



planet blue
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Planet Blue Reusable Water Bottle Program

Background: In FY 2011, students were lobbying for a [bottled water ban](#) on campus. Several [Sustainability and the Campus](#) courses provided suggestions for reducing disposable water bottle use on campus. Water refill stations installed in Mason hall were very popular. The Office of Campus Sustainability (OCS) coordinated a [project](#) in Fiscal Year (FY) 12 to install more water refill stations in key high traffic locations throughout campus. Over 200 bottle filling stations have been installed. In conjunction with the water refill station effort a three year pilot project began in FY 13 to provide all incoming freshmen with a reusable water bottle. The pilot began in the fall of FY 13 and ended in the fall of FY 15. Funding for the reusable water bottles was provided by three environmental student groups and five U-M units. In addition to the reusable bottles for all freshmen, the Graham Sustainability Institute, Office of Campus Sustainability, and Office of Global Communications purchased an additional supply for new staff, new faculty, Planet Blue Ambassador incentives and sustainability events.

Pilot Goals: Introduce the Planet Blue brand. Reinforce impression to incoming freshmen that sustainable behavior is expected on U-M's campus. Measure behavior change of students specifically to increase use of reusable bottles and reduce use of disposable water bottles.

Pilot Results: Most students already had reusable water bottles before arriving on campus however enjoyed receiving a Planet Blue Water bottle. The Planet Blue branding received a good boost with this program. Students at Festifall, Northfest and Earthfest that recognized the brand were overwhelmingly freshmen that had received the bottle. They expressed interest in learning more about it and wanted to know how they could get involved in sustainability activities on campus. We hoped to encourage more use of a reusable water bottle and less use of single use bottles among incoming freshmen. To measure the pilot results, students were surveyed (see 2nd page). In the first three years, the survey results show that between the initial survey and the spring, the use of a reusable water bottle doubled and the use of disposable water bottles was at least 50% less.

In FY 15 the cost of the bottles was covered by Graham Sustainability Institute and Office of Campus Sustainability.

FY 16 cost will be covered by Office of Campus Sustainability.

Survey results: A survey of incoming freshmen (residing in a residence hall) was conducted at the beginning of the year before the students arrive on campus and again at the end of the school year. A summary of the survey findings to date are listed below.

Beginning of the year FY 13	End of the Year FY 13
<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 37% used single use bottled water every day 35% a few times per week <u>19%</u> a few times a month 91%	<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 13% used single use bottled water every day 15% a few times per week <u>29%</u> a few times a month 57%
<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 32% used reusable water bottles every day 33% a few times per week <u>19%</u> a few times a month 84%	<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 66% used reusable water bottles every day 21% a few times per week <u>8%</u> a few times a month 95%
Beginning of the year FY 14	End of the Year FY 14
<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 29% used single use bottled water every day 34% a few times per week <u>24%</u> a few times a month 87%	<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 13% used single use bottled water every day 15% a few times per week <u>24%</u> a few times a month 52%
<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 34% used reusable water bottles every day 34% a few times per week <u>18%</u> a few times a month 86%	<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 68% used reusable water bottles every day 19% a few times per week <u>8%</u> a few times a month 95%
Beginning of the year FY 15	End of the Year FY 15
<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 26% used single use bottled water every day 32% a few times per week <u>27%</u> a few times a month 85%	<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 12% used single use bottled water every day 12% a few times per week <u>24%</u> a few times a month 48%
<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 38% used reusable water bottles every day 32% a few times per week <u>16%</u> a few times a month 86%	<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 74% used reusable water bottles every day 16% a few times per week <u>6%</u> a few times a month 96%
Beginning of the year FY 16	End of the Year FY 16
<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 27% used single use bottled water every day 32% a few times per week <u>26%</u> a few times a month 85%	<i>Single Use Bottled Water</i> 15% used single use bottled water every day 13% a few times per week <u>25%</u> a few times a month 53%
<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 41% used reusable water bottles every day 32% a few times per week <u>15%</u> a few times a month 88%	<i>Reusable water bottles</i> 72% used reusable water bottles every day 16% a few times per week <u>6%</u> a few times a month 94%