












Savannah River Site™

STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS SURVEY RESULTS

September 13th, 2021



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Background

Based on news reports and community interactions, it was apparent that many people in the Central Savannah River Area did not have a basic understanding of what the Savannah River Site (SRS) was, what its missions were, and how it was organized. Anecdotal evidence suggested that people in the community understood that SRS had a number of missions and that it was overseen by the Department of Energy (DOE). Community members did not appear to understand that the primary mission of the SRS is Environment Management (EM) and that the site has seen a number of successes in its various missions. Communications from DOE about EM efforts often focus on individual contractor accomplishments and not the site. It seems likely that confusion about activities at SRS undermine confidence in DOE-SRS activities and even fuels community fears about what many long-time local residents call “the bomb plant.”

The Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) believed that DOE-SRS needed to take an active role in combating community misconceptions about SRS through persistent and targeted public outreach. In order to do that, the department must understand the community’s level of interest in SRS, its level of concern about SRS, and how community outreach can be improved.

Recommendation

The CAB recommended that DOE-SR fund a scientifically valid and reliable baseline survey of the stakeholder population in order to ascertain its understanding of SRS EM activities, to measure its interest in and concerns about SRS, and to determine efficient and effective channels for SRS EM outreach to stakeholders.

Objectives


Business Objectives

1. Determine the level of understanding concerning SRS Environmental Management (EM) activities
2. Measure community and stakeholder interest and concerns about SRS
3. Determine efficient and effective channels for SRS EM outreach to different stakeholder

Research Objectives

1. Determine what people know about SRS
2. Discover where people acquire their information about SRS
3. Understand if there are more effective ways to share information with the public about SRS.
4. Determine differences in level of awareness, understanding, concern, and communication preferences for differing segments (age groups, educational levels, gender, and geographical setting).

Methodology

		Total	Georgia	South Carolina
	Sample Distribution	1,627	529	1,098



Collection Dates
July 31st to August 9th, 2021

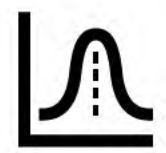


Data Collection Method
Internet Survey



Key Information

- Sample: Members of a national panel
- Inclusion Criteria:
 - 18 and up &
 - Reside in the **Georgia counties** of Columbia, Richmond, Burke, Screven, Effingham, or Chatham **OR** the **South Carolina counties** of Aiken, Barnwell, Allendale, Hampton, Jasper, Beaufort, Colleton, Bamberg, Charleston, Lexington, or Richland
- Survey Length: Approximately 15 minutes



Statistical Significance Testing in Report

- Conducted at the 95% confidence level
- Information from base sizes less than n=30 should be interpreted with caution

Executive **Summary**

Awareness of the Savannah River Site (SRS) is high among survey participants, especially South Carolina residents. Social Media and Newspapers serve as popular sources of information about the SRS and most residents are not concerned about the SRS' activities. Opportunities to establish ongoing communication with area residents exist.

When results for residents of rural counties are compared to those living in urban and populated counties, no statistically significant differences were found. Meaning that residents of rural and urban counties provide similar feedback.

Even though email is favored by nearly all survey takers, generational differences were seen in the additional communication methods residents prefer to receive.

It is recommended that the DOE – SRS establishes an opt-in neighborhood communication platform that provides ongoing communication and opportunities for residents to participate in research.

Future communication efforts with area residents should be tailored to the varying levels of understanding they have on the SRS. Messages should be delivered in an understandable way using a combination of preferred methods (email, internet news, newspapers, etc.) to allow them to have the widest reach.



SRS Familiarity & Knowledge

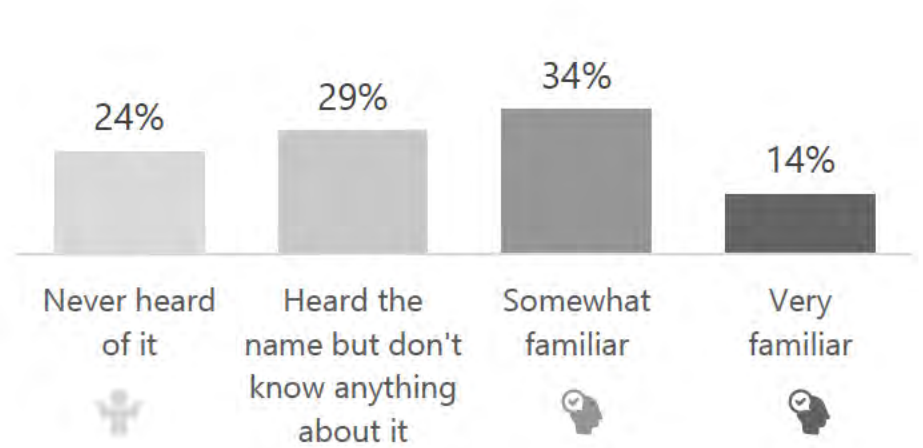


Level of Familiarity

Nearly twice as many respondents have never heard of Plant Vogtle compared to the Savannah River Site (SRS). Not only have more respondents heard of SRS, but a greater percentage would categorize their knowledge as "somewhat" or "very" familiar.

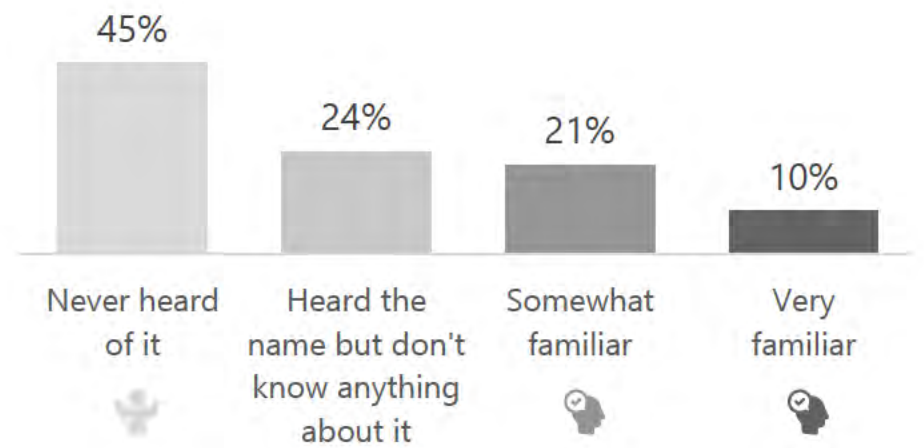
Savannah River Site (SRS)

Base: Total Respondents N=1627



Plant Vogtle

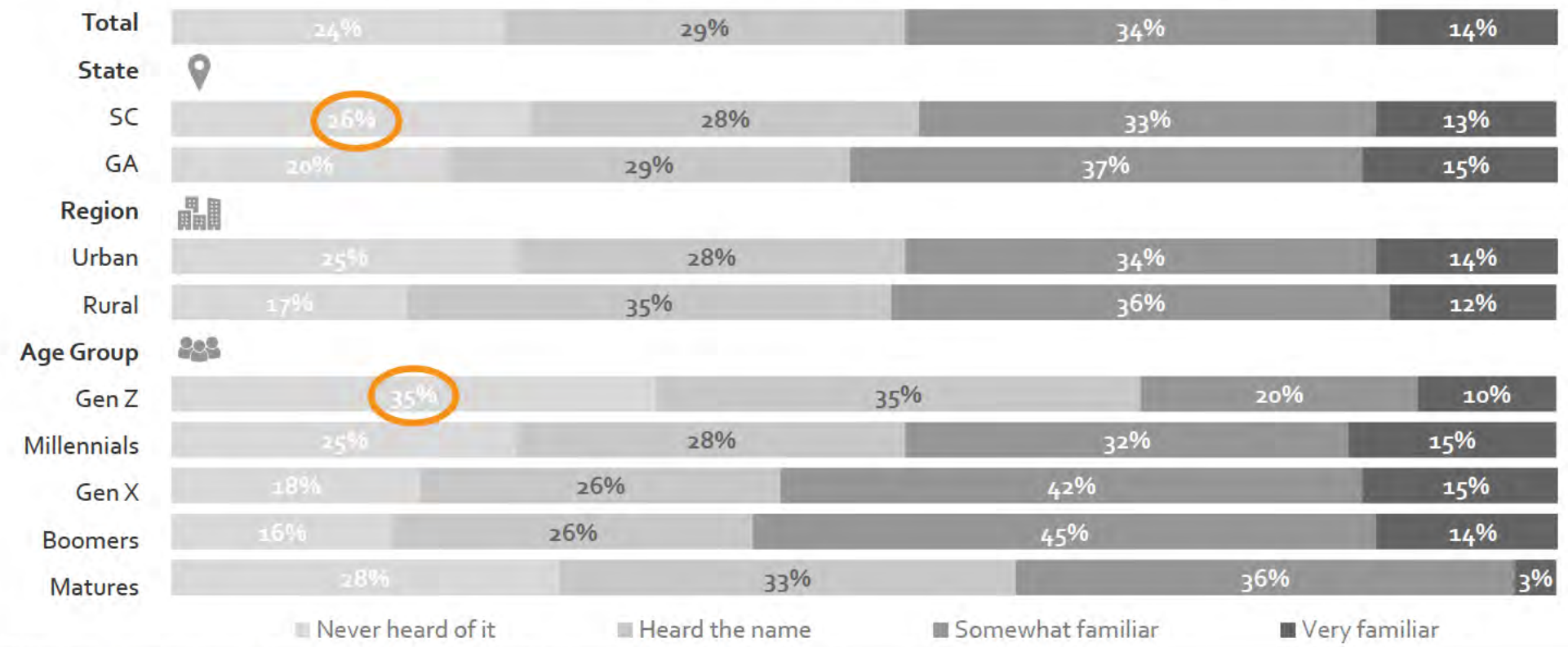
Base: Total Respondents N=1627



Differences Observed in SRS Familiarity

Significant differences in familiarity with SRS were observed by state and age group. More South Carolina respondents and younger age groups, had never heard of the Savannah River Site.

Level of Familiarity with the Savannah River Site (SRS)

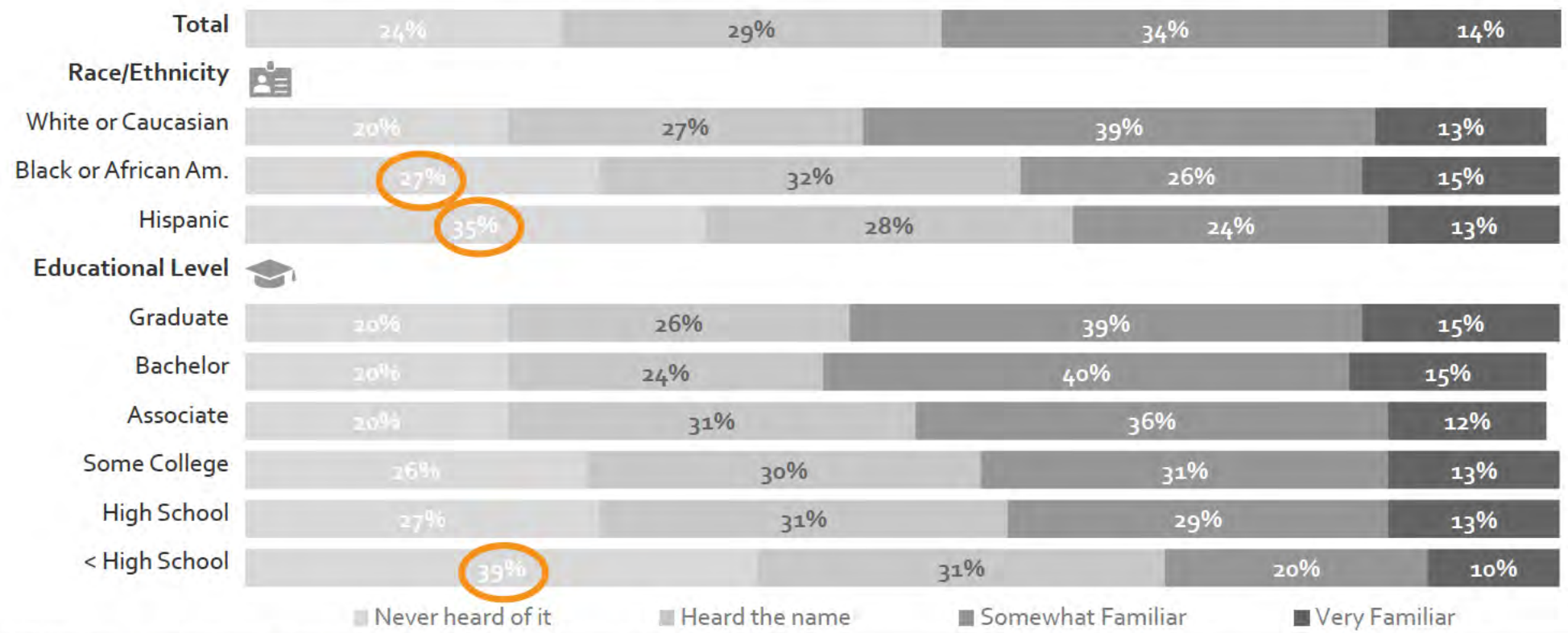


A1. How familiar are you with the Savannah River Site (SRS)? Base: Total Respondents = 1627

Differences Observed in SRS Familiarity

Significant differences in familiarity with SRS were observed by race/ethnicity and education. Those with lower educational attainment, Hispanic and Black or African American respondents had never heard of the Savannah River Site.

Level of Familiarity with the Savannah River Site (SRS)



A1. How familiar are you with the Savannah River Site (SRS)? Base: Total Respondents = 1627

The Community has Some Knowledge of SRS

The mission, location, and ownership of the SRS were the questions most often incorrectly answered. A little less than half of the respondents (44%) correctly identified South Carolina as the True statement and Georgia as the false statement for the location of the SRS. Whereas a little more than 1 in 3 respondents (35%) correctly answered both ownership statements regarding the DOE and DOD.

Savannah River Site Beliefs & Perceptions

Base: Total Respondents N=1627

The SRS...	True	False
 has a long track record of being one of the safest major industrial sites in the world	77%	23%
 is responsible for the disposition of nuclear materials waste and waste management	72%	28%
 processes and stores nuclear materials in support of national defense efforts	66%	34%
 treats nuclear and hazardous waste left over from the Cold War	56%	44%
 and Plant Vogtle have the same mission	51%	49%
 The purpose of the SRS is to manufacture bomb parts	27%	73%

		South Carolina	
		True	False
Georgia	True	19%	30%
	False	44%	7%











		DOD	
		True	False
DOE	True	30%	35%
	False	15%	20%

Familiar Respondents More Knowledgeable

As expected, those familiar with SRS were equally if not more knowledgeable about the facility, correctly answering all True/False statements, except one. However, both the familiar and unfamiliar equally believed the “The SRS and Plant Vogtle have the same mission.”

Savannah River Site Beliefs & Perceptions - True by SRS Familiarity

Base: Total Respondents N=1627

The SRS...	Familiar	Not
 has a long track record of being one of the safest major industrial sites in the world	86%	68%
 is responsible for the disposition of nuclear materials waste and waste management	83%	61%
 processes and stores nuclear materials in support of national defense efforts	74%	59%
 The U.S. Department of Energy owns the SRS	71%	59%
 The SRS is located in South Carolina	76%	51%
 treats nuclear and hazardous waste left over from the Cold War	66%	48%
 and Plant Vogtle have the same mission	52%	50%
 The U.S. Department of Defense owns the SRS	41%	49%
 The SRS is located in Georgia	40%	57%
 The purpose of the SRS is to manufacture bomb parts	28%	27%



SRS Concerns



Ways Informed about SRS

Respondents were shown an excerpt of Page 1 of the Savannah River Site Overview Fact Sheets and asked if they'd seen the information before. Approximately 1 in 4 (28%) of respondents reported seeing the information. The top three information sources were other, social media, and newspapers.

The Savannah River Site

SRS is a 310-square-mile site located near Aiken, S.C., on the Savannah River, which borders South Carolina and Georgia. SRS covers 198,046 acres, including parts of Aiken, Barnwell and Allendale counties in South Carolina. The SRS annual budget is approximately \$2 billion, with a workforce of about 11,000.

Dedicated to maintaining the highest possible safety and security standards, the Savannah River Site (SRS) is a key Department of Energy (DOE) industrial complex responsible for disposition of nuclear materials, waste management, environmental cleanup and environmental stewardship.

Safety

SRS is committed to its people, missions and the future. SRS has a long track record of being one of the safest sites in the DOE complex and one of the safest major industrial sites in the world. Protecting workers, the public, the environment and national security interests are our highest goals.

Missions

SRS processes and stores nuclear materials in support of national defense and U.S. nuclear nonproliferation efforts. The site also develops and deploys technologies to improve the environment and treat solid and liquid nuclear and hazardous wastes left from the Cold War. While current missions remain the highest priority, SRS leadership places great importance on developing broader missions for SRS that use its unique capabilities in order to address critical national missions.

History

During the 1950s, SRS began to produce materials used in nuclear weapons, primarily tritium and plutonium-239. Five reactors and support facilities were built to produce these nuclear materials. Irradiated materials were moved from the reactors to one of



Info Sources



Top Concerns

Most respondents did not have any concerns, and many applauded the SRS for their work. The shared concerns fell into two buckets: being informed and concerns about safety related to the environment and people, workers, and those within the community. In addition, many respondents had general questions about the materials and activities of the SRS, while others wanted to know the details of how the SRS operated safely.



None

"i do not have concerns - have lived here a long time and no problems - trust and confidence they are and will continue to do all that needs to be done to protect our safety"

"I didn't know people worked so hard for these types of things. I'm proud."



Safety

"concerned that safety protocols continue without influence by any political parties"

"Ensuring safety of the people and environment involved"



Being informed

"How long is this site sustainable for and how is radiation around this area different from other areas without such a plant."

"how safe and secure?"



Communication Preferences

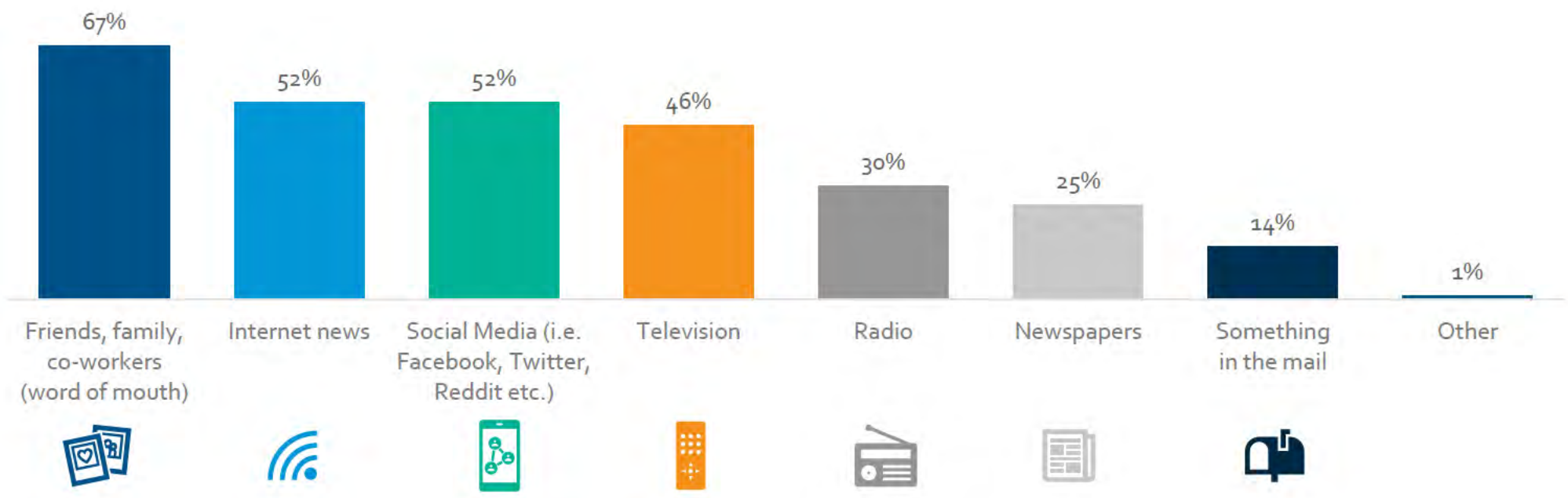


Verbal & Online Most Preferred

Respondents typically learn about events in their community by word of mouth, from those closest to them (friends, family, and co-workers), online sources (internet news and social media), and more traditional media sources like television, radio, newspapers, and mailings.

General Communication Preferences








Total Respondents N=1627



Georgia Communication Preference

Respondents typically learn about events in their community by word of mouth, from those closest to them (friends, family, and co-workers), online sources (internet news and social media), and more traditional media sources like television, radio, newspapers, and mailings.








General Communication Preferences by Georgia County

	n	Word of Mouth 	Internet news 	Social Media 	TV 	Radio 	News-papers 	Mail 	Other
Total	1627	67%	52%	52%	46%	30%	25%	14%	1%
Georgia	529	68%	54%	55%	49%	30%	22%	13%	1%
Burke	17	71%	53%	71%	47%	41%	18%	18%	0%
Chatham	183	62%	61%	54%	55%	39%	25%	18%	2%
Columbia	76	80%	47%	55%	37%	21%	28%	15%	0%
Effingham	47	68%	53%	60%	36%	30%	15%	11%	2%
Richmond	195	69%	52%	55%	52%	25%	19%	10%	1%
Screven	11	64%	27%	46%	55%	27%	27%	9%	0%

B1. How do you typically learn about events in your community? Please select all that apply

Respondents typically learn about events in their community by word of mouth, from those closest to them (friends, family, and co-workers), online sources (internet news and social media), and more traditional media sources like television, radio, newspapers, and mailings.

General Communication Preferences by County

	n	Word of Mouth 	Internet news 	Social Media 	TV 	Radio 	Newspapers 	Mail 	Other
Total	1627	67%	52%	52%	46%	30%	25%	14%	1%
SC	1098	66%	52%	50%	45%	30%	27%	14%	2%
Aiken	176	71%	42%	52%	44%	31%	28%	15%	2%
Allendale	8	100%	50%	38%	13%	38%	38%	0%	0%
Bamberg	14	79%	57%	43%	43%	14%	57%	29%	0%
Barnwell	10	70%	40%	40%	40%	20%	70%	40%	0%
Beaufort	86	62%	40%	43%	31%	21%	34%	14%	1%
Charleston	281	62%	55%	51%	45%	28%	25%	9%	1%
Colleton	26	81%	54%	50%	54%	39%	39%	8%	0%
Hampton	8	88%	25%	63%	38%	38%	13%	38%	0%
Jasper	16	69%	56%	44%	94%	31%	38%	6%	0%
Lexington	206	68%	54%	48%	47%	25%	18%	15%	1%
Richland	267	64%	58%	55%	43%	37%	26%	17%	3%

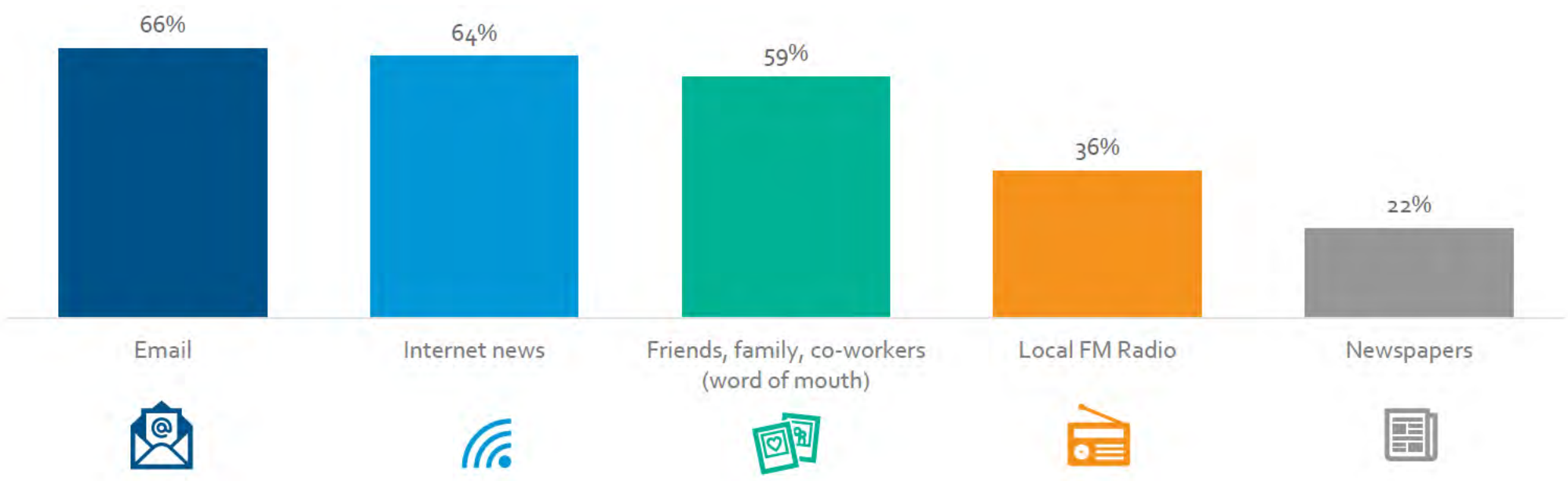
B1. How do you typically learn about events in your community? Please select all that apply

Online Preferred for SRS Communication

Future SRS Communications should take a digital-first approach by sharing information in emails and via internet news. Local radio and newspapers were also cited as preferred communication mediums; however, these methods resonated with smaller percentages (1 in 3 and 1 in 5 respondents, respectively).

Future SRS Communications Preferences (Top 5)

Total Respondents N=1627

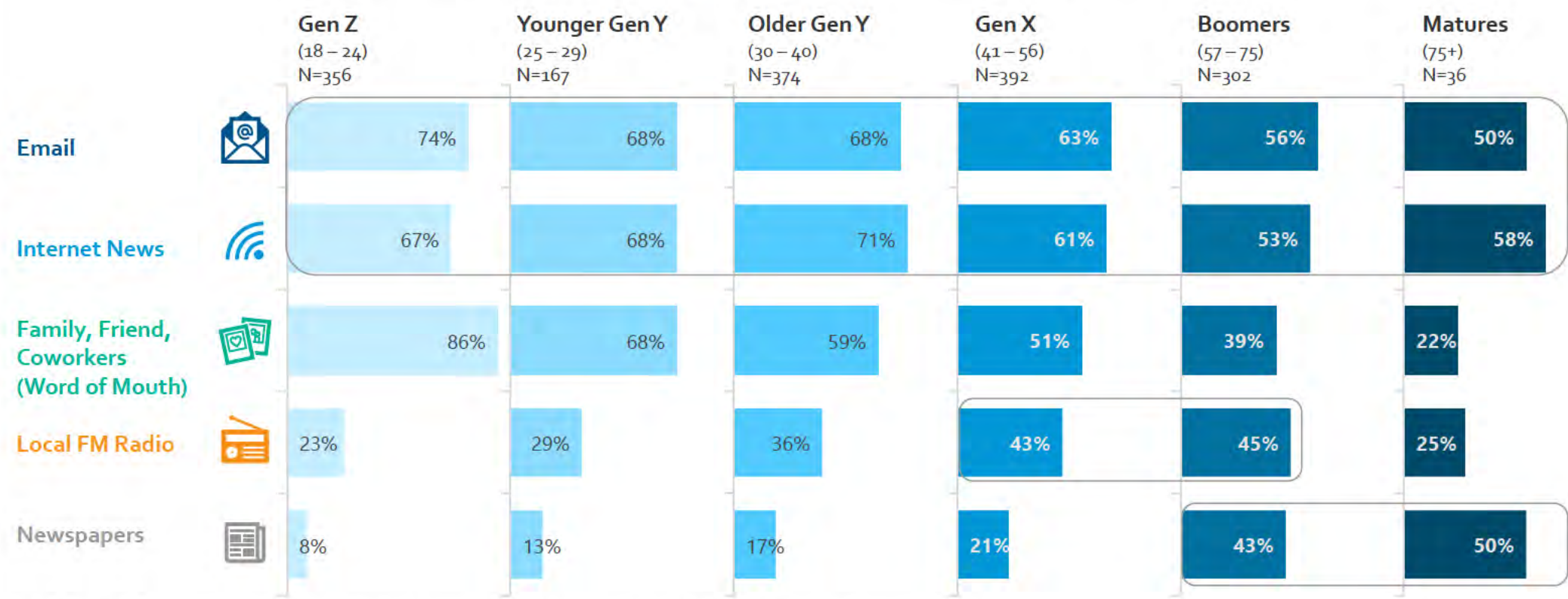


Generational Differences in Preferences

Generational differences were observed for future SRS communication preferences with Gen Xers, Boomers, and Matures preferring traditional mediums such as local FM radio and Newspapers. However, all age groups responded favorably to the digital options of email and internet news.

Future SRS Communications Preferences (Top 5) by Age Group

Total Respondents N=1627





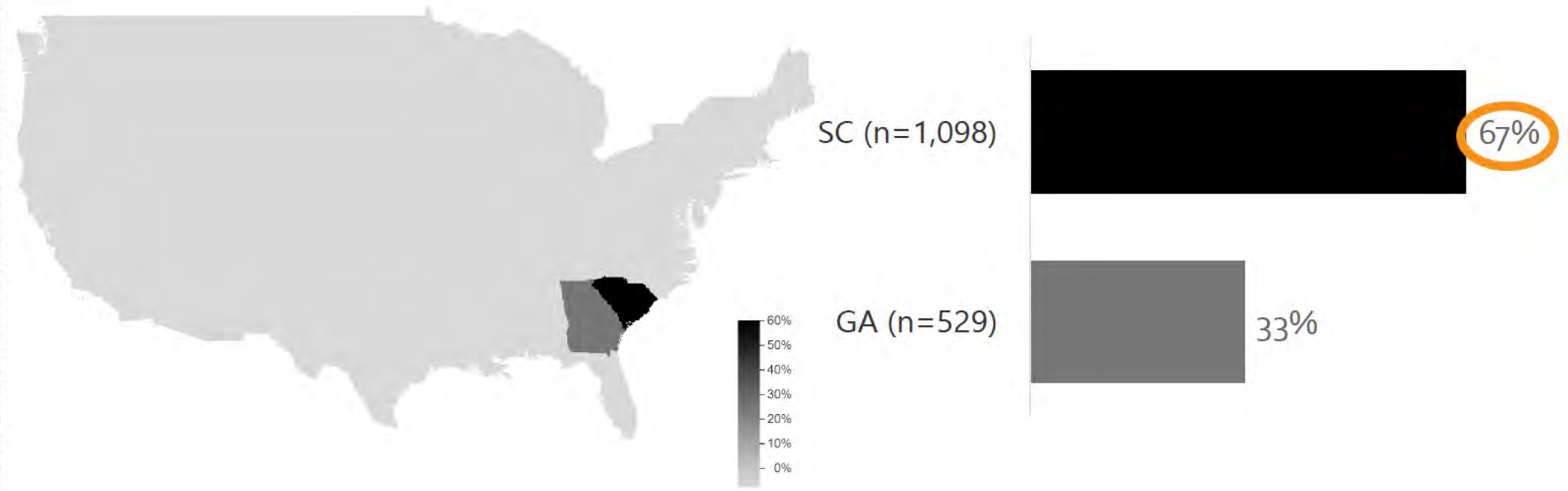
Demographics

Respondent State of Residency

By design, entry into the survey required that participants reside either in South Carolina or Georgia in one of the 13 counties surrounding the Savannah River Site's location. As a result, approximately two-thirds (67%) of participants reside within one of the South Carolina counties of interest, whereas the remainder live in Georgia.

Participant Geography

Base: N=1,627



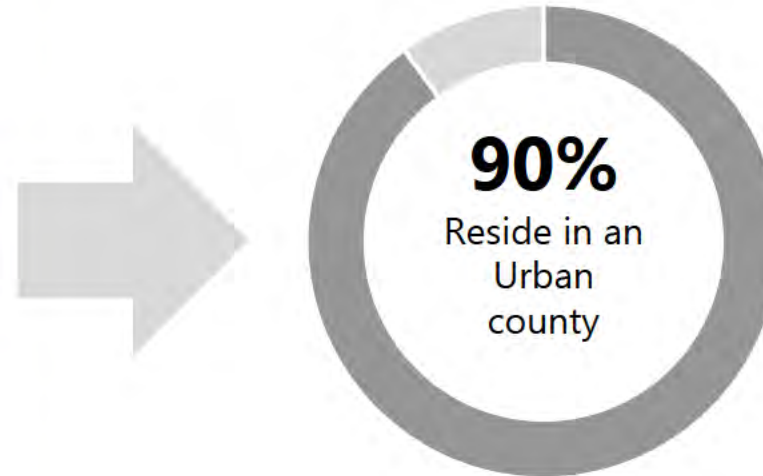
Counties of Interest

The largest proportion of survey participants live in Charleston County, SC, followed by Richland, County, SC. Nearly 2 in 10 (17%) of survey takers live in either one of these counties. The data also show that a majority of study participants live in large cities. Approximately 9 in 10 (90%) of participants reside an Urban county.

County	N	%
Aiken (SC)	176	11%
Allendale (SC)	8	0%
Bamberg (SC)	14	1%
Barnwell (SC)	10	1%
Beaufort (SC)	86	5%
Burke (GA)	17	1%
Charleston (SC)	281	17%
Chatham (GA)	183	11%
Colleton (SC)	26	2%
Columbia (GA)	76	5%
Effingham (GA)	47	3%
Hampton (SC)	8	0%
Jasper (SC)	16	1%
Lexington (SC)	206	13%
Richland (SC)	267	16%
Richmond (GA)	195	12%
Screven (GA)	11	1%

Survey Participant County of Residency

Base: N=1,627



Sample Demographics

Annual Income

	#	%	
Less than \$20K	251	15%	
\$20K < \$35K	250	15%	
\$35K < \$50K	256	16%	
\$50K < \$75K	258	18%	
\$75K < \$100K	212	13%	
\$100K or more	242	15%	
Total	1597	92%	

Male	Female
489	1109
30%	68%

Level of Edu

	#	%	
< High School	61	4%	
High School	356	22%	
Some College	408	25%	
Associate	201	12%	
Bachelor	349	22%	
Some/Graduate	252	16%	
Total	1627	100%	

Age Group

	#	%	
Gen Z	356	22%	
Younger Gen Y	167	10%	
Older Gen Y	374	23%	
Gen X	392	24%	
Boomers	302	19%	
Matures	36	2%	
Total	1627	100%	

Hispanic	8%
Mexican	3%
Puerto Rican	2%
Cuban	1%
Other	1%
Total	123

Race

	#	%	
White or Caucasian	1050	65%	
Black or African American	530	33%	
Other	137	3%	
Total	1717	106%	

*percentages rounded to nearest whole number

Demographics – Census & Sample Levels

	Female	65 and Older	Hispanic	White	Black	Bachelors or higher
Total (N=1627)	68%	10%	8%	65%	33%	38%
Census South Carolina	52%	18%	6%	69%	27%	28%
SC Sample (n=1098)	67%	11%	7%	66%	30%	42%
Census Georgia	51%	14%	10%	60%	33%	31%
GA Sample (n=176)	71%	8%	9%	61%	38%	27%

Census information pulled from Quick Facts, Population, Census, April 1, 2020

**percentages rounded to nearest whole number*

THANK YOU

