

### Background:

SUNY Potsdam has said many times before that they are a green and eco-friendly school. Our energy usage and physical waste do not reflect this green motto, especially in the residence halls.

### Reducing Physical Waste:

- The average college student produces 640 pounds of trash per year.

#### Reducing purchase of bottled water

- The sink water in the dorms is heavily chlorinated so there is no place to refill water bottles in the dorms, only vending machines to buy plastic water bottles.
- There are multiple sinks in many dorms where water fountains or water bottle filtration systems could be placed.

#### Increasing recycling rates

- Some of my peers surveyed the student body on their recycling habits.
- More than half of the students surveyed said that there are definitely not enough recycling bins on campus.
- Also, many students are unaware of what can and can not be recycled.

## Transform the Dorms: Improving Sustainability in the SUNY Potsdam Residence Halls By Juliana Spinella

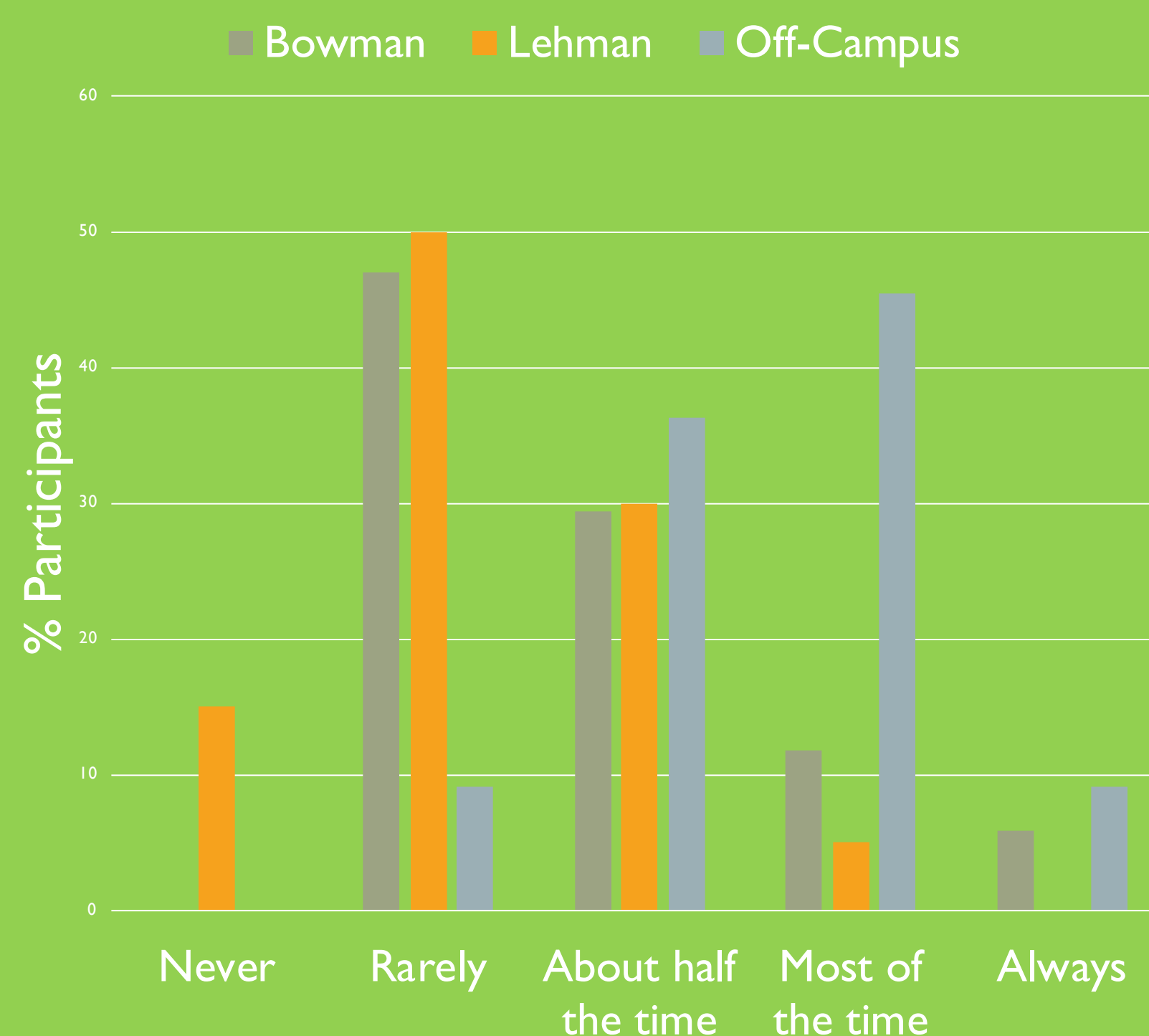


Figure 1.

5% of students say they **NEVER** Recycle.

Figure 2. Data from America Avila & Alexandria Rivera

### Conserving Energy:

#### Temperature policies

- SUNY Potsdam currently DOES NOT have an air conditioning/heating policy for our facilities staff to follow
- SUNY Canton DOES have an air conditioning/heating policy that includes:
  - Caps on how high or low the heat can be set
  - Rules restricting the heating and cooling to be turned on until the outside air reaches certain temperatures
  - Special service places like the exercise room and the dorms are monitored by facilities to determine if the temperatures are appropriate.
- Applying these policies would result in decreased energy use and increased cost savings.

#### Student voices

- I wanted to see how many students felt their dorm was uncomfortable.
- Figure 1 shows students are more uncomfortable temperature wise living on campus, specifically in Lehman and Bowman.

### Freecycle Force:

- The Freecycle Force is a group created to help reduce waste from dorms at the end of the semester.
- Our group's plan is at the end of the semester promote and advertise for students to drop off perfectly good items they would typically throw out and redistribute them in a free pop-up shop sort of fashion.
- We would take any fridges, microwaves, electronics, clothes, and other dorm amenities in good condition.
- Whatever was not redistributed would be sent to appropriate sources, such as a e-recycle place for electronics.

### Conclusion:

Overall, SUNY Potsdam considers itself a green campus and our dormitories and student areas should reflect that.