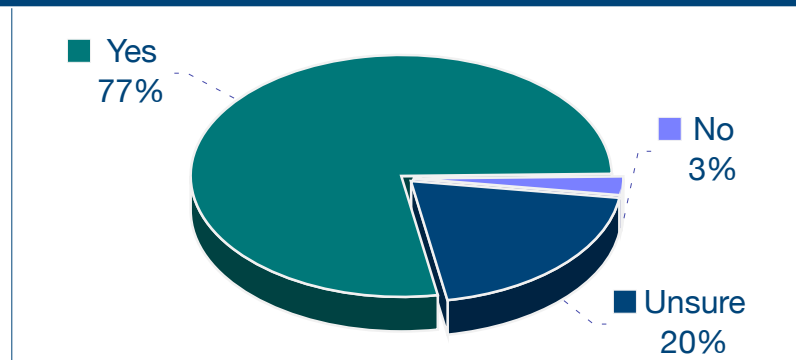




# Results of North Carolina's Reuse Sector Survey

September 2009

Would it be helpful if Reuse Alliance North Carolina offered a means of bringing reuse organizations together to explore ways to cross-promote reuse as a triple bottom line solution (people, planet, profit)?



For more information, please contact:  
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# What is the Reuse Alliance?

The Reuse Alliance, a professional association for reuse organizations, is working to strengthen the reuse sector by connecting, supporting and promoting its members.

## Connect

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- ◉ Act as a networking conduit that builds relationships between reuse organizations

## Support

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- ◉ Provide capacity building training that strengthens individual organizations
- ◉ Leverage research dollars for issues that are important to the reuse sector
- ◉ Develop informational resources that increase public awareness and access to these innovative waste prevention services

## Promote

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- ◉ Communicate the triple bottom line benefits of reuse
- ◉ Advocate for pro-reuse policies and regulations

# Introduction

The Reuse Alliance supports reuse and affiliated organizations in promoting reuse as an activity with triple bottom line benefits.

A survey was conducted in the Summer of 2009 in North Carolina to gauge the level of interest in forming a statewide chapter of the Reuse Alliance. The majority of the 48 respondents reported there is a need for an organizing body and networking conduit for reuse organizations, educators, business community, policy makers, public servants, and citizens of North Carolina.

The participating individuals and organizations comprised of a cross-section of North Carolina's "reuse sector" including thrift & consignment stores, reusable building material stores, reuse centers of various materials, bike repair, used book stores, environmental educators, procurement managers, waste reduction specialists, local/state government officers, institutional sustainability offices, electronic/computer donation/repair, and more.

A wide range of viewpoints were expressed on the nature of services that would benefit the state's reuse sector. The following report will provide an overview of our research and analysis.

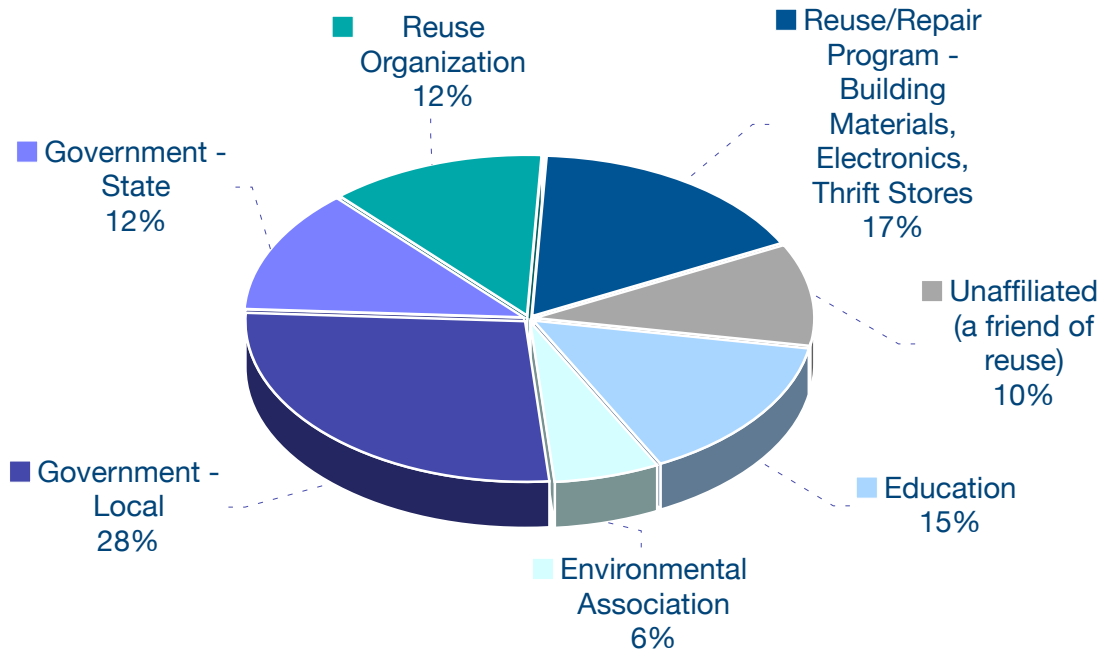
The first section, Survey Findings, will show you the survey questions and the responses reported to us. The next section, Challenges & Recommendations, will highlight the suggested areas of focus for Reuse Alliance North Carolina. The last section, Next Steps, will list the action items necessary to bring together those involved or supportive of reuse.

We hope you will enjoy reading this report, and that you will join us in moving Reuse Alliance North Carolina forward.

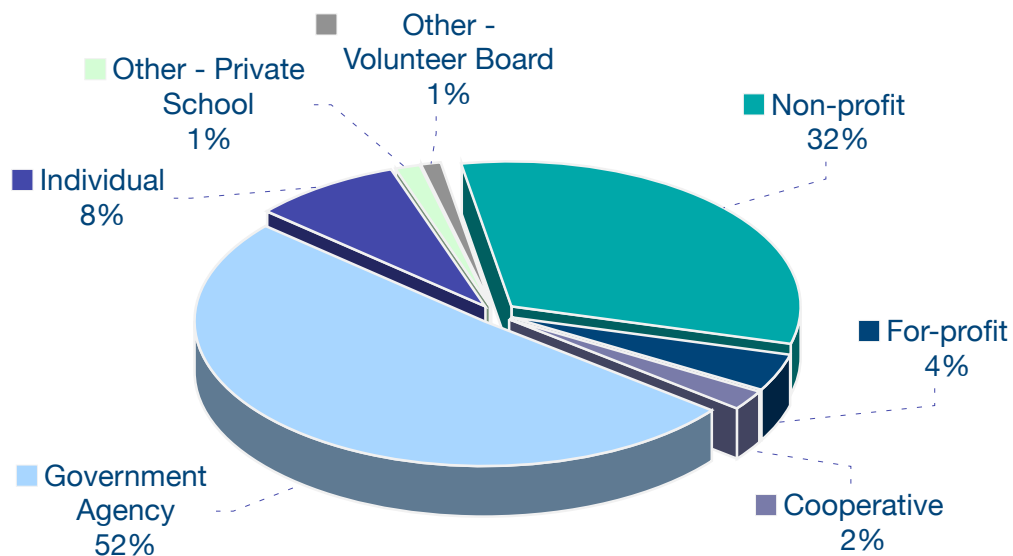


# Survey Findings

## 1. What kind of organization do you represent?

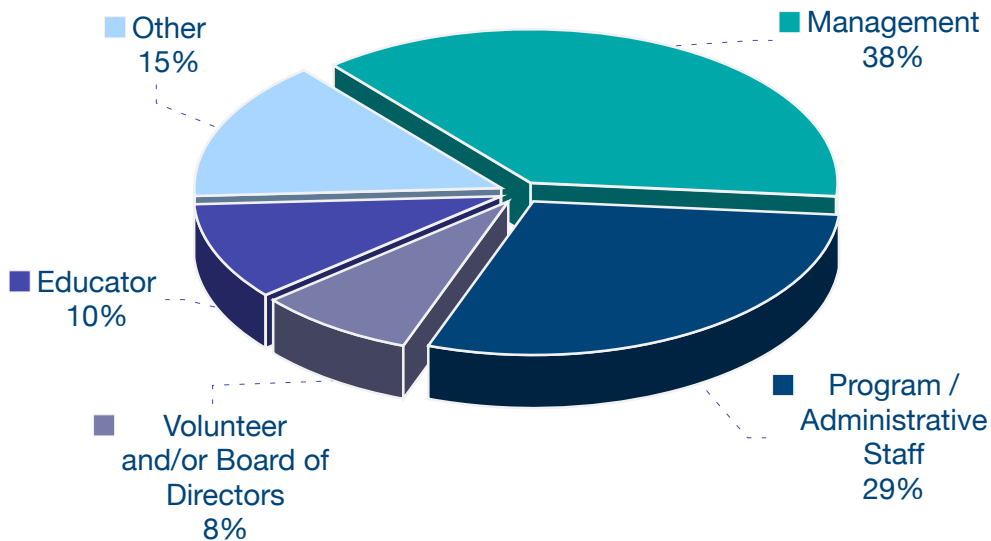


## 2. What is the organization's legal status?

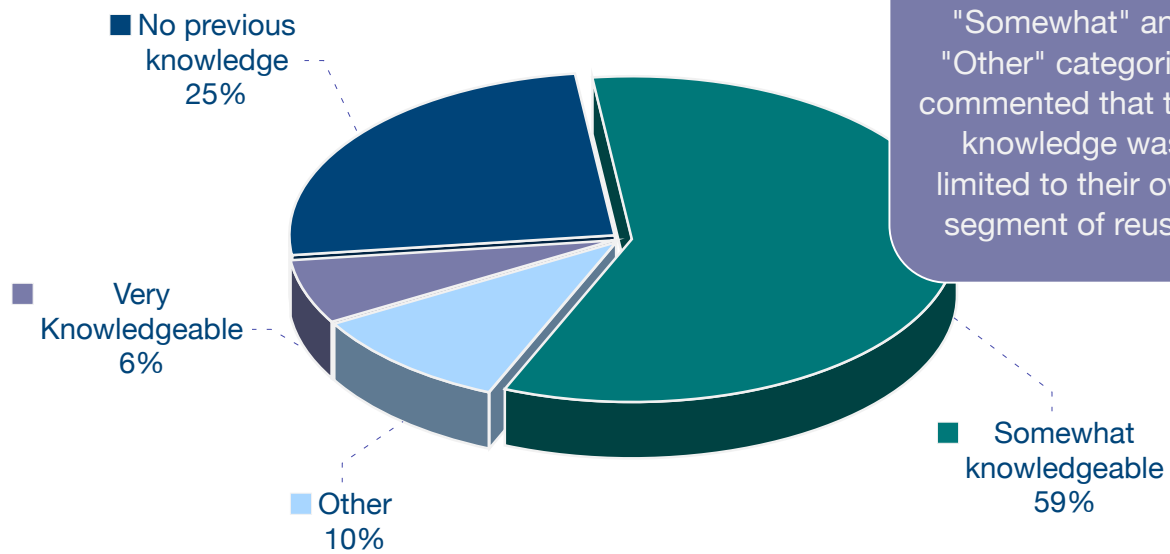


# Survey Findings

## 3. What is your position in your organization?



## 4. What is your level of awareness/knowledge of the "reuse sector" and its various stakeholders?

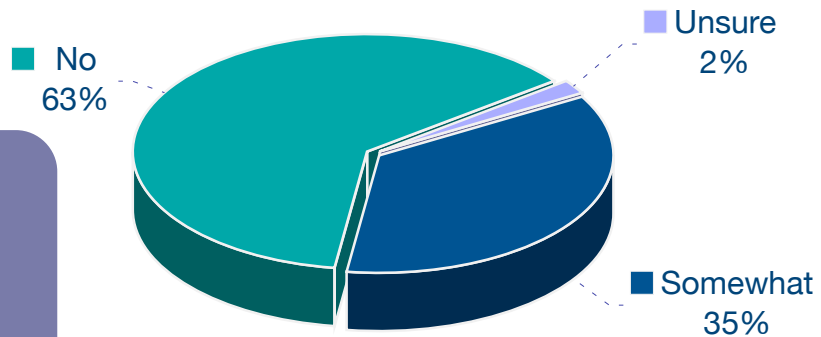


Many in the "Somewhat" and "Other" categories commented that their knowledge was limited to their own segment of reuse.

# Survey Findings

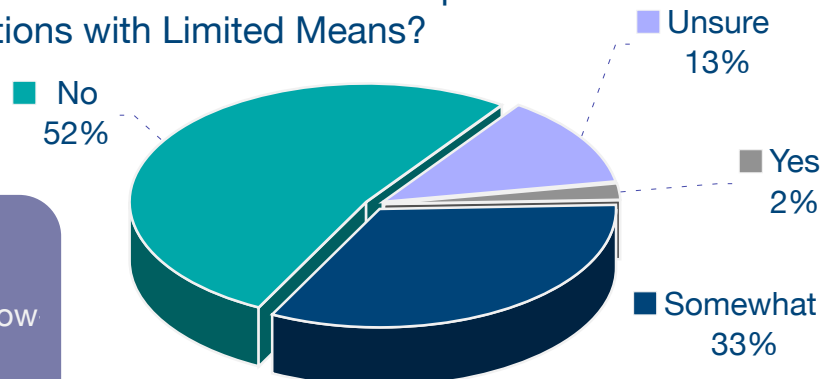
5. Do you feel there are sufficient public outreach and education initiatives in NC that focus on reuse as a strategy to:

Divert waste from landfills?



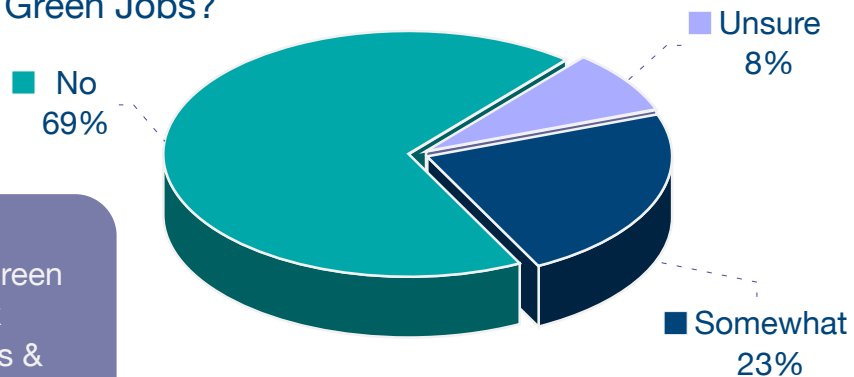
**Energy Savings:**  
Reuse diverts resources from landfill, and reduces the need for energy & raw materials.

Offer Low/No-Cost Materials to People & Organizations with Limited Means?



**Financial Savings:**  
Reuse offers individuals, nonprofits, & businesses low cost green purchasing options.

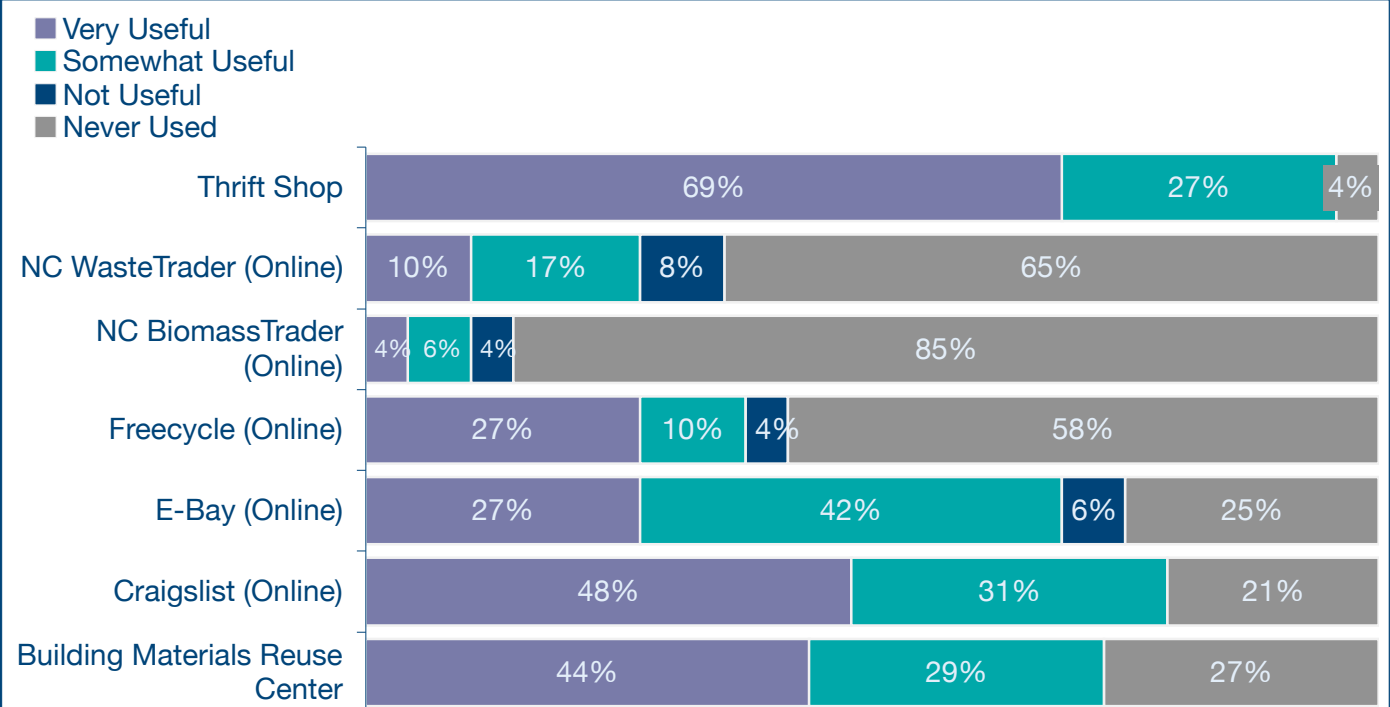
Create Green Jobs?



**Economic Growth:**  
Reuse is a source of green collar jobs & offers tax benefits for businesses & residents.

# Survey Findings

6. Have you ever used any of the following reuse services, and how did you feel about the experience?



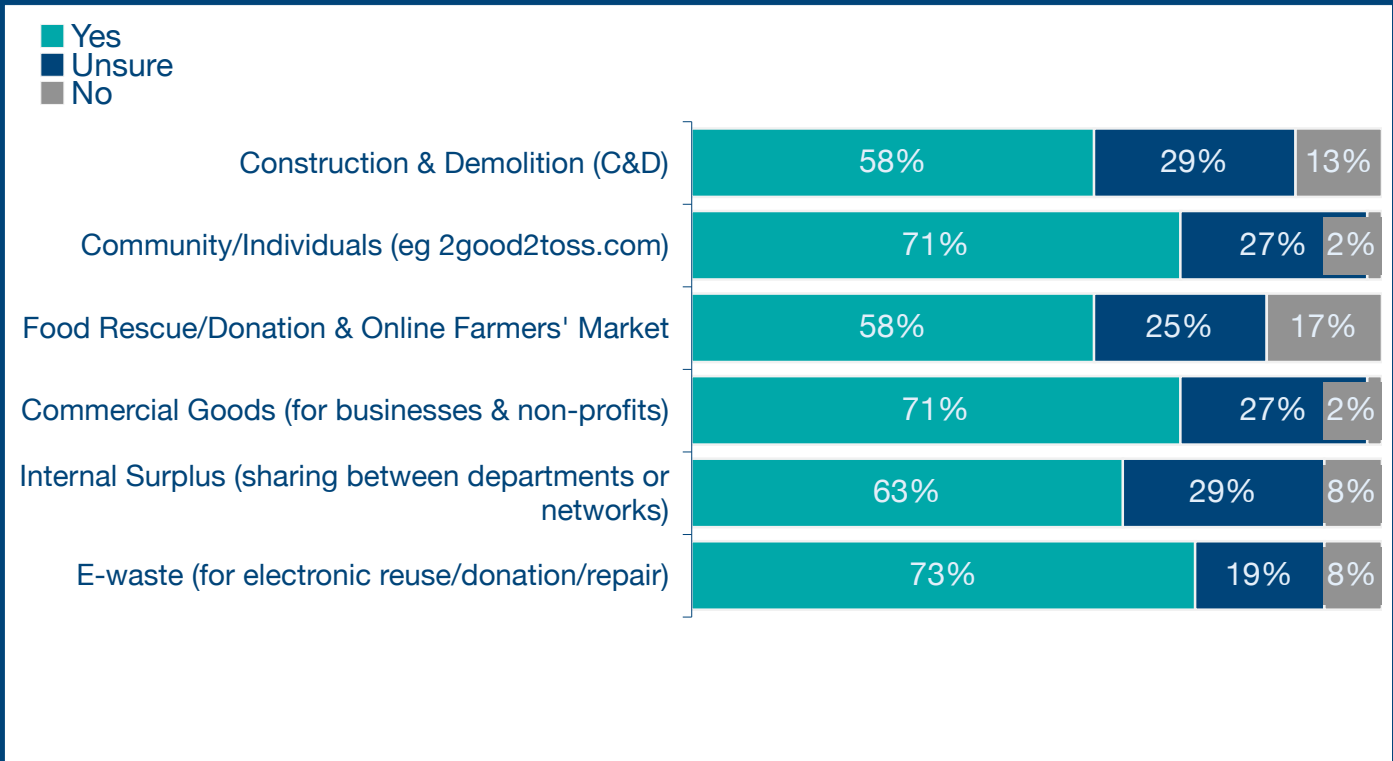
Other existing reuse services mentioned as being useful include:

- ⦿ NC State Surplus
- ⦿ Furniture Consignment stores
- ⦿ Salvage sheds/swap shops at solid waste collection centers

For some respondents who felt a service was not useful or not being used, they expressed that the service may not be actively promoted, focused, or user-friendly.

# Survey Findings

7. Would your organization have an interest in seeing local/regional online materials exchange & resource websites that promote reuse, with a focus on a specific industry or material category?



Some respondents also expressed an interest in seeing exchanges focused on the following:

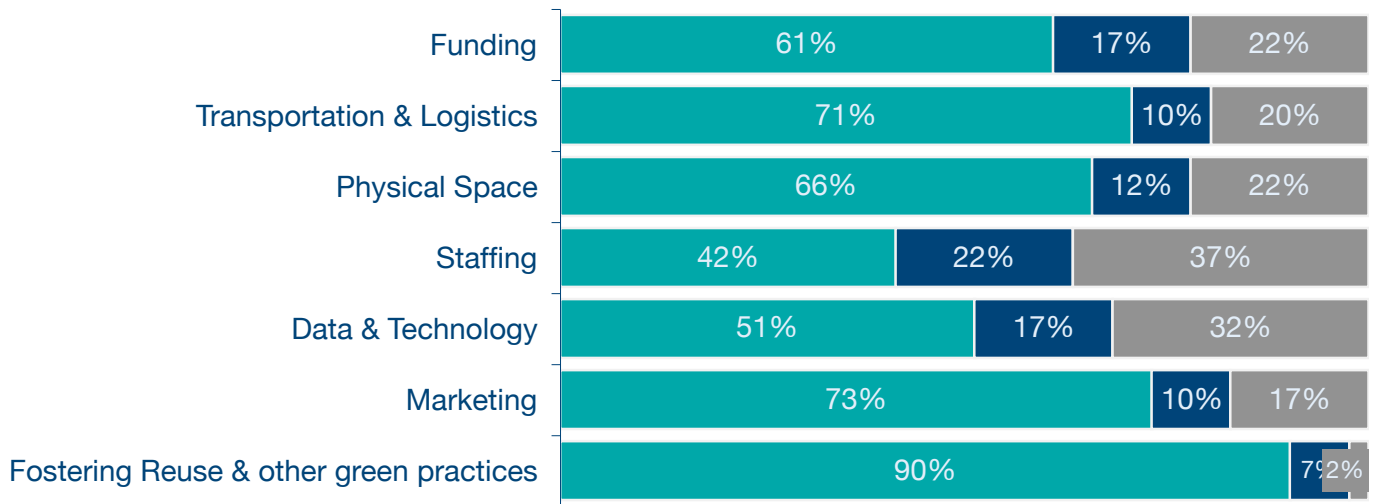
- fats, oils, and greases
- dorm reuse/surplus programs in colleges and universities
- county-wide surplus materials/equipment between schools

Concerns were voiced about potential cost of service and existing prohibitive procurement policies.

# Survey Findings

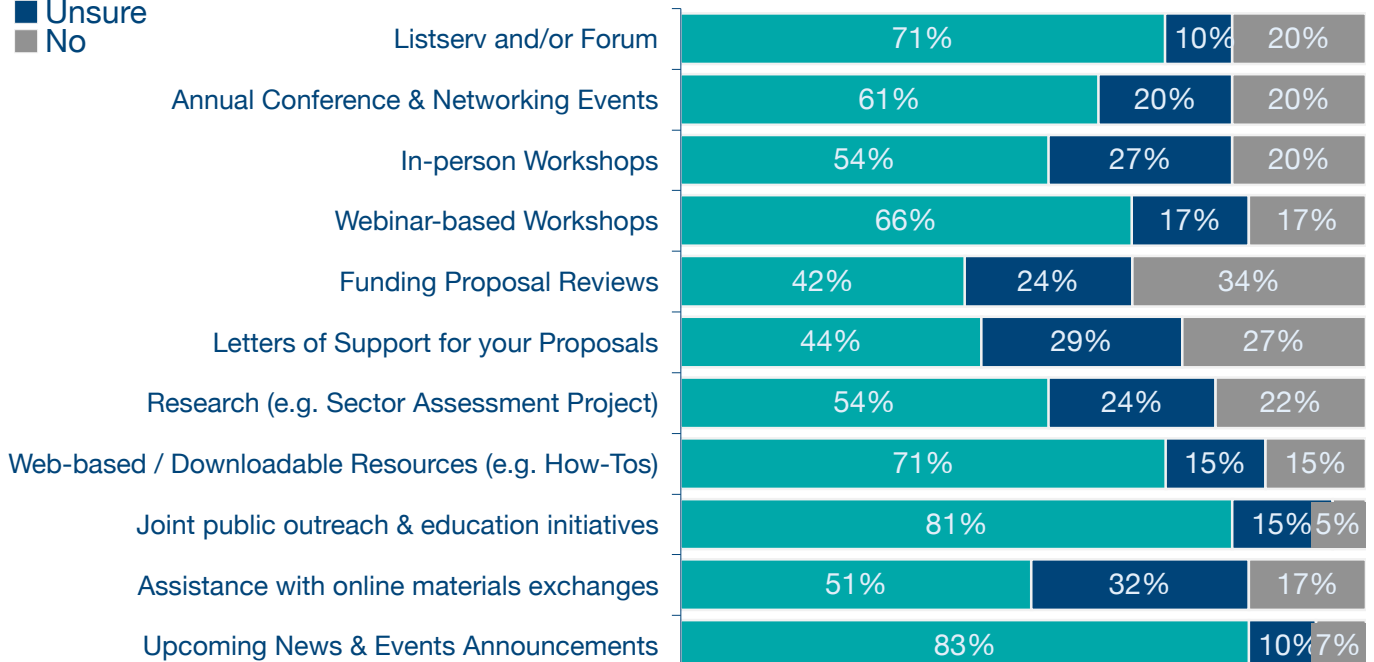
## 8. Would it be helpful to your organization if RANC worked to address any of the following challenges?

■ Yes  
■ Unsure  
■ No



## 9. Specifically, which RANC services would you be interested in?

■ Yes  
■ Unsure  
■ No



# Survey Findings

10. What can RANC do to help the reuse sector in the short term (next 12 months) and in the longer term (next 3 years)?

## Short Term (Next 12 months)

- ◉ Create a structure to communicate with each other, identify action plan
- ◉ Introduce organizations to one another
- ◉ Pick an area of NC for an in-depth evaluation of particular sector (e.g. clothing, appliances, electronics) and provide a case study
- ◉ Promote existing programs and reuse orgs
- ◉ Education and Marketing in all Counties
- ◉ Public encouragement to divert reusable items from the landfill
- ◉ Use educators to reach older children who will influence their parents
- ◉ Assist in finding recipients for reusable materials
- ◉ Keep more waste fryer oil in North Carolina & promote biofuels incentives in the state legislature

*\*Please note some answers have been combined and/or summarized where multiple answers of the same nature were given.*

## Longer Term (Next 3 Years)

- ◉ Create an identity with the public for the value and necessity for reuse organizations and reuse generally
- ◉ Change public policy
- ◉ Partner with other organizations
- ◉ Create PSAs and educate teachers
- ◉ Incorporate a 'Reduce' campaign/education as well as Reuse
- ◉ Educate waste generators and small business on the benefits of reuse
- ◉ Promote deconstruction & reuse for profit
- ◉ Educational seminars to support the DIY movement
- ◉ Ensure infrastructure & training for repair and exchange
- ◉ Create a comprehensive clearinghouse of all programs and promote them accordingly
- ◉ Help foster more ways to exchange and reuse items
- ◉ Replace petroleum boiler fuels with free fatty acids, keep more waste fryer oil in North Carolina and promote biofuels incentives in the state legislature
- ◉ Technical assistance / Logistics / Location assistance
- ◉ Offer case studies and success stories to potential partners and participants with contact information - Assist organizations with reuse partnering

# Challenges & Recommendations

The top needs/challenges for the reuse sector in North Carolina are:

- ◉ Space & Transportation
- ◉ Marketing & Communications
- ◉ Staff Training
- ◉ Public Awareness

The suggested areas of focus for Reuse Alliance North Carolina, as noted by survey participants, are:

- ◉ Capture impact data (benefits) of reuse (e.g. tons diverted, GHG avoided, # of people assisted)
- ◉ Create a communication mechanism that can help avoid duplication of efforts in the sector
- ◉ Encourage private and public agencies to fund reuse programs
- ◉ Launch a joint marketing campaign to educate the public about reuse
- ◉ Research more uses and recipients for reusable materials
- ◉ Help connect people with reusable goods in a sustainable, cost-effective manner
- ◉ Assess and address C&D and packaging waste streams
- ◉ Research and address liability issues around reusable goods
- ◉ Help the legislative movement in NC to include more materials in landfill bans

# Next Steps

## Membership Invitation

Reuse Alliance North Carolina will be:

- Member-Driven
- Member-Supported

In order to be able to offer services that are meaningful to members, we'll need your input, participation and support. Membership dues are affordable and you can sign up to become a member online or download the form to mail in.

## Chapter Launch via Statewide Conference Call

We'll be launching the chapter with a statewide conference call to give everyone an opportunity to ask questions about the survey and the Reuse Alliance in general, provide additional feedback, and begin discussions on ways to move forward. **Members and non-members are invited to participate.**

We'll highlight some exciting RANC initiatives that are already underway, and begin the formation of committees that will assist in organizing members and activities in various parts of the state.

**The Conference Call will take place in Autumn 2009. Date & details will be announced soon.**

In closing we'd like to quote one of our respondents who aptly noted,

*"It takes time and persistence to bring about change."*

Thank you for your interest! We look forward to connecting with you and promoting reuse in North Carolina.