

2015 Surplus Property Departmental Customer Satisfaction Survey: Summary Results and Next Steps

Survey Administration

Survey type: Online

Survey dates: Two weeks, January 23 – February 6, 2015

Number of responses: 213

How the survey was marketed:

- Email to all customers in the Surplus database who have submitted pick-up requests or made departmental purchases
- Email to all building managers
- Email to OSU Inform lists C06 (Classified staff), C07 (Professional Faculty) and C11 (Office Managers, Executive Assistants, Administrative Assistants)
- Listing in *OSU Today* email list
- Button on Surplus Property website homepage

Respondent Demographics

Respondent roles

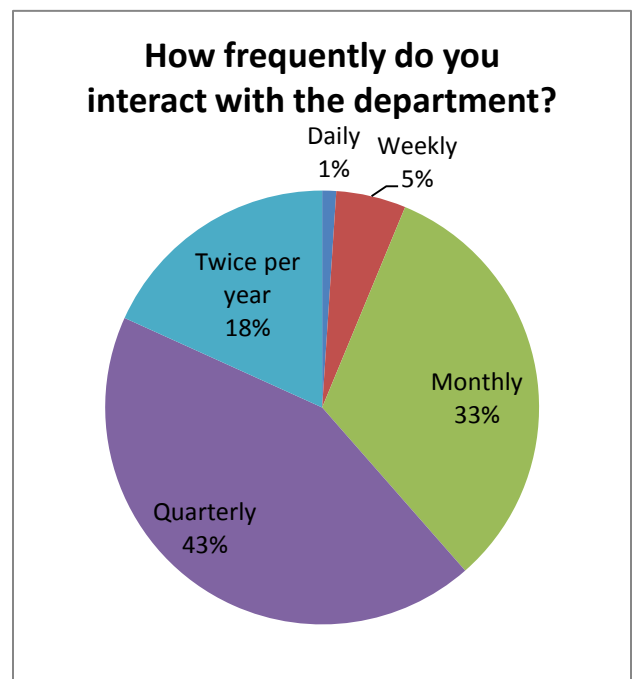
Roughly 1 in 5 respondents are building managers and a bit more than 1 in 3 are the person responsible for submitting surplus pick-up requests for their department. Note: This was a “check all that apply” question, so some respondents may fall into both categories.

Answer	# of responses	% of responses
Person responsible for submitting surplus pick-up requests for their dept.	79	37%
Building manager	41	19%

How frequently respondents interact with Surplus Property

The majority (68%) of respondents interact with Surplus Property on a monthly or quarterly basis. 16% interact with the department twice per year.

Answer	# of responses	% of responses
Daily	2	1%
Weekly	10	5%
Monthly	62	29%
Quarterly	83	39%
Twice per year	35	16%
Once per year or less	20	9%
Never	1	0%

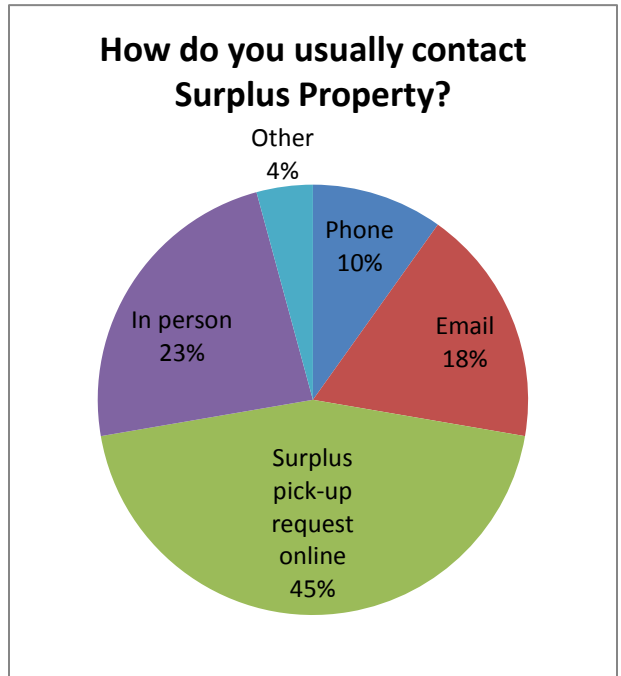


How respondents usually contact Surplus Property

Nearly half of respondents initiate contact by using the online pick-up request system. Nearly one-quarter contact Surplus in person (this likely accounts for people whose primary form of interaction with the department is through shopping at the store).

Note: Those who described what they meant by “Other” specified that they used multiple means to initiate contact.

Answer	# of responses	% of responses
Phone	21	10%
Email	38	18%
Surplus pick-up request online	95	45%
In person	50	23%
Other	9	4%

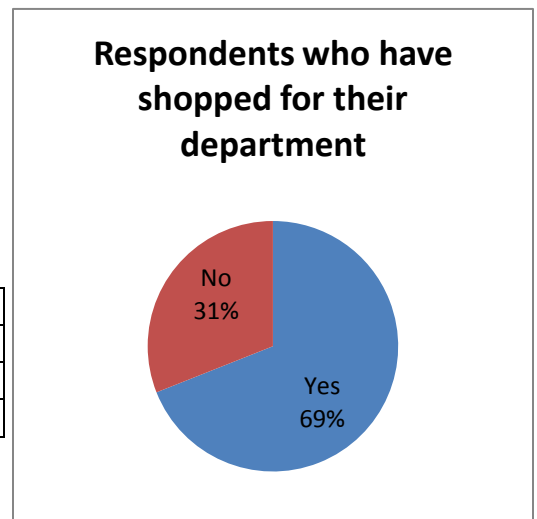


How many respondents have been to the OSUsed Store

The majority of respondents have shopped at the store for their department (69%) and/or personal purchases (55%). Only 14% of respondents have never been to the store.

Note: This was a “check all that apply” question, so some respondents may fall into both of the first two categories.

Answer	# of responses	% of responses
Yes, to shop for dept.	147	69%
Yes, for personal shopping	118	55%
Never been	29	14%



Program Familiarity

Respondents are familiar with: the policy that all OSU-owned property must be disposed of through Surplus Property (90% are familiar), the pick-up request system (85%), public sales (85%) and department purchasing process (78%).

Respondents are less familiar with the free departmental office supplies (49% are not familiar) and campus moves services (42% not familiar). While Surplus Property is not actively seeking to expand its campus moves services, expanding awareness of our free office supplies may be an opportunity to increase the number of visits we receive from department shoppers (see “Opportunities” section below).

Topic	Have used/ participated	Familiar but have not used/ participated	Not familiar
Surplus Pick-up Request System	73%	12%	15%
Department purchasing process (hours, charging OSU indexes, delivery fee, etc.)	59%	19%	22%
Public sales	53%	32%	15%
Free departmental office supplies	31%	20%	49%
Campus Moves	29%	29%	42%
All OSU-owned property no longer needed by a dept. must be disposed of through Surplus Property.	77%	13%	9%

Customer Satisfaction

High Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with the department is high – 73% of respondents said they are very or extremely satisfied with Surplus Property and another 16% reported being moderately satisfied.

According to survey respondents, the majority of customers are very or extremely satisfied (as opposed to moderately satisfied, slightly satisfied or not satisfied) with the following:

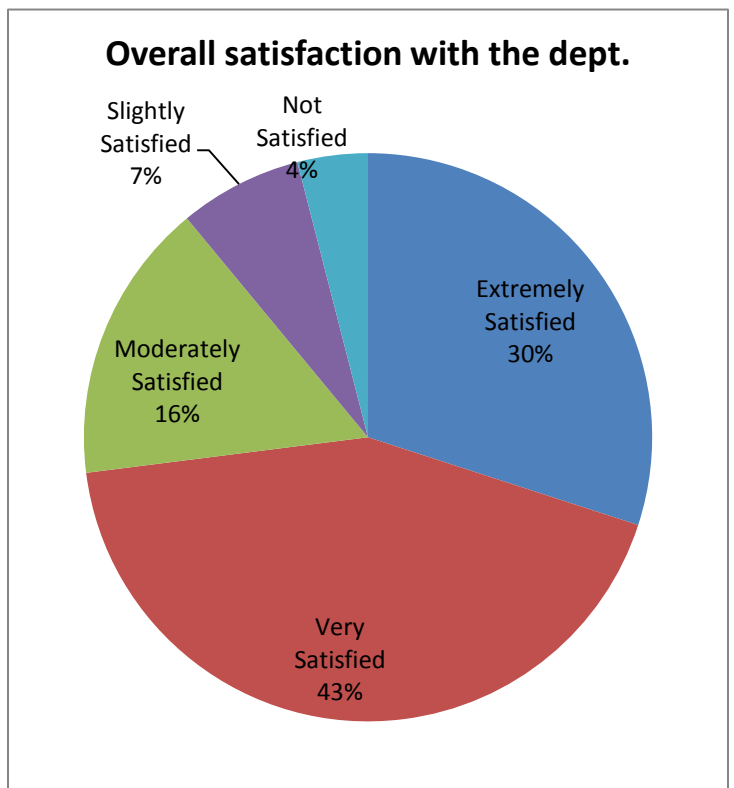
- Collaboration in working with customers (81%)
- Professionalism and courteousness (80%)
- Store hours for department purchases (80%)
- Helpfulness in resolving problems (79%)
- Promptness of returning calls or emails (77%)
- Merchandise pricing (75%)

In summary, customers are satisfied with the department’s customer service performance as well as hours and pricing.

Dissatisfaction

According to survey respondents, potential areas for improvement include:

- Use of the Surplus Pick-up Request System (31% not satisfied)
- Surplus commission rates (11% not satisfied)
- Timeliness in completing work (11% not satisfied)
- Ease of navigation on the department’s website (9% not satisfied)



In summary, customers are less satisfied with the pick-up request system and website, pick-up timeliness and commission rates.

Because the commission rates set by Surplus Property are designed to recapture the cost of selling merchandise, the department will not be able to modify them in the near future. Please see the “Opportunities” section below on how Surplus plans to address remaining customer concerns.



Strengths and Opportunities

The following is a summary of Surplus Property’s strengths and opportunities for improvement, based on the survey’s satisfaction ratings, familiarity ratings and comments.

Strengths

As mentioned above, overall satisfaction with the department is high. Respondents indicate that they have high satisfaction levels for customer service (a sentiment also expressed in many of the comments). Most respondents have and know how to shop with us and they like our hours and pricing. They are familiar with the policy that all OSU-owned property must be disposed of through our department.

Some highlights from survey comments:

“Staff are consistently pleasant and helpful, regardless of whether I’m there for the department or as a private consumer.”

“Have never had any negative experiences with Surplus.”

“The customer service I have received has been helpful. My questions are always answered and if I need help the staff has been good at communicating with me.”

“Steve Schofield has helped me on several occasions by first determining my needs, designing a solution, acquiring and organizing the materials, and either delivering or providing easy pickup. Thank you.”

“It’s organized very well. Cannot beat the prices. Employees are knowledgeable and willing to help.”

“All staff at the surplus place have always gone out of their way to help me. Our dept. super appreciates the free office supplies on occasion. The move we made went smoothly. Rae has returned calls promptly and given good suggestions on item hunting for something or other that surplus didn't have. I like the prices and Man it is organized WELL! I would say -probably the most efficient and valuable department at OSU-headache free!”

Opportunities

Surplus pick-up request system

Satisfaction ratings and comments indicated that customers are not satisfied with the online pick-up request system. Surplus Property is pleased to share that recently (February 16, 2015) we launched a new web interface for surplus pick-up requests that we believe will streamline and improve customers' experiences. Surplus staff reviewed survey comments and believe that the new interface addresses all of the concerns cited.

Low familiarity with free office supplies

As mentioned above, nearly half of respondents are not familiar with the free office supplies Surplus offers to departments and only one-third have taken advantage of this. Surplus Property plans to take a few modest steps to further promote this, as it benefits both Surplus and OSU departments to keep materials within the university and may encourage departments to visit the store more frequently (and subsequently result in additional surplus purchases and reuse of materials within the university).

Customer service in store for department shoppers

A small number of commenters noted that our in-store staff were not consistently friendly and at times would approach department shoppers in an accusatory tone when asking if they were shopping for a department. Surplus has already begun to address this by focusing on training our employees to use a friendly greeting and offer to help, prior to confirming that they are shopping for a department.

Customer desire for more information on available merchandise

Many customer comments expressed a desire to see a list or photos of available merchandise or a waitlist system. Surplus Property unfortunately does not have adequate resources to maintain a waitlist or inventory list. Surplus Property would like to do the following to address this customer request:

1. Better communicate with departmental customers that they are welcome to call the store to inquire about merchandise they are seeking.
2. Create a "catalog" of items that we always have in stock so customers can see the types, typical pricing, and example photos of items we generally have in stock (and invite customers to call ahead or visit to see current inventory). This "catalog" would be hosted on the Surplus Property website and could potentially be updated monthly or quarterly with special merchandise. Surplus Property will investigate existing tools or methods other institutions are using for this purpose.

Reliability and timeliness of surplus pick-ups

Satisfaction ratings and comments indicated that some customers are frustrated with 1) the length of time between when they submit a pick-up request and when items are picked up and 2) the reliability or accurateness of pick-up times. Surplus Property intends to address these concerns in these ways:

1. Switch to a first come, first served model. Surplus Property used to use a scheduling system in which we would only service certain sections of campus on a particular day of the week (upon request). We are now scheduling pick-ups based on the order in which they are submitted through the online request system. Furthermore, the new system sends an email to customers to alert them when we have pulled their request from the system (indicating that we will be by within the next 24 hours).
2. At times surplus staff have been shifted from surplus pick-ups to other operations within Materials Management, particularly when other staff have called in sick. Surplus intends to prevent this in the future so we are better prioritizing the timeliness of surplus pick-ups.
3. Surplus Property aims to better communicate with its customers about how their pick-ups are scheduled – training our staff to more clearly communicate that estimated pick-up times are estimates only and informing customers about the new first come, first served model.

Inconsistencies between customer requests and what is picked up

A couple commenters expressed frustration with surplus crew members picking up items that were not intended to be picked up. This concern will be addressed by improved training of student crew members.

Some commenters gave negative feedback about crew members picking up only what is on the manifest and not taking additional items placed along with surplus property. First we'd like to clarify why this sometimes occurs. For one, Surplus bases its choice of vehicle, equipment and labor time based on the items listed on the manifest and thus may not be able to accommodate picking up items not listed on the manifest. Two, because Surplus wants to ensure that items are not mistakenly picked up, our crew will not take items not included on the manifest unless they are each clearly labeled "surplus" or if the person who made the pick-up request is present and explicitly requests the additional items be taken.

There are two actions Surplus Property plans to take to address this second concern:

1. In the new surplus pick-up request interface, customers now have the option to add to or otherwise modify their request after submitting it. This provides a new streamlined process through which customers can inform Surplus of additional items they would like picked up.
2. Surplus plans to create a standard door hanger or other note that we can leave behind so we can better communicate with customers on pick-up issues. The template could include options to circle such as:
 - a. Items not listed on the manifest were left behind
 - b. We were not able to pick-up because door was locked; please call to make special arrangements
 - c. We picked up more than what was listed on manifest because ____ (items were labeled or a person requested it)