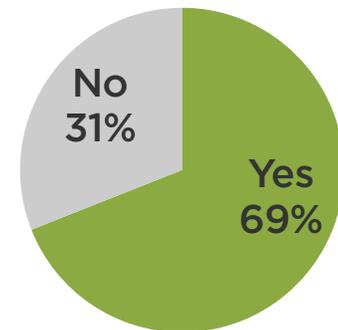
Q: Were you aware of the fact that the County has a landfill site?

2020: 1,150



Q: If yes, were you aware that it is currently operated by a third party company?

N= 1,113



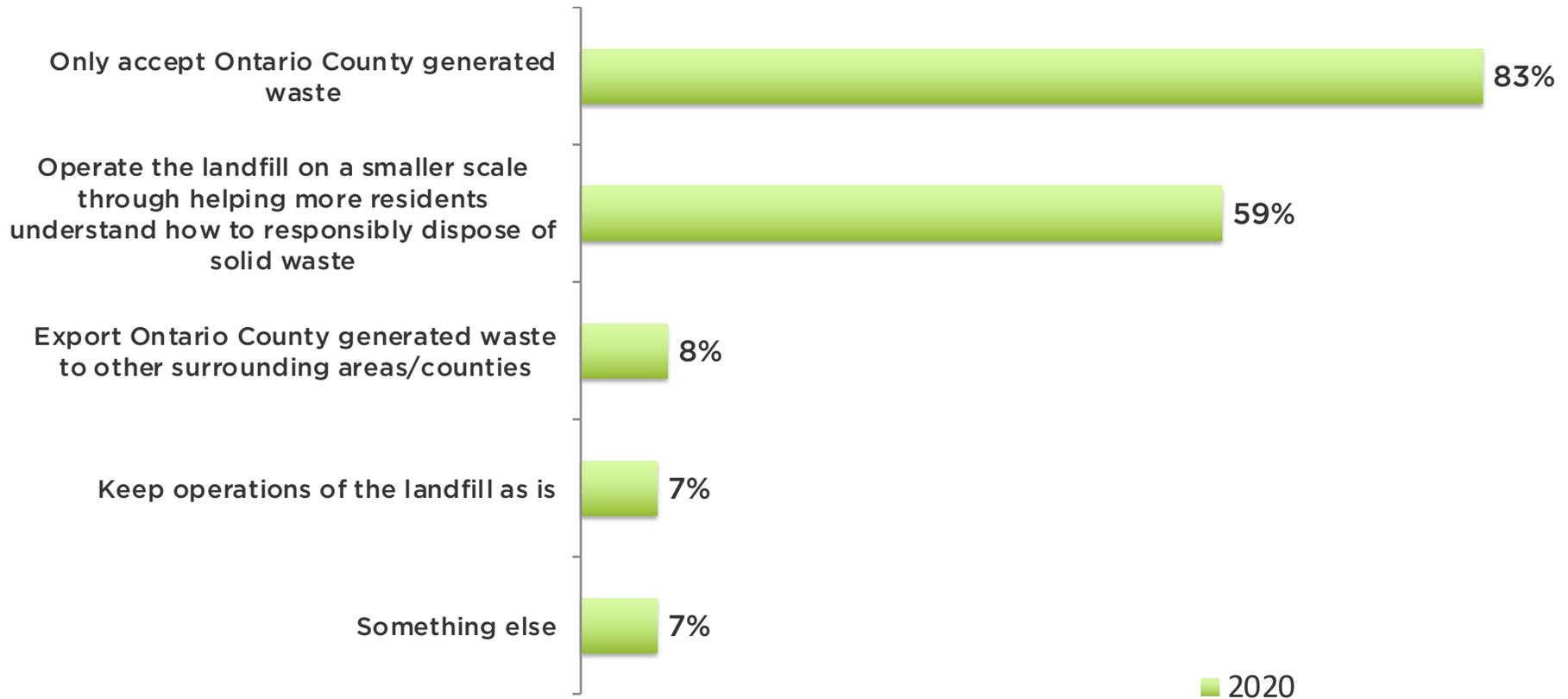


Opinions on Future Planning



Q: In 2003, Ontario County signed a 25-year lease agreement with Casella to operate our landfill. As the contract term nears and the landfill approaches capacity, what things should the County explore to prepare for ongoing and future disposal needs?*

2020: 1,136



Q: If you could improve the County with constructive input regarding recycling and waste diversion in Ontario County, it would be...

2020: 741

- **Make it simple and convenient.** (40%)
 - Clearly articulate what can be recycled.
 - Continue and expand education on recycling, composting, waste reduction, and proper disposal.
 - Standard or regularly scheduled collection events throughout County. Notify and remind residents of these events.
- **Improve communication** with residents. (21%)
- Stop accepting waste from places outside of the area; **keep it local.** (12%)
- **Reduce the odor** the landfill produces/ releases. (7%)
- Encourage composting.
- Encourage and incentivize businesses, other large employers and housing complexes to recycle and reduce waste; enforce regulations when they are not met.
- Close landfill.
- Lower cost; eliminate special fees for disposal of certain items.
- Weekly recycling pick-up.

Q: What advice would you give Ontario County as they plan for the future of recycling and waste management?

2020: 736

- Continue to **educate** the community on the three R's and the importance of doing all those things. (20%)
- **Better/more frequent communication** with residents. (20%)
 - Reminders about what can/can't be recycling, and upcoming collection events
 - Inform and share impact of the three R's
 - Be transparent and honest about decisions that affect the community
- **Limit the amount** or stop accepting waste from outside the area. (14%)
- **Reduce the odor** the landfill produces/releases. (10%)
- End contract with current landfill operator; don't hire third party to manage waste.
- Reduce size of landfill.
- Research and benchmark what other communities are doing; stay up to date on latest technologies and methods.
- Collaboration with other governmental units, businesses, etc. to reduce waste and improve recycling.
- Keep up the good work.



Next Steps

Strategic Planning Next Steps

- SWOT analysis, informed by survey findings
 - SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- Strategy and tactics development
- Vision statement development for the Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management
- Community input opportunity
- Final plan development

