Tear A Square
Over There

ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT · FIFTH EDITION

State of the *Stall* 2026

Hybrid work, household conservation, and the quiet migration of America's restroom usage to the workplace.

14,212
workers surveyed

2,300
facilities assessed

74%
of hybrid usage on in-office days

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> *"For too long, the household has carried a burden that was never rightfully its own."*
>
> — From the Foreword

01 · FOREWORD

A movement that was already moving

When we published the first *State of the Stall* in 2022, we were asked — often, and not always kindly — whether this was a real issue. Five editions later, the data has answered for us.

This year's survey confirms what our advocates have long known intuitively: given a choice, working people overwhelmingly prefer to meet their needs on infrastructure they did not pay for. Hybrid employees in particular have become, without any formal training, some of the most disciplined practitioners of the Over There Method we have ever measured.

And yet employers are not keeping pace. Single-ply persists in 42% of facilities. Motion-sensor lighting continues to time out on hardworking people mid-visit. Our Workplace Readiness Index remains stubbornly below 60 across most industries.

The household has carried this burden long enough. We hope this report gives employers, policymakers, and advocates the evidence they need to act.

Margaret Halloway

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Margaret Halloway

Executive Director, Tear A Square Over There

The year at a glance

Five years in, the shift is no longer anecdotal. Workers are moving their restroom usage to the workplace at record rates — and saving real money at home in the process.

74%

of hybrid workers' restroom visits now happen on in-office days, up from 58% in 2022.

$214

average annual household savings on paper and water among pledged advocates.

47 hrs

of paid time reclaimed per advocate per year — more than a full week of work.

11%

of all weekly workplace restroom volume occurs on Mondays between 1 and 3 p.m.

WHAT WE FOUND

01 **The 9:15 Surge is real.** Workplace visits spike in the first hour after arrival, consistent with a strategic commute-and-reserve pattern.

02 **Conservation is the leading motivator.** 41% of respondents cite saving household paper as a primary reason; only 19% admit to avoiding a meeting.

03 **Return-to-office is a conservation opportunity.** Each additional in-office day per week is associated with a 9.6% drop in household water use.

04 **Employers are unprepared.** Only 23% of facilities have motion-sensor lighting with a timeout of at least 15 minutes.

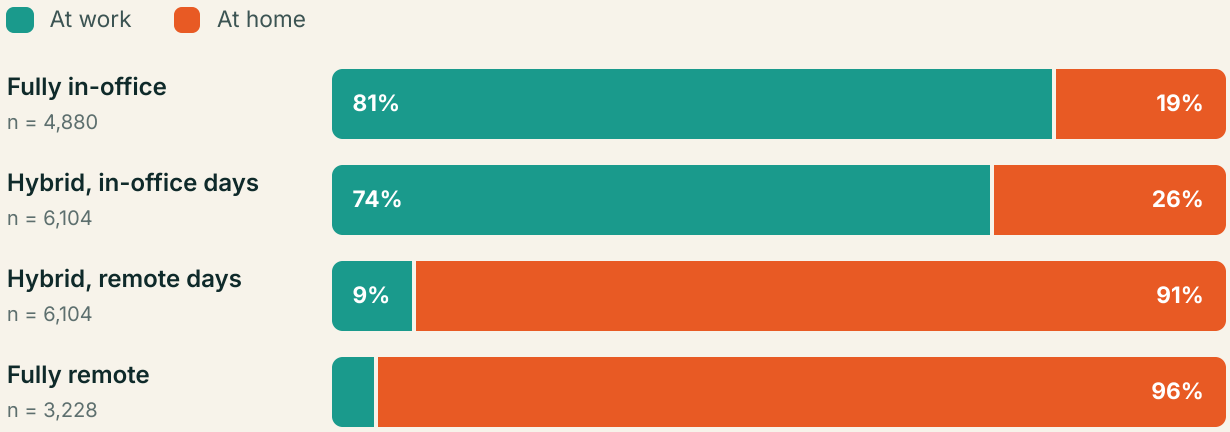
05 **Advocates are happier.** Pledged respondents were 2.3× more likely to describe their workday as “relaxing” than non-pledged peers.

Hybrid workers have quietly *picked a side*

Location is the single strongest predictor of where a worker's restroom visits occur. On days spent at the office, hybrid workers concentrate nearly three-quarters of their usage on employer-provided facilities.

Figure 1. Share of weekday restroom visits by location

By work arrangement, % of self-reported visits, n = 14,212



"At work" for fully remote respondents includes co-working spaces, cafés, and libraries. Hybrid respondents answered for both day types.

The commute effect

Respondents with commutes of 20–45 minutes showed the highest workplace concentration (79%). Our researchers attribute this to the "Reserve" phase of the Over There Method, during which advocates practice what one respondent called "mindful patience on the 7:52 express."

The remote gap

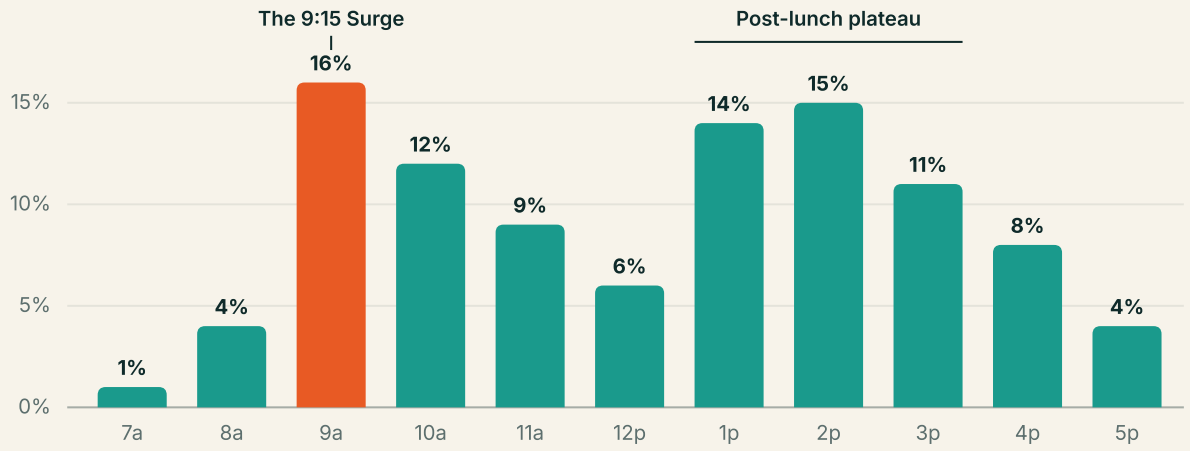
Fully remote workers remain the movement's greatest challenge and its greatest opportunity. With 96% of visits occurring at home, the average remote household consumes 3.1 additional rolls per month. Our Remote Relief Fund was created to close this gap.

The 9:15 Surge and the *post-lunch plateau*

Workplace visits follow a clear two-peak rhythm. The first arrives shortly after badge-in; the second settles in after lunch and lasts, in many cases, until the 3 p.m. meeting.

Figure 2. Workplace restroom visits by hour of arrival

% of weekday workplace visits, in-office and hybrid respondents (in-office days only)



Hours shown are local time of visit start. Columns sum to 100%. The 9 a.m. hour is highlighted.

Mondays are different

Monday afternoons between 1 and 3 p.m. account for **11% of all weekly workplace restroom volume** — more than all of Friday combined. Researchers believe weekend dietary patterns play a role. We recommend employers treat this window as a protected period (see Recommendation 3).

Meeting density matters

Respondents with six or more meetings per day were 38% more likely to report visits lasting longer than 12 minutes. When asked why, the most common answer was "no reason."

> *"I schedule it. It's on my calendar as 'Focus Time.' Nobody has ever asked."*
>
> — Survey respondent, financial services, Chicago

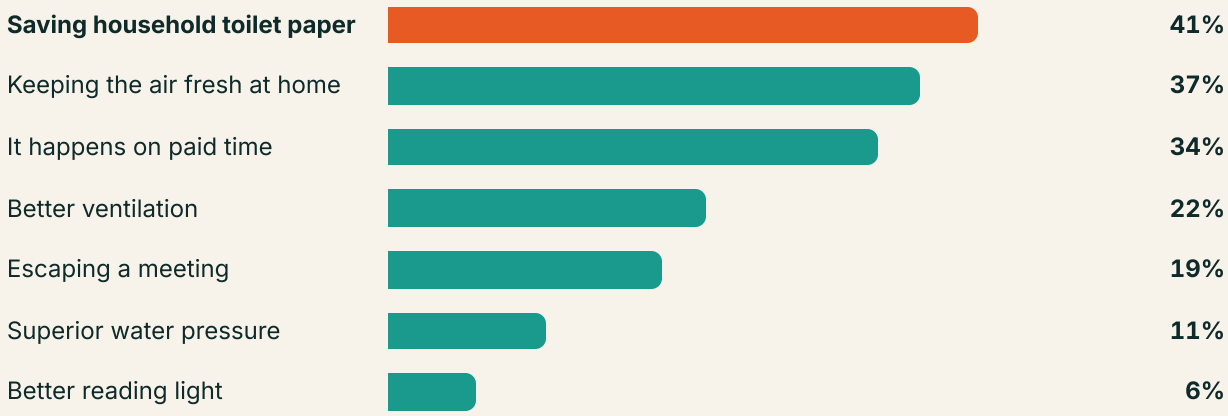
05 · WHY WORKERS GO

It's about the household, *mostly*

We asked respondents to select every reason they prefer to use workplace facilities. Household conservation leads; meeting avoidance, while present, is a minority motivation.

Figure 3. Reasons for preferring workplace restrooms

% of respondents selecting each reason (multiple selections allowed), n = 11,940



Bars scaled to a 50% maximum. Respondents who selected “prefer not to say” (4%) are excluded.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“My water bill went down $11 a month. I bought a nicer coffee machine. For home.”

Operations manager, Denver

“Our house has one bathroom and three teenagers. The office is the only place I've found peace.”

Account director, Atlanta

“I didn't know there was a word for it. Now I know there's a movement.”

Software engineer, Austin

“The fourth floor has the good soap. Everybody knows. Nobody says.”

Paralegal, Boston

Most employers are *not ready*

The Workplace Readiness Index (WRI) scores facilities from 0–100 across paper quality, partition height, lighting, ventilation, and floor coverage. Volunteer Floor Surveyors assessed 2,300 facilities in 2026.

Figure 4. Average Workplace Readiness Index score by industry

0–100 scale; higher is better. 70+ is considered "Advocate-Ready."



Marketing & advertising is highlighted: the industry scored well on aesthetics (91) but poorly on partition height (34) and "having enough stalls for the number of people who drink cold brew" (22).

Facility features in 2026

FEATURE	% OF FACILITIES
Two-ply as standard	58%
Motion lights ≥ 15-minute timeout	23%
Full-height stall partitions	17%
At least one stall "out of order"	31%
Bidet attachment available	4%

The single-ply problem

Facilities using single-ply paper saw 1.7× more paper consumed per visit, effectively eliminating any cost savings for the employer while degrading the advocate experience. Our analysis suggests a full transition to two-ply would be cost-neutral within 14 months.

We call on every employer to adopt the **Square Deal** standards outlined on the next page.

What happens *next*

The evidence is clear. Here is what each of us can do to support working people and the households they come home to.

FOR EMPLOYERS

Adopt the Square Deal

1. Make two-ply the floor, not the ceiling.
2. Set motion-sensor lighting to a minimum 15-minute timeout.
3. Protect Monday 1–3 p.m. from recurring meetings.
4. Guarantee one restroom per floor — including mezzanines.
5. Install full-height stall partitions in all new construction.

FOR ADVOCATES

Practice with purpose

1. Learn your building. Our Floor Mapping toolkit can help.
2. Align your in-office days with your natural rhythms.
3. Track your impact in the Over There App.
4. Recruit one coworker this quarter. Start with someone discreet.

FOR POLICYMAKERS

Recognize the household

1. Include restroom readiness in return-to-office guidance.
2. Study household water reductions associated with in-office work.
3. Consider a modest tax credit for employers who meet Square Deal standards.

> *“Every square torn over there is a square saved over here.”*
>
> — Tear A Square Over There founding principle, 2019

How we did it

The 2026 *State of the Stall* survey was fielded online between June 3 and July 19, 2026, among 14,212 employed adults in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Results were weighted by age, gender, region, industry, and work arrangement. The margin of error is ±1.6 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Facility data was collected by 412 volunteer Floor Surveyors using the WRI v3.2 protocol across 2,300 workplaces. Surveyors visited during business hours and were instructed to "behave normally."

38% of respondents completed the survey from a restroom. They were not excluded.

About Tear A Square Over There

Tear A Square Over There is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works to shift non-essential household restroom usage to the workplace — conserving residential water, paper, and air quality, one shift at a time. Since 2019, more than 128,000 advocates in 41 countries have taken the Pledge.

Suggested citation

Tear A Square Over There Research Institute. (2026). *State of the Stall 2026: Hybrid workers concentrate 74% of restroom usage on in-office days.* tearasquareoverthere.org/research

Your home deserves a break.

Take the Pledge, track your impact, or support our work.

tearasquareoverthere.org →