

# **Douglas and Sarpy County Household Hazardous Waste Facility Survey**

**—Final Report—**

**October 2000**



# FACT FINDERS, INC.

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# The Douglas and Sarpy County Household Hazardous Waste Facility Survey

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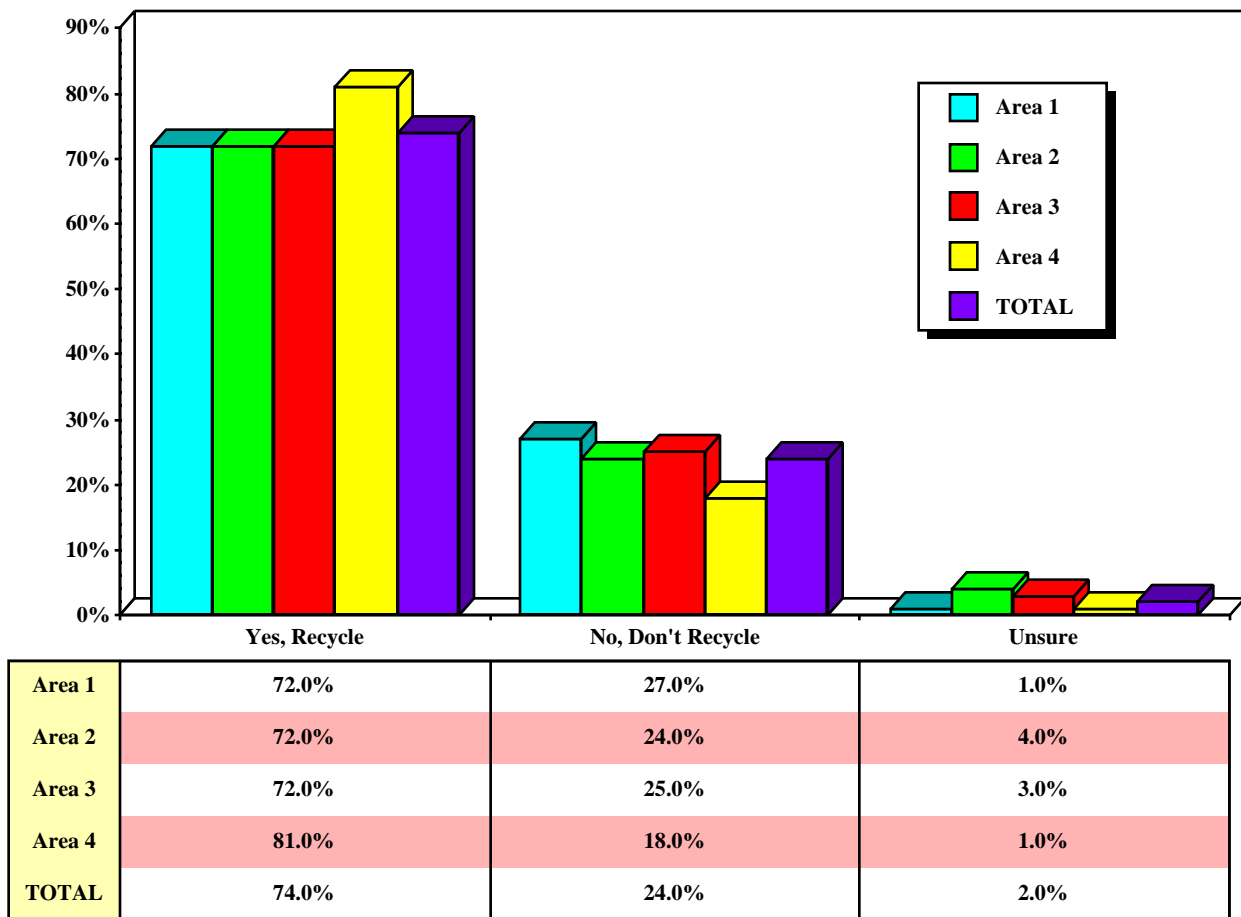
- The Douglas and Sarpy County Household Hazardous Waste Facility Survey was undertaken to determine the need—and the extent of community support—for development of a permanent collection facility to dispose of hazardous household waste materials in the Omaha metropolitan area.
- Fact Finders, Inc. was commissioned to design, conduct, and analyze the results from the Household Hazardous Waste Survey. The survey questionnaire, a copy of which is provided in the appendix to this report, was designed by Fact Finders, Inc. in conjunction with the metropolitan area planning agency.
- Four geographic regions were designated to aid in the location of the proposed facility and to identify significant variations—if any—in community attitudes towards the construction project.
  - Area 1 covers the perimeter to the north, west, and southwest of Omaha and includes the towns of Bennington, Valley, Waterloo, Elkhorn, Gretna, Springfield, and Richfield. (Area 1 includes the following Zip codes: 68007, 68022, 68028, 68054, 68059, 68064, 68069, 68112, 68122, 68136, 68142, 68152).
  - Area 2 covers the area south of Omaha and includes the towns of Papillion, La Vista, Ralston, and Bellevue. (Area 2 includes the following Zip codes: 68005, 68046, 68113, 68123, 68127, 68128, 68133, 68138, 68147, 68157).
  - Area 3 covers the Omaha area north of Harrison, east of 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, and south of Redick. (Area 3 includes the following Zip codes: 68102, 68104, 68105, 68106, 68107, 68108, 68110, 68111, 68117, 68131, 68132).
  - Area 4 covers the Omaha area north of Harrison (excluding Ralston), west of 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, south of Redick and Ida, and east of Elkhorn. (Area 4 includes the following Zip codes: 68010, 68114, 68116, 68118, 68124, 68130, 68134, 68135, 68137, 68144, 68154, 68164).
- Completed telephone surveys were obtained from a random sample of 410 Omaha area households. A total of 99 surveys were completed in Area 1, 103 in Area 2, 103 in Area 3, and 105 in Area 4. Overall, findings from a study sample of 410 random surveys can be projected to the larger population with a sampling error of  $\pm 5.0\%$  at a 95% level of confidence.

## Q1 Does your household currently recycle any household materials on a regular basis?

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- Seventy-four percent of the Douglas and Sarpy County residents surveyed said that their household currently recycles various waste materials on a regular basis. Twenty-four percent indicated that their household did not recycle on a regular basis, while 2% said they were unsure.
- Residents in Area 4 (81%) were somewhat more likely than those in the other three areas (72%) to recycle waste materials on a regular basis, albeit the difference falls short of statistical significance.

**Figure 1**

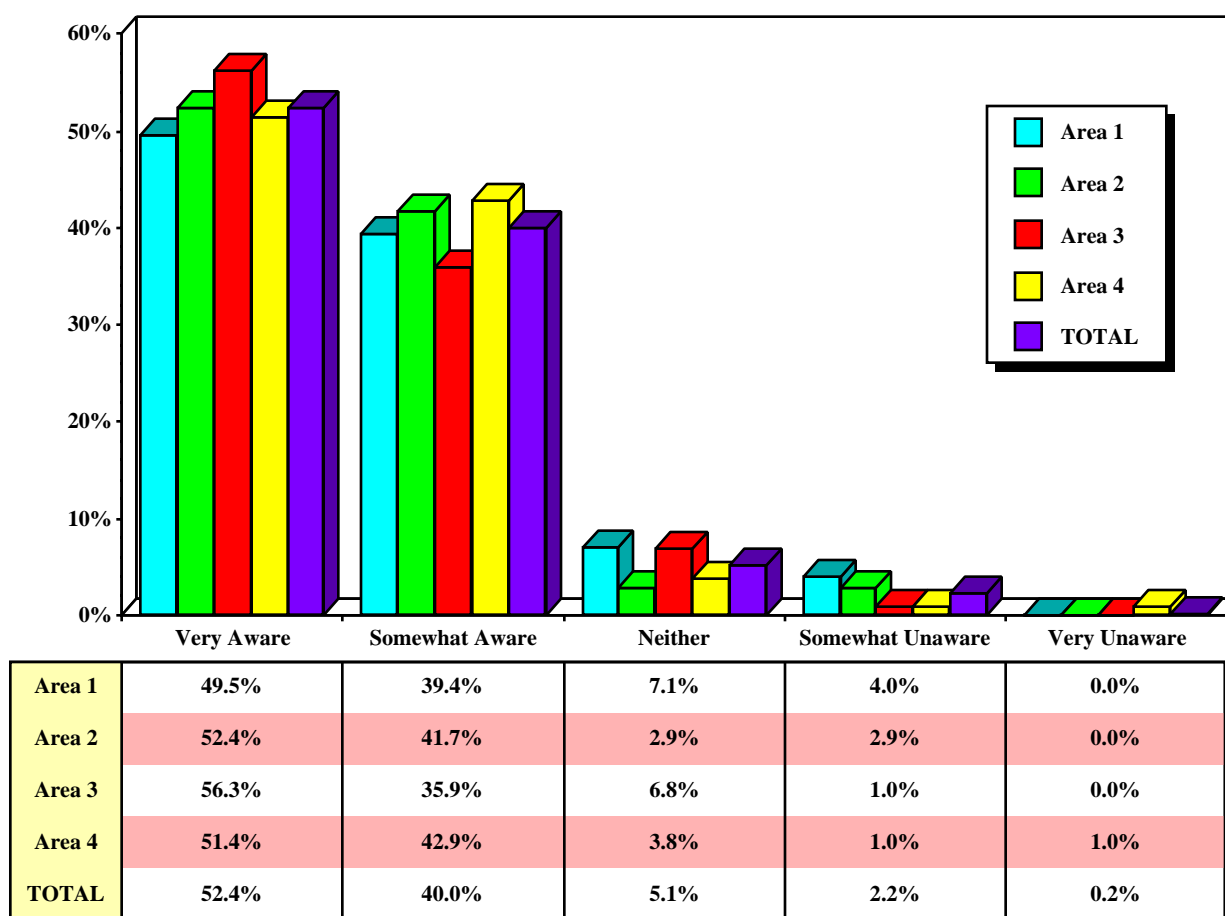


## Q2 To what extent do you consider yourself to be aware of the problem of household hazardous waste?

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- Half (52%) of the area's residents considered themselves to be very aware of the problems of household hazardous waste, while 40% said they were at least somewhat aware of the problem.
- Residents in Area 3 (56%) were the most likely to be very aware of the problem, and those in Area 1 (50%) were the least likely to be very aware of the problem of household hazardous waste. But, again, the differences across areas were inconclusive.

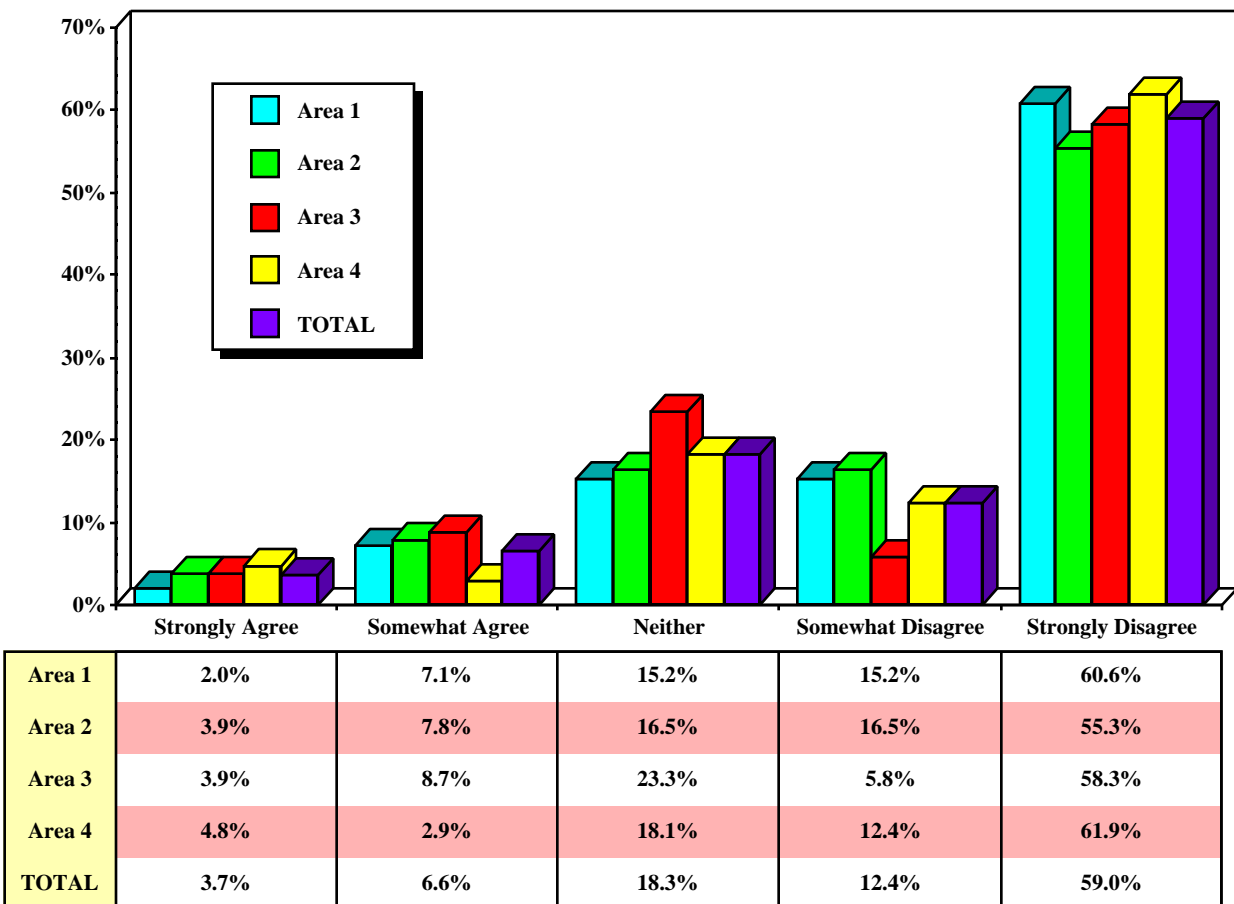
**Figure 2**



### Q3 To what extent do you agree with the idea that household hazardous waste can be safely disposed of by putting them down the drain or in the trash?

- Six out of ten (59%) Douglas and Sarpy County residents strongly disagreed with the notion that household hazardous waste can be safely disposed of by common methods of waste disposal. Another 12% said they somewhat disagreed with this idea.
- Only one out of ten (10%) residents agreed that hazardous waste materials could be safely disposed of by putting them down the drain or in the trash. Less than 4% said they strongly agreed—and less than 7% somewhat agreed—that household hazardous waste could be disposed of by common methods of waste disposal.
- No conclusive differences of opinion were found across the four regions with regard to the proper disposal of hazardous waste materials.

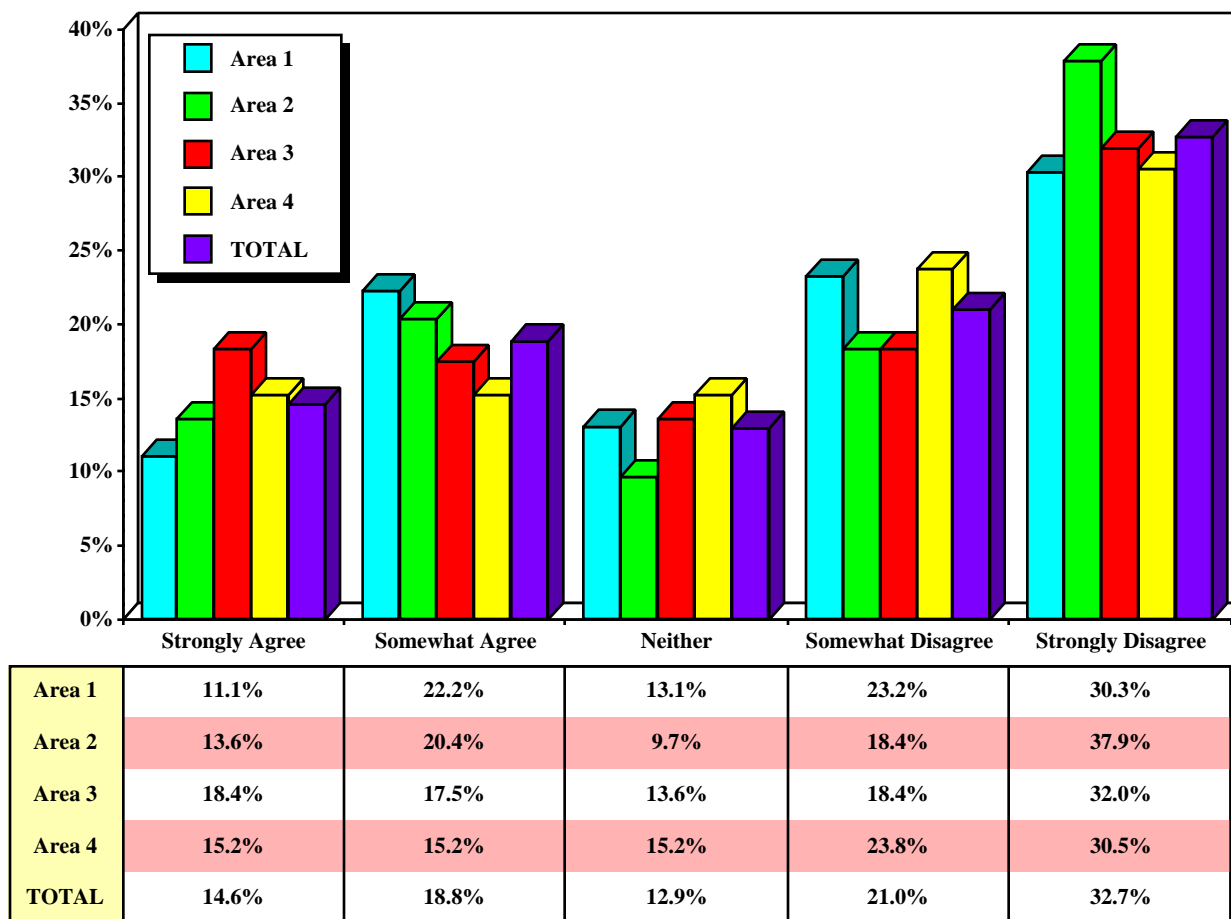
**Figure 3**



## Q4 To what extent do you agree with the idea that household hazardous waste poses some risk to the environment, but that the risk is not significant?

- One-third (33%) of Douglas and Sarpy County residents strongly disagreed with the idea that household hazardous waste poses an insignificant risk to the environment. Another 21% of those surveyed said they somewhat disagreed with this idea.
- Thirteen percent of the area's residents were unsure about their opinions in this regard, and neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.
- Thirty-three percent of those interviewed agreed that hazardous waste materials pose an insignificant risk to the environment. Just under 15% of those surveyed strongly agreed with this opinion, whereas 19% indicated that they only somewhat agreed.
- Differences across geographic areas were not statistically significant.

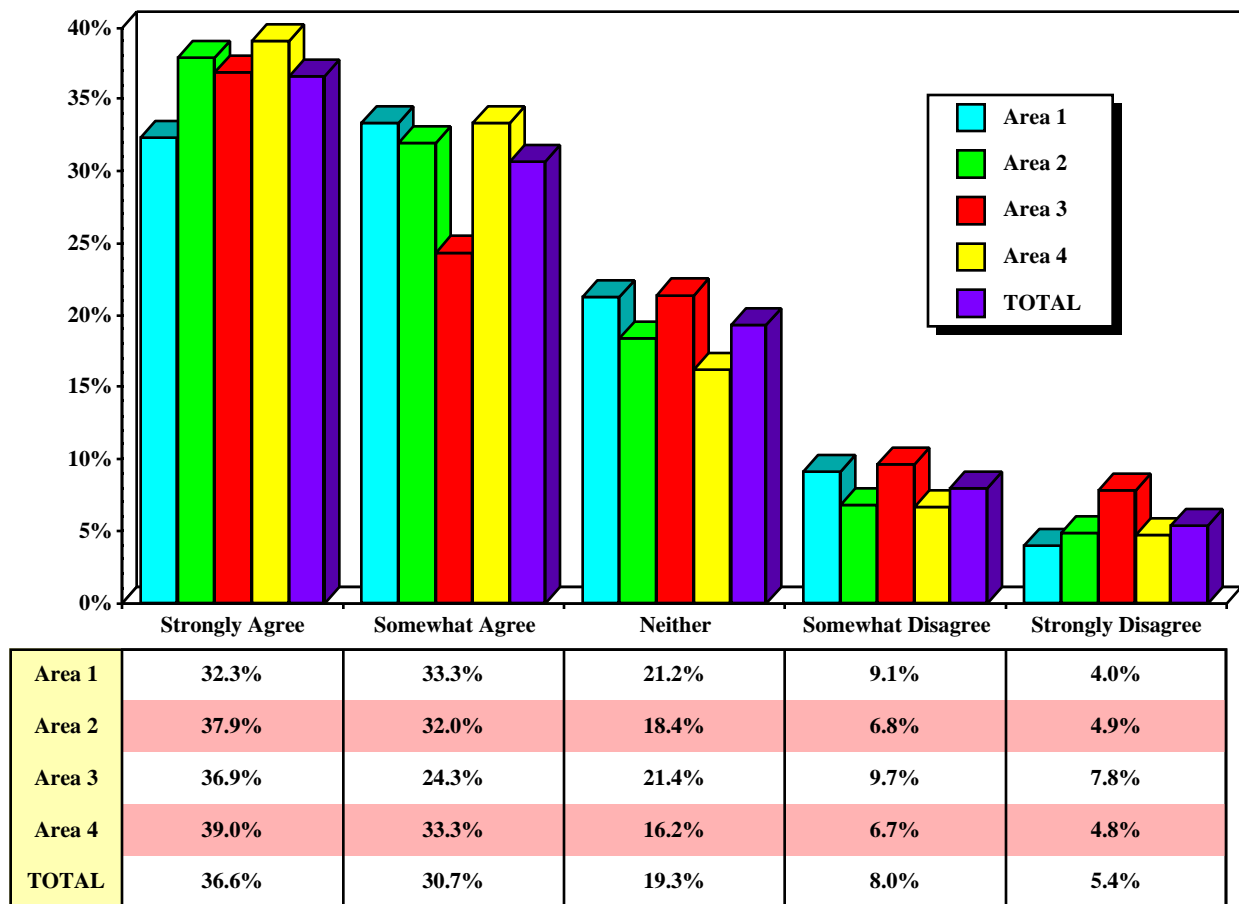
**Figure 4**



## Q5 To what extent do you agree that you personally are concerned about the lack of information on how to properly dispose of your household hazardous waste?

- Overall, 37% of residents strongly agreed that they are concerned about the lack of information on proper disposal methods for household waste materials. Thirty-one percent indicated that they somewhat agreed with this statement.
- Nineteen percent of those surveyed said they were unsure about their opinion in this regard, while 8% somewhat disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed—or were otherwise not concerned about the lack of information about household waste disposal.
- Concern about the lack of information with regard to household hazardous waste did not differ significantly across the four areas studied.

**Figure 5**

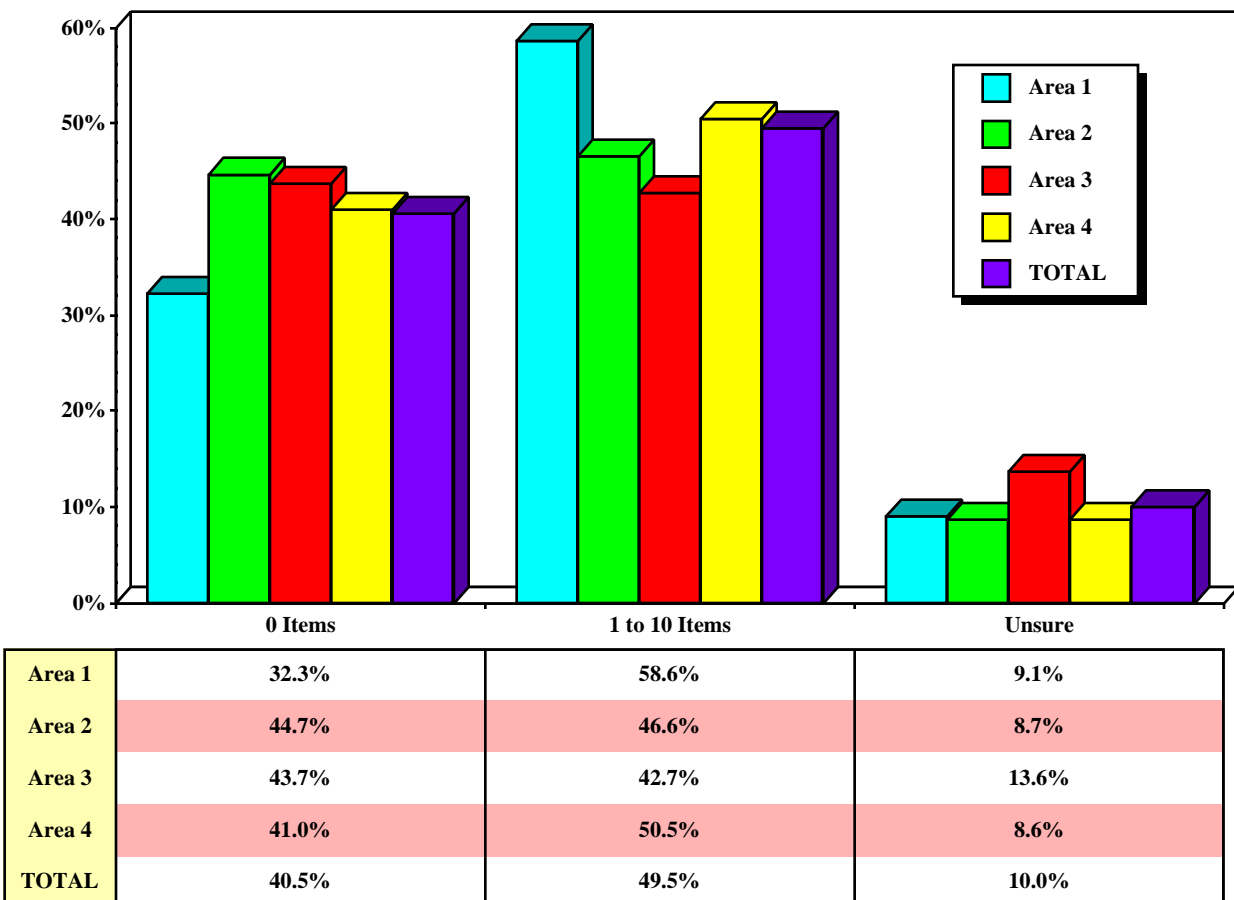




## Q6 Does anyone in your household currently store any unused or leftover waste items that can be considered hazardous or must be handled carefully during disposal?

- Four out of ten (40%) area residents said that no unused or leftover waste items were currently stored by anyone in their household.
- Half (50%) of those surveyed in the metropolitan area reported that anywhere from one to ten unused or leftover hazardous waste items were currently being stored by someone in their household.
- Ten percent of residents were unsure about whether anyone in their household was currently storing unused waste items that might be hazardous or require special handling.
- Reported variations in unused or leftover waste storage did not vary significantly across the four areas surveyed.

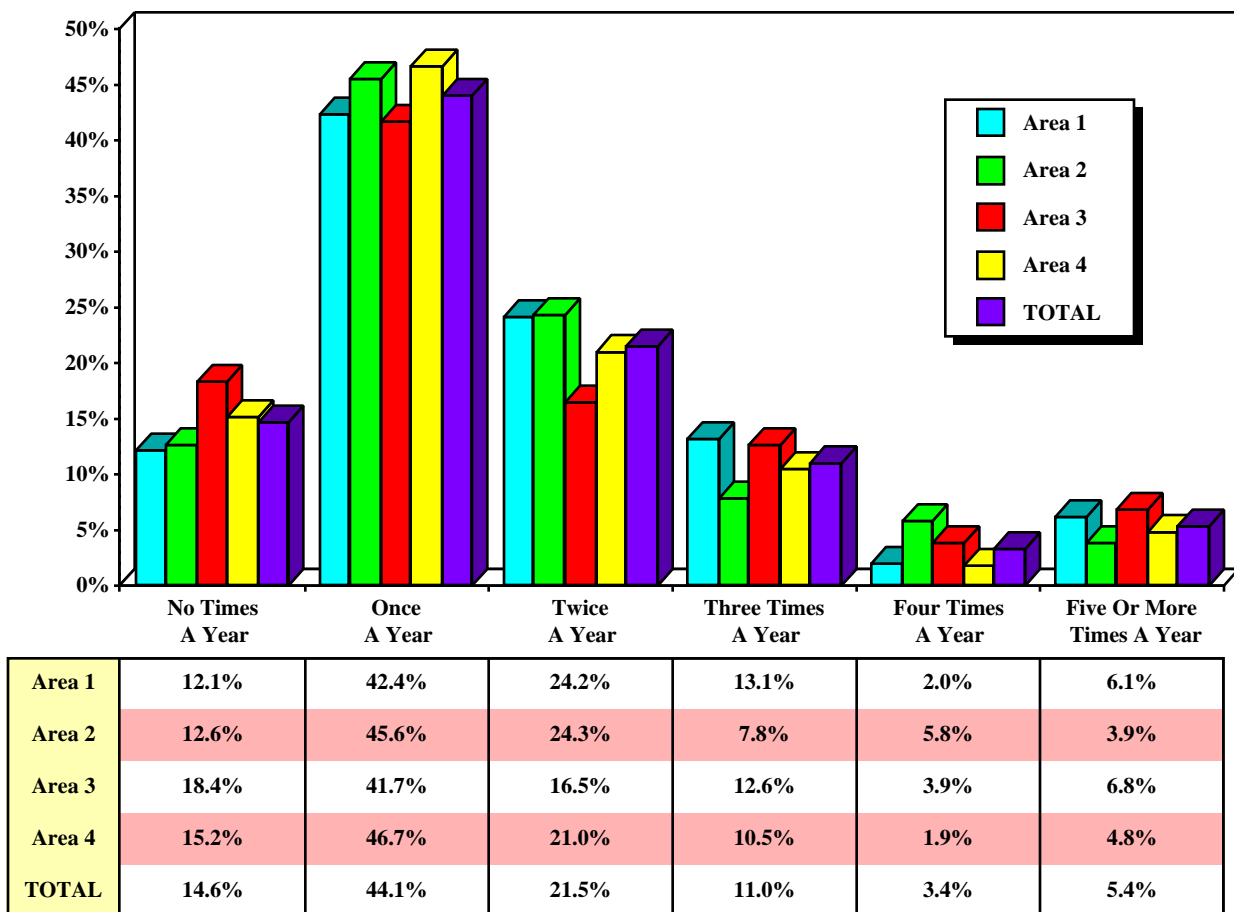
**Figure 6**



## Q7 How often would you say that your household needs to dispose of some type of household hazardous waste product?

- Only 15% of Douglas and Sarpy County residents claim that they never need to dispose of some type of household hazardous waste during the course of a year.
- Forty-four percent of residents said that they need to dispose of hazardous waste items once a year. Twenty-two percent reported that they dispose of such materials twice a year.
- Five percent of those interviewed indicated that they dispose of household hazardous waste products five or more times a year.
- Variations in disposal need did not attain an acceptable level of statistical significance.

**Figure 7**

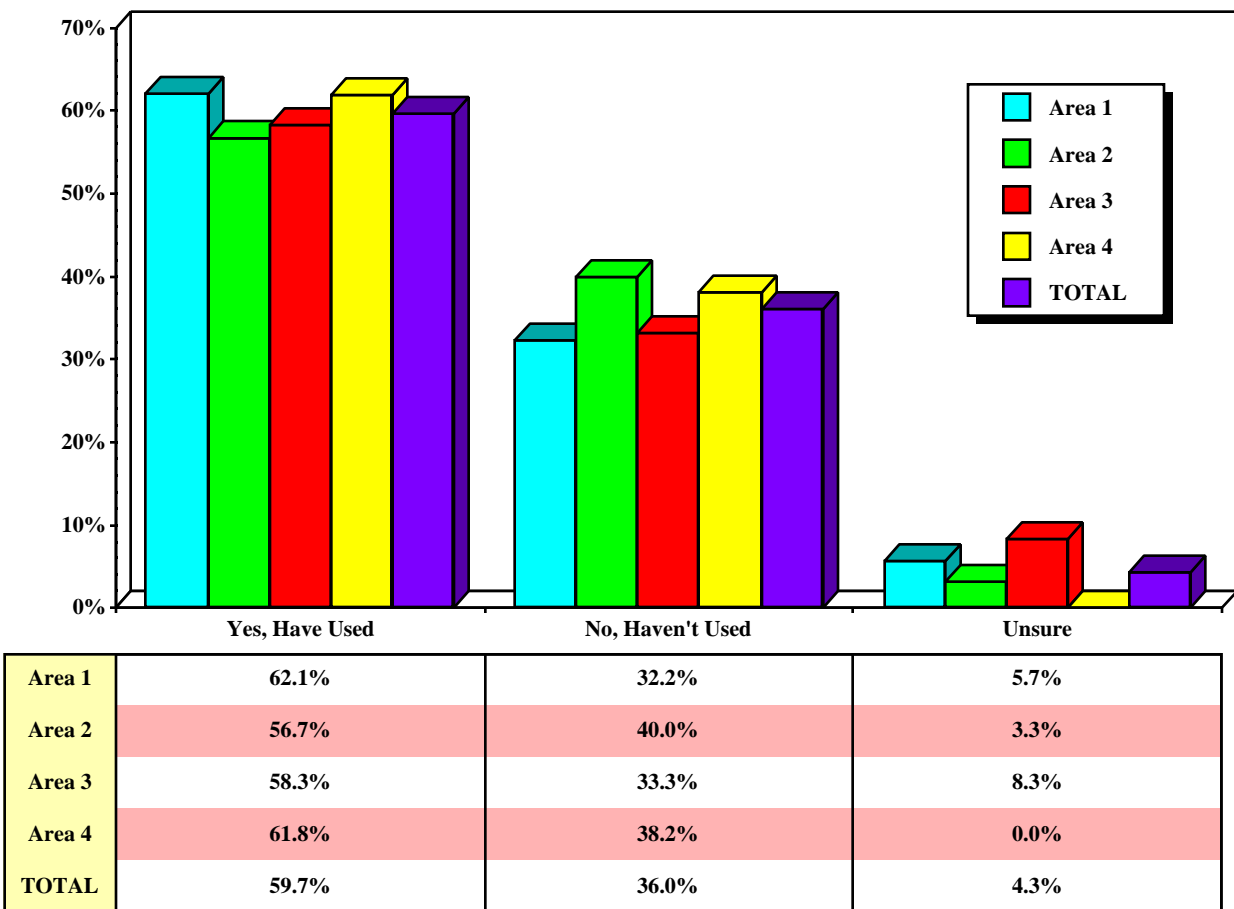


## Q8 Currently, a few select items can be dropped off for recycling at local businesses. Has your household ever used these services?

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- Six out of ten (60%) residents said they have used recycling facilities at local businesses for select hazardous waste products.
- Thirty-six percent of those surveyed said they had not used such facilities, and 4% were unsure.
- Usage did not differ significantly across the various metropolitan areas surveyed.

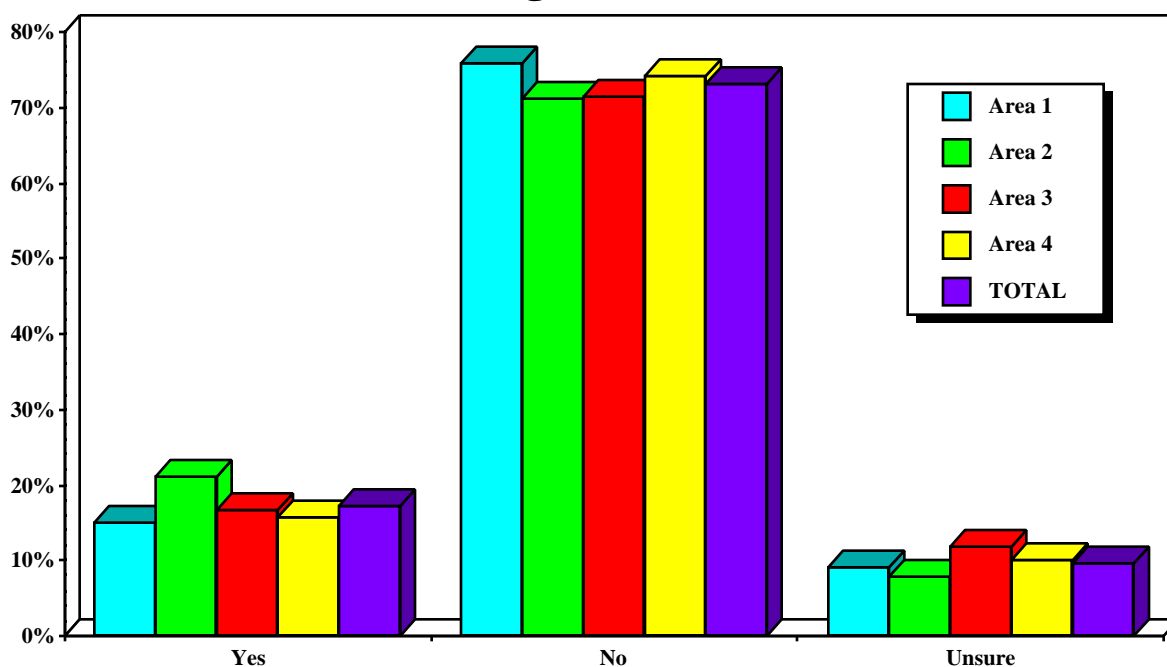
**Figure 8**



## Q9 Does you household ever put hazardous materials out with the regular garbage for disposal, or dump them down the sewer or storm drain?

- Seventeen percent of the area's residents admitted that their household sometimes puts hazardous materials out with the regular garbage for disposal, or dump them down the sewer or storm drain.
- Nearly three-fourths (73%) of those surveyed said that their household does not dispose of hazardous waste materials by treating it like regular garbage.
- Residents in Area 2 (21%) were the most likely to dispose of hazardous materials in this manner, while those in Area 1 (15%) were the least likely to do so.

**Figure 9**

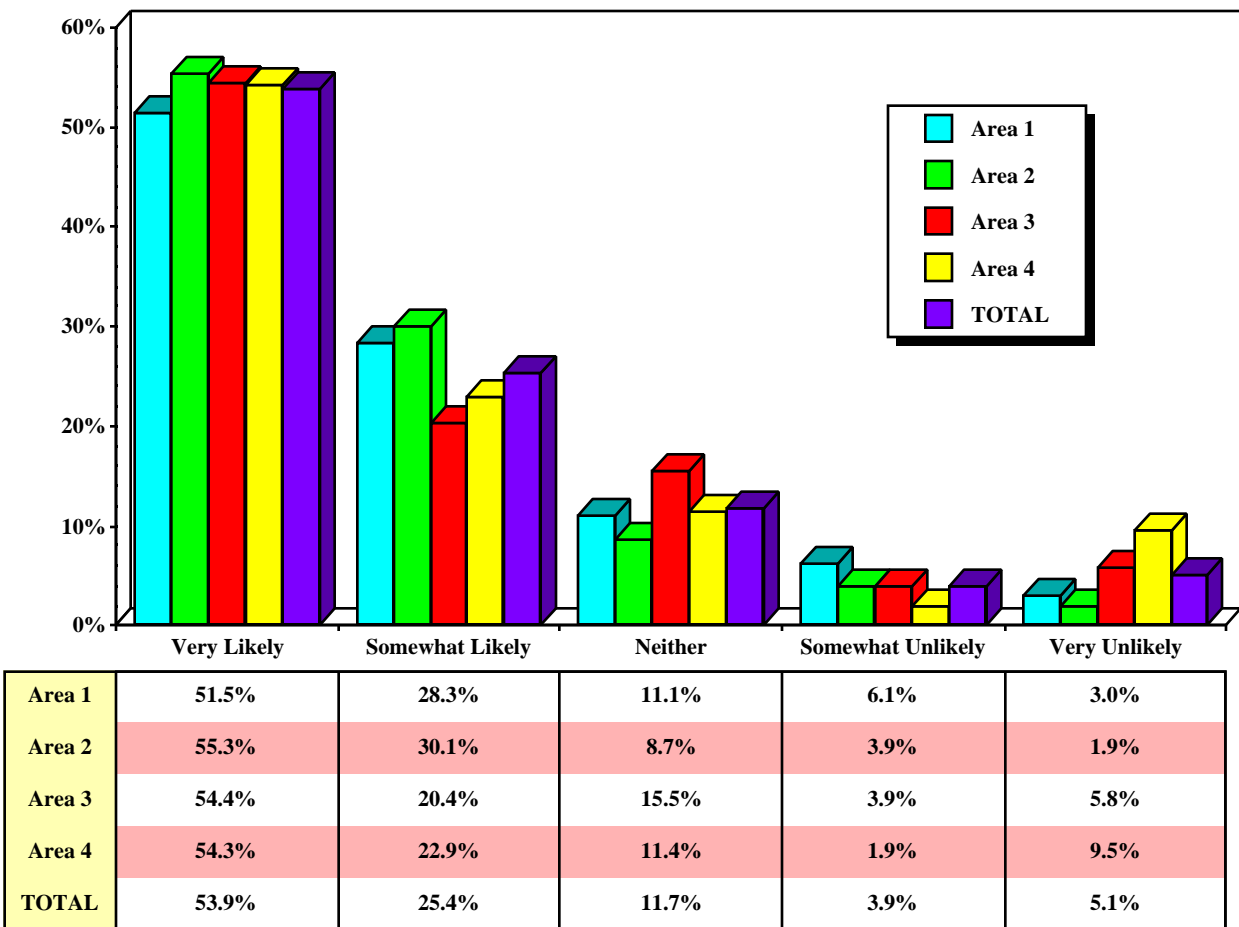


Area 1	14.9%	75.9%	9.2%
Area 2	21.1%	71.1%	7.8%
Area 3	16.7%	71.4%	11.9%
Area 4	15.7%	74.2%	10.1%
TOTAL	17.1%	73.1%	9.7%

## Q10 Were our community to build a permanent hazardous waste disposal facility, how likely would your household be to use it?

- Over half (54%) of those surveyed reported that they would be very likely to use a permanent hazardous waste disposal facility were it to be built. Another 25% of the area's residents said they would be somewhat likely to use such a facility.
- Only 5% of Omaha's residents, overall, said they would be very unlikely to use a permanent hazardous disposal facility. Four percent said they would be somewhat unlikely to do so, and 12% were unsure about what they might do were such a facility to be built.
- Anticipated usage of a permanent hazardous waste disposal facility did not differ significantly across the four metropolitan areas studied.

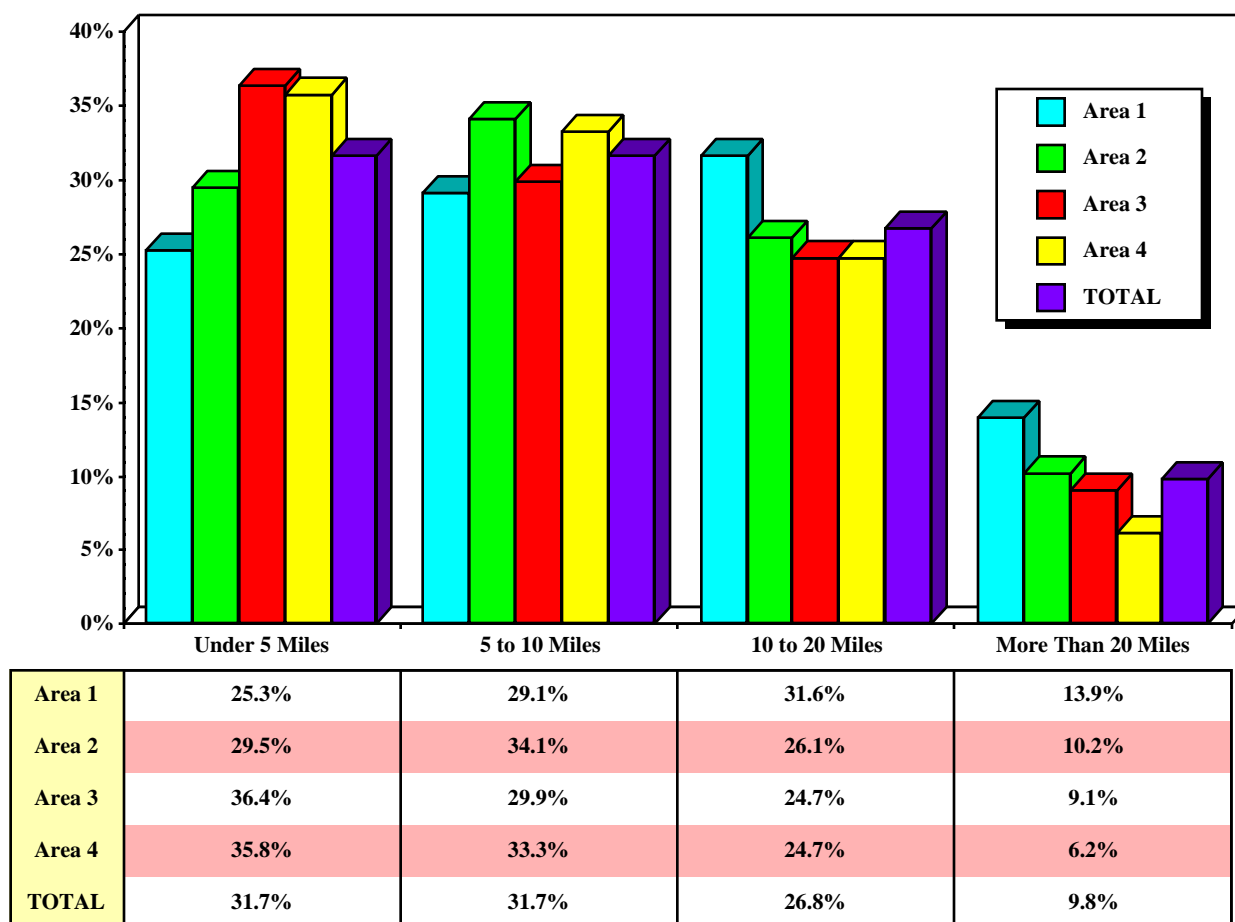
**Figure 10**



## Q11 What is the greatest number of miles you would be willing to travel to dispose of household hazardous waste at such a facility?

- About one-third (32%) of the area's residents said they would travel no more than five miles to dispose of household hazardous waste at a permanent collection facility.
- Another third (32%) indicated that they would be willing to travel between 5 and 10 miles to dispose of household hazardous waste materials.
- Twenty-seven percent of those interviewed reported that they would be willing to travel between 10 and 20 miles, and 10% said they would travel more than 20 miles to dispose of household hazardous waste at a permanent collection facility.

**Figure 11**

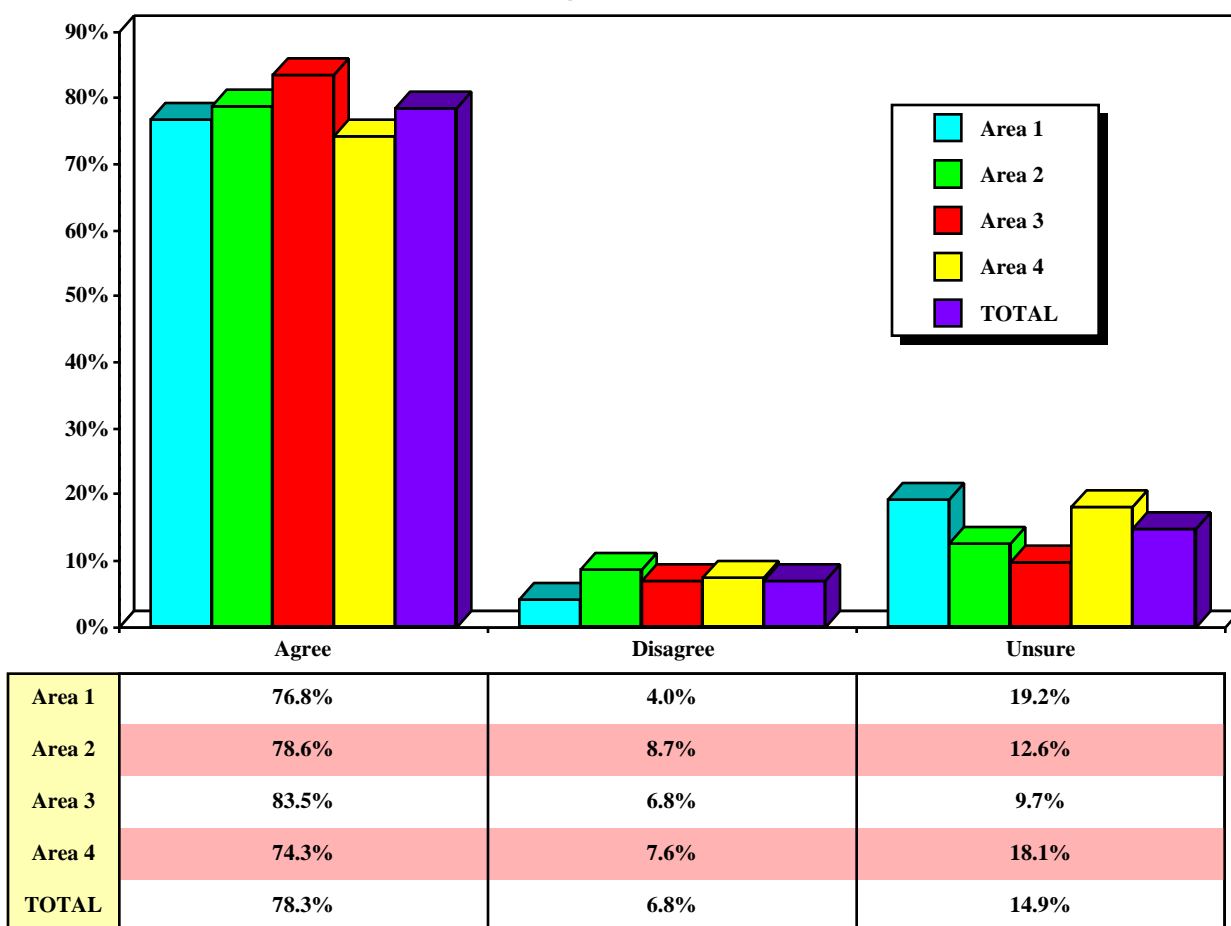


## Q12 Would you agree or disagree that a permanent collection facility is needed to help further reduce the quantity of hazardous materials introduced into the environment?

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- Nearly eight out of ten (78%) Douglas and Sarpy County residents agree that a permanent collection facility is needed to help further reduce the quantity of hazardous materials introduced into the environment.
- Only 7% of those surveyed said they believed such a facility was not needed, while 15% were unsure about their opinion in this regard.
- The perceived need for a permanent collection facility for hazardous waste materials did not differ significantly across the four areas surveyed.

**Figure 12**







**Appendix 1**  
**—Study Sample—**

**Table 1**  
**Study Sample Demographic Characteristics**

<b>GENDER</b>	
Male Head of Household	33.2%
Female Head of Household	66.8%
<b>AGE</b>	
21-25	5.4%
26-35	14.4%
36-55	42.7%
55+	37.6%
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	
Married	67.1%
Not Married	32.9%
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>	
Full-Time	49.3%
Part-Time	12.0%
Student	2.7%
Homemaker	12.0%
Retired	23.7%
Not Employed	0.5%
<b>HOUSEHOLD TYPE</b>	
Single Family	81.9%
Townhome or Duplex	4.7%
Multi-Unit	13.4%
<b>RACE</b>	
Caucasian	90.3%
African-American	4.2%
Other	5.5%
<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	
< \$20K	16.9%
\$20K - \$35K	24.4%
\$35K - \$55K	25.2%
\$55K - \$75K	19.0%
\$75K - \$100 K	10.1%
\$100K +	4.4%

**Appendix 2**  
**—Survey Questionnaire—**

## Household Hazardous Waste FFitel Survey Script Final Version

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- [S1] Hi I'm Nancy calling on behalf of Fact Finders, a national research company. Today we are conducting a brief survey about household hazardous wastes in the metropolitan area. We are not trying to sell you any services or products—we are calling for research purposes only and your answers are completely confidential. If you are included in our study, upon completion of the survey, your name will be entered into a random drawing for a \$100 cash prize. Your chances of winning the cash prize are roughly 1 in 400. To proceed with the survey, press 2 if you are over 21 years of age, or press 1 if you are under 21.
  - (If 1) I'm sorry, the quota for this age group already has been filled. Thank you, goodbye.
- [S2] To have a question repeated at any time, simply press the pound key located under the 9 key on your telephone. Now, please press 3 if you are the female head of your household, press 2 if you are the male head of your household, or press 1 if you are not the female or male head of your household.
  - (If 1) I'm sorry, the quota for this group already has been filled. Thank you, goodbye.
- [S3] Using any number between one and nine, please indicate the total number of people—including yourself—who currently occupy your household. If your household includes ten or more individuals, please enter 'zero'.
- [Q1] Does your household currently recycle any household materials on a regular basis?
  - if yes press 3
  - if no press 2
  - if you are not sure press 1
- [Q2] Most households generate a certain amount of waste that can be considered hazardous or must be handled carefully when being disposed. These wastes can be unused or leftover car batteries, acids, oil-based paints, spray paints, old mercury thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs, pesticides or herbicides, fertilizers, high strength cleaners or solvents, or used oil and gasoline. To what extent do you consider yourself to be aware of the problem of household hazardous waste?
  - if you are very aware press 5
  - if you are somewhat aware press 4
  - if you are neither aware nor unaware press 3
  - if you are somewhat unaware press 2
  - if you are very unaware press 1
- [Q3] To what extent do you agree with the idea that household hazardous waste can be safely disposed of by putting them down the drain or in the trash?
  - if you strongly agree press 5
  - if you somewhat agree press 4
  - if you neither agree nor disagree press 3
  - if you somewhat disagree press 2
  - if you strongly disagree press 1
- [Q4] To what extent do you agree with the idea that household hazardous waste poses some risk to the environment, but that the risk is not significant?
  - if you strongly agree press 5
  - if you somewhat agree press 4
  - if you neither agree nor disagree press 3
  - if you somewhat disagree press 2
  - if you strongly disagree press 1

- [Q5] To what extent do you agree that you personally are concerned about the lack of information on how to properly dispose of your household hazardous waste?
  - if you strongly agree press 5
  - if you somewhat agree press 4
  - if you neither agree nor disagree press 3
  - if you somewhat disagree press 2
  - if you strongly disagree press 1
- [Q6] Most households in our community generate a certain amount of waste items that can be considered hazardous or must be handled carefully during disposal. Does anyone in your household currently store any unused or leftover car batteries, acids, oil-based paints, spray paints, old mercury thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs, pesticides or herbicides, fertilizers, high strength cleaners or solvents, or used oil and gasoline at your residence?
  - if 0 items press 3
  - if one to ten items press 2
  - if you are unsure press 1
- [Q7] In general, how often would you say that your household needs to dispose of some type of household hazardous waste product?
  - if never press 6 (SKIP TO Q10)
  - if once a year press 5
  - if twice a year press 4
  - if three times a year press 3
  - if four times a year press 2
  - if five or more times a year press 1
- [Q8] Currently, a few select items including batteries, paint and used motor oil can be dropped off for recycling at local businesses. Has your household ever used these services?
  - if yes press 3
  - if no press 2
  - if you are unsure press 1
- [Q9] When your household needs to dispose of household hazardous waste items, as I have described them, do you ever put the hazardous materials out with the regular garbage for disposal, or dump them down the sewer or storm drain?
  - if yes press 3
  - if no press 2
  - or if you're unsure press 1
- [Q10] Our community currently has no permanent facility where one can properly dispose of household hazardous waste products. Were such a facility to be built, how likely would your household be to use it?
  - if very likely press 5
  - if somewhat likely press 4
  - if neither likely nor unlikely press 3 (SKIP TO Q12)
  - if somewhat unlikely press 2 (SKIP TO Q12)
  - or if very unlikely press 1 (SKIP TO Q12)
- [Q11] What is the greatest number of miles you would be willing to travel to dispose of household hazardous waste at such a facility? Enter any number between zero and 99, always using two digits.
- For example, if your answer is fifty-one miles, please enter 5 + 1. If your answer is five miles, please enter 0 + 5...and so forth.

- [Q12] Based on what you currently know about household hazardous wastes, would you agree or disagree that a permanent collection facility is needed to help further reduce the quantity of hazardous materials introduced into the environment?
  - if you agree press 3
  - if you disagree press 2 (SKIP TO Q14)
  - if you are unsure press 1 (SKIP TO Q15)
- [Q13] In your own words, why do you think a permanent collection facility for household hazardous wastes is needed? Press any key when you're finished.
 

[Voice Response] — (SKIP TO D1)
- [Q14] In your own words, why do you think a permanent collection facility for household hazardous wastes is NOT needed? Press any key when you're finished?
 

[Voice Response] — (SKIP TO D1)
- [Q15] In your own words, what sort of information could be provided that would help you to decide whether a permanent collection facility for household hazardous wastes is needed or not needed? Press any key when you're finished?
 

[Voice Response]
- [D1] If you are between the ages of 21 and 25 years of age press 4; if you are 26 to 35 press 3; if you are 36 to 55 press 2; or if you are 55 and older press 1
- [D2] So that we can better evaluate the study's results, please enter the number that corresponds to your current employment status.
  - if you are employed full-time press 6
  - if you are employed part-time press 5
  - if you are a full-time student press 4
  - if you are a homemaker press 3
  - if you are retired press 2
  - if you are not unemployed press 1
- [D3] Which of the following best describes your household?
  - if you own or rent a single family home press 3
  - if you own or rent a town home or duplex press 2
  - if you rent in a multi-unit dwelling press 1
- [D4] Please press the number that corresponds to your marital status.
  - if you are married press 2
  - if you are not married press 1
- [D5] Which of the following best describes your race?
  - if you are Caucasian press 6
  - if you are African American press 5
  - if you are Hispanic or Latino press 4
  - if you are Asian press 3
  - if you are Native American press 2
  - if your race has not been mentioned press 1

- [D6] Please enter the number that corresponds to your household's total annual income before taxes.
  - if under \$20,000 press 6
  - if between \$20,000 and \$35,000 press 5
  - if between \$35,000 and \$55,000 press 4
  - if between \$55,000 and \$75,000 press 3
  - if between \$75,000 and \$100,000 press 2
  - if \$100,000 or more press 1