



Fall 2012 Newsletter | Volume 20 | No. 3

OCRRA.org Gets a Facelift

Reworked website offers new features



Check us out today!

Repeatedly, people (even some outside our great state) tell us how valuable they find OCRRA's website. This month, when you visit our URL, you will find it looks a little different. Now you can even:

- Order trash bag stickers or compost passes online, and
- Request a presentation or onsite recycling assessment for your group or business.

While we've made some fetching aesthetic improvements, you will still find all the great tools you are accustomed to accessing:

- Simple household hazardous waste appointment-making system that takes just minutes to complete (hint, hint, the final event of 2012 is in October. Appointments are filling up fast...)
- Easy to search database that tells you how to get rid of or recycle thousands of items.
- Online order form where businesses can "purchase" recycling supplies that will boost their recycling efforts (they're actually free, but we wanted to use one of those cute little shopping cart icons on the new site).

- Detailed report section featuring operations reports and test results for the Waste-to-Energy Facility and Compost Sites.
- One-click access to join our bi-monthly email list or our Facebook page.

The site is chock-full of new content that is too extensive to list here, so, please take a few minutes to check it out and let us know what you think. We'd love your feedback as we continue to make improvements. Please email us your thoughts at info@OCRRA.org.



MATTRESSES PG 2
OCRRA's new shredder increases recycling in Onondaga County



BLUE RIBBON RECYCLERS PG 2
POMCO and Hansen's Advisory Services receive OCRRA's coveted business certification



TOXICS DROP-OFF PG 3
Register online for the Oct. 6 Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day



WASTE-TO-ENERGY REPORT CARD PG 4
Facility passes with flying colors in 2012



SHRED-O-RAMA PG 6
Paper shredding event comes to Alliance Bank Stadium on 9/22

New Shredder Increases Recycling By Slicing and Dicing

Shared equipment improves Compost Site workflow AND eliminates landfilling of mattresses

Donato Mercuri

Have you ever wondered what happens to your old mattress? OCRRA's Ley Creek Drop-Off Site receives over 25 tons of mattresses a day from residents and local distribution centers. Their size renders these bulky materials unable to go to the Waste-to-Energy Facility to be turned into electricity, so, until recently, they were sent to a landfill. This was costly to the environment and to OCRRA.

With a little creative thinking, and collaboration between departments, OCRRA developed a plan to address the mattress issue. In February 2012, OCRRA purchased a Komptech Crambo 5000. This machine is a gigantic, low-speed shredder that can be used both for pulverizing yardwaste at OCRRA's Compost Sites and for slicing up mattresses at the Ley Creek Drop-Off Site.

The Crambo is easily transported between sites and cuts fuel costs at the Compost Sites by 30% because it reduces the need to operate OCRRA's high-speed grinder. The Crambo also allows OCRRA to handle oversized stumps

and wood at the Compost Sites; these items are generally hard for residents to dispose of and expensive as well.

When it comes to mattress processing, the Crambo brings many advantages to OCRRA and to the environment. It has a large internal magnet that catches all the metal inside the mattresses, which can then be recycled. In the two weeks this project has been in place, OCRRA recovered approximately 15 tons of scrap metal worth \$4,500. The machine also grinds the remaining mattress material fine enough so it no longer needs to be landfilled, but instead is transferred to the Waste-to-Energy Facility (WTE) where it is processed into electricity. The sale of this electricity helps fund OCRRA's green programs including Compost Site operations. The end-product of the WTE process, a non-hazardous ash, is 1/10 the size of the incoming trash, which means a transport and disposal savings of around \$5,000 per month.

By collaborating between departments, and sharing



Photo by Vince Latorre

The recently acquired Komptech Crambo 5000, shown above, is hard at work shredding mattresses at the Ley Creek Drop-Off Site. Mattresses no longer go to a landfill, but instead are shredded into tiny pieces; the metal is recycled and the fluff is sent to the Waste-to-Energy Facility and turned into electricity. Each year the WTE Facility produces enough energy to power 15% of Onondaga County households!

this piece of equipment, OCRRA found a way to reduce mattress landfilling, while also increasing revenue. A rough estimate shows that at this rate OCRRA can:

- Salvage 200 tons of scrap metal each year,
- Divert 1,000 tons of mattress fluff to the WTE Facility, generating enough energy for an additional 100 homes a year.

This could increase revenues by approximately \$60,000 per year for scrap metal and \$25,000 per year

for electricity. This will help fund OCRRA's numerous community programs and events, which are offered at no charge to residents, including:

- The purchase and distribution of blue bins to residents and local highway departments as well as recycling education supplies for businesses.
- Annual Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Days, the Shred-O-Rama Events, and the Earth Day Litter Cleanup Program.

- Year-round public education on what and where to recycle blue bin materials and hard to dispose of items that contain mercury or other heavy metals (e-waste, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, thermostats and thermometers, etc.).

This effort is proof positive that OCRRA is truly finding new ways to save the world a little each day.

Donato Mercuri can be reached at dmercuri@ocrra.org



Go Green ~ Become Blue...

Apply for certification and join the local companies that became Blue Ribbon Recyclers this quarter!

- Hansen's Advisory Services, Inc.
- POMCO Group

www.blueribbonrecycler.com

Take advantage of the simple online application process.



POMCO's Jeff Bater, facilities manager, and Jessica Marabella, account manager, show off their CFL and battery drop-off stations. POMCO's Syracuse headquarters has a multi-initiative recycling and waste reduction program in place. In one year, they proudly increased the amount of paper recycled in their 95-gallon bins from 364 bins to 465 bins. In addition, thanks to their Blue Ribbon efforts, their paper usage decreased resulting in a savings of \$10,572!

Toxics: Proper Environmental Management is Easy

Donation or drop-off at OCRRA's October 6 Household Hazardous Waste Event are great options

Allison Stuart

Do you use auto, painting or garden supplies around your house? Do you have more than you need? OCRRA strongly encourages you to reuse materials by donating them if they are still in usable condition. Contact Syracuse Habitat for Humanity Restore (syracuserestore.org or 475-9172) for a list of items they accept and redistribute to others.

If you have hazardous materials that are not usable, you can bring them to OCRRA's last Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day of 2012. Reservations are available online for the Saturday, October 6 event, which takes place from 8 am to 2 pm at the Ley Creek Drop-Off Site (5158 Ley Creek Drive, Liverpool).

Visit OCRRA.org or call 453-2866 to make your appointment today. Doing so ensures you get in and out in a timely fashion. A list of accepted and prohibited items, as well as preparation instructions are found at OCRRA.org.

Residents do not sponsor these events through their taxes.

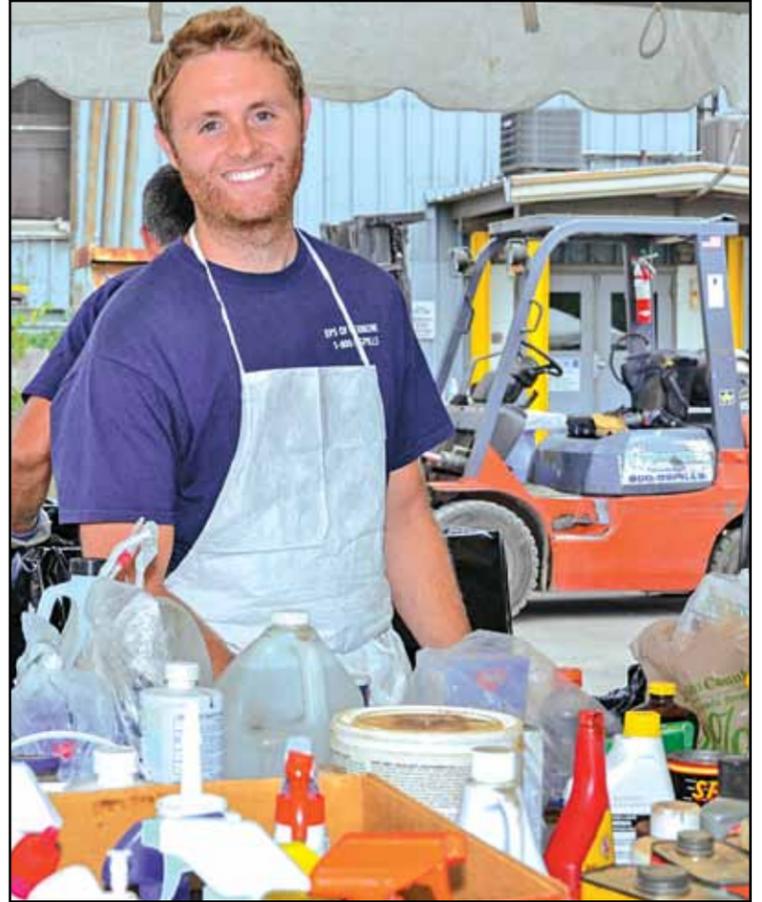
The event is *free* to Onondaga County residents in the OCRRA System (this excludes the town and village of Skaneateles, who host their own events).

FACTOID: Despite what OCRRA's name implies, residents do not sponsor these events through their taxes. It costs OCRRA about \$50 per vehicle to process and prop-

erly manage the toxic materials that come into these events. OCRRA funds our green programs with proceeds from trash disposal fees as well as the sale of scrap metal and electricity generated at the local Waste-to-Energy Facility. Household Hazardous Waste Days are funded in part by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, which reimburses OCRRA for half the cost of the events through a grant.

OCRRA seeks resident feedback after each event through online surveys. Following the July event, one Onondaga resident had this to say about their experience, "Very efficiently run. I was very impressed. My

— continued on page 5



Jeff Stanislav of Environmental Products and Services sorts toxics at OCRRA's July Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Event. Register for the final event of 2012, happening Saturday, October 6 from 8 am to 2 pm, at OCRRA.org. No internet access? Call 453-2866.



Recycling Rhoda

Let's Talk Trash...and Recycling too!

Dear Rhoda,

Help! My house has been taken over by plastic bags! I get them at the grocery store, at the convenience store, even at the mall. They just pile up and I don't know what to do with them. Should I just throw them in the trash?

*Sincerely,
Baffled in B'ville*

Dear Baffled,

Ugh, plastic bags really put a bee in my bonnet. They're everywhere - I think we've all seen them stuck high up in a tree at one time or another. Did you know that Americans throw away over 100 billion of these bags every year? That's crazy! And environmentally foolish to boot.

What to do with them? Well, you can start by putting the brakes on taking them from stores. Sure, you need to carry your goodies home in something - why not a reusable bag? You can get them anywhere nowadays. You use them over and over again and then - poof, the plastic bag problem disappears. Of course, the key is to remember to bring reusable bags with you each time you shop. I tape large reminders on my windshield, which presents its own problems... You, perhaps, should use less extreme measures and after you unpack your loot, hang your bags on the doorknob as a visual reminder to take them on your next shopping spree.

Reusable bags don't fix the Armageddon-like stockpile of plastic bag you've got going on at your house, now do they? You might call me Captain Obvious, but stop being wasteful and reuse them! Bring them back to the store and have the clerks fill 'em back up with new stuff. Clean up after Fido when he does his business. Save yourself some dinero - stop buying garbage bags, use your stockpile instead. Put your lunch in one and bring it to work. Use one for your rank gym clothes (I would, but that would mean I would have to GO to the gym...) The possibilities are endless.

Don't have enough reuse options to whittle down the

plastic bag monster springing forth from under your kitchen sink? Well, wrestle it to the ground and recycle it...but, not how you think. Before you drop those plastic bags in your blue bin with your other recyclables - STOP! The facilities that accept all those blue bin items have machines that HATE plastic bags. They get stuck in their parts and wreck havoc on the sorting process. You don't want to ruin recycling for everyone else, do you?

To recycle those plastic bags, simply take 'em back where ya got 'em. Any large store that gives them out is required by law to take them back for recycling. This includes most grocery stores (think Wegmans,

Price Chopper, Tops), big box stores (Wal-Mart, Target), as well as many other stores you frequent. All you have to do is bring them to the store with you and drop them into the plastic bag recycling container. It's usually in the front of the store (you know, by the carts). Ask if you can't find it, Sherlock. And just to be clear, you don't have to bring bags back to the store you got them at, those big stores will also take plastic bags from other places. . .

So there you have it, no more excuses - reduce, reuse and recycle those plastic bags!

*Recycling
Rhoda*

Local Waste-to-Energy Facility Makes the Grade

Once again, annual stack and ash testing results meet strict State and Federal permit limits

Amy Miller

While you read this article, the Onondaga County Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility is busy turning our County's non-recyclable **trash into electricity – enough to power about 15% of Onondaga County households.** Air pollution control equipment and continuous monitoring systems are in place to make sure it is done safely. Read on to discover what testing is done at the WTE Facility and learn what this year's WTE report card says.

What is the purpose of stack testing (annual air emissions testing)?

Stack testing measures air emissions produced by the WTE Facility. A probe is inserted into the WTE stack to collect samples of the gases that are released. Several samples are taken during each test. Sampling and laboratory analysis are conducted in accordance with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) protocols. NYSDEC oversees stack testing at the WTE Facility.

How do the 2012 stack test results look?

The 2012 stack test results indicate that the facility continues to meet high operational standards, that it meets all of the state and federal permit limits, and that the air pollution control devices are working properly. Many of the parameters were significantly below the permit limits.

Does the facility conduct any other air emissions testing besides the annual stack testing?

Yes. The facility has a continuous emission monitoring system (CEMS) that measures equipment operations and stack emissions in order to continually track Facility performance. The CEMS monitors carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, oxygen, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides as well as opacity and combustion temperatures.

What is the purpose of the semi-annual ash testing and how do the recent 2012 results look?

Semi-annual ash testing determines whether residual ash, the by-product of turning the community's trash into energy, should be managed as a

non-hazardous or hazardous material. A representative sample of residual ash is collected according to NYSDEC and USEPA protocols. The sample is then analyzed by an independent laboratory for leachable metals, according to USEPA's Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP). TCLP analysis simulates landfill conditions (the final disposal site for the ash) and determines whether the ash exhibits hazardous characteristics. Over the life of the facility (including the most recent 2012 results), TCLP analysis has always indicated that the ash is non-hazardous.

How do I get more information on these test results or about the WTE Facility in general?

Visit **OCRRA.org** for detailed information on the Facility as well as past and current test results. You may also contact Amy Miller, OCRRA's Engineer, at 453-2866, ext. 225 or amiller@ocrra.org for additional information.

Amy Miller can be reached at amiller@ocrra.org

2012 ANNUAL STACK TEST RESULTS

	Constituent	Average Measured Emissions ¹			Permit Limit ²	Pass/Fail? P/F	
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3			
TESTED ANNUALLY	FEDERAL	Cadmium (mg/dscm @ 7% O ₂) ³	3.66E-04	< 1.86E-04	< 2.23E-04	3.50E-02	P
		Cadmium (lb/hr) ³	5.51E-05	< 2.89E-05	< 3.64E-05	1.90E-03	P
		Carbon Monoxide (lb/hr)	1.24E+00	9.99E-01	1.24E+00	8.04E+00	P
		Dioxins/Furans (ng/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	8.99E-01	3.34E-01	6.04E-01	3.00E+01	P
		Hydrogen Chloride (ppmdv @ 7% O ₂)	3.32E+00	1.16E+00	3.78E+00	2.50E+01	P
		Hydrogen Chloride (lb/hr)	7.83E-01	2.69E-01	9.43E-01	5.24E+00	P
		Hydrogen Chloride Removal Efficiency (%)	99.6	99.8	99.6	>=95	P
		Lead (mg/dscm @ 7% O ₂) ³	5.09E-03	1.24E-03	1.88E-03	4.00E-01	P
		Lead (lb/hr) ³	7.66E-04	1.94E-04	3.07E-04	3.81E-02	P
		Mercury (lb/hr)	6.79E-04	2.33E-04	6.81E-04	4.00E-03	P
		Nitrogen Oxides (lb/hr)	4.97E+01	5.39E+01	5.66E+01	5.80E+01	P
		Particulates (gr/dscf @ 7% O ₂)	7.12E-04	6.48E-04	6.92E-04	1.00E-02	P
		PM ₁₀ (gr/dscf @ 7% O ₂)	5.63E-04	3.15E-04	3.00E-04	1.00E-02	P
		PM ₁₀ (lb/hr)	1.94E-01	1.09E-01	1.10E-01	3.16E+00	P
		Sulfur Dioxide (lb/hr)	6.05E+00	4.99E-01	4.86E+00	1.62E+01	P
STATE	Ammonia (ppmdv @ 7% O ₂)	4.83E+00	3.19E+00	< 1.01E+00	5.00E+01	P	
	Ammonia (lb/hr)	5.41E-01	3.45E-01	< 1.18E-01	4.88E+00	P	
	Dioxins/Furans-2,3,7,8 TCDD TEQ (ng/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	1.40E-02	4.75E-03	1.01E-02	4.00E-01	P	
	Dioxins/Furans-2,3,7,8 TCDD TEQ (lb/hr)	2.14E-09	7.64E-10	1.62E-09	1.29E-07	P	
	Mercury (µg/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	4.56E+00	1.50E+00	4.19E+00	2.80E+01	P	
	Mercury Removal Efficiency (%)	94.9	98.8	95.2	>=85	P	
	Zinc (lb/hr) ³	4.58E-03	3.00E-03	6.06E-03	1.42E-01	P	

UNITS:

- gr/dscf = grains per dry standard cubic foot
- ppmdv = parts per million dry volume
- lb/hr = pounds per hour
- ng/dscm = nanograms per dry standard cubic meter
- µg/dscm = micrograms per dry standard cubic meter
- mg/dscm = milligrams per dry standard cubic meter
- @ 7% O₂ = concentration corrected to 7% oxygen

NOTES:

- ¹ Based on three test runs
- ² NYSDEC Title V Permit #7-3142-00028/00009
- ³ Unit #1 results are based on June retesting event

2012 ASH RESIDUE CHARACTERIZATION TEST RESULTS			
Semi-Annual Test Results - June 2012			
Constituent	Test Result	Permit Limit	Pass or Fail
Cadmium	0.28 mg/L	1 mg/L	Pass
Lead	0.50 mg/L	5 mg/L	Pass
CONCLUSION			
Ash residue does NOT exhibit a hazardous characteristic. As such, it should continue to be managed as a non-hazardous solid waste.			

SWANA Honors Long-Time OCRRA Partner

Covanta Energy receives international award for outstanding waste-to-energy facility operations

James Regan, Covanta Energy, Corporate Communications and Media Relations Manager

Covanta Energy, the operator of the OCRRA Waste-to-Energy Facility has been awarded the 2012 Gold Excellence Award from the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA). The facility serves Onondaga County

York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory oversight is a recipe for success. Onondaga County reaps the benefit of energy production and well-funded recycling pro-



Using a joystick, a Covanta Energy operator picks up trash with a giant claw, which can hold 3 tons of trash, and drops it into a boiler feed chute. Covanta Energy was recently honored by SWANA for outstanding facility operations at the local Waste-to-Energy Facility where our county's trash is converted into enough electricity to power 15% of Onondaga County households.

Covanta has operated the facility in collaboration with OCRRA since its inception in the mid-1990s.

with sustainable waste disposal, processing approximately 990 tons of municipal solid waste per day into more than 39 megawatts of renewable energy – enough to power approximately 40,000 homes.

Covanta has operated the facility in collaboration with OCRRA since its inception in the mid-1990s. “Covanta is well-deserving of this prestigious SWANA award. Since startup in 1994, the facility’s operational and environmental performance has exceeded expectations,” said Mark Donnelly, OCRRA’s Executive Director. “Covanta’s strong partnership with OCRRA and willing cooperation with the New

York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulatory oversight is a recipe for success. Onondaga County reaps the benefit of energy production and well-funded recycling programs, thanks to the efficient processing of trash at this Waste-to-Energy Facility and OCRRA’s comprehensive system of ‘green’ services.”

SWANA’s Excellence Awards Program recognizes outstanding solid waste programs and facilities that advance the practice of environmentally and economically sound solid waste management.

“On behalf of all the employees of Covanta Onondaga, I am pleased to accept this award honoring our environmental, safety and sustainability achievements,” said Kathleen Carroll, Covanta Onondaga Business Manager. “We work tirelessly to operate

in the safest and most environmentally sound manner possible and are proud of our work in the community to be a good corporate citizen and neighbor.”

Since its inception, the facility has:

- Converted over 5.7 million tons of municipal solid waste into approximately 3.6 million megawatt hours of clean, renewable energy;

- Recovered and recycled more than 173,000 tons of metal, the equivalent amount of steel used to build more than 140,000 automobiles;
- Reduced approximately 5.7 million tons of greenhouse gases based on national averages, which is equal to avoiding the annual greenhouse gases from over 1 million passenger vehicles.

Did You Know?

Our trash is turned into electricity, enough to power 15% of Onondaga County homes!

Did You Know?

Medical needles have special disposal requirements.

Visit tinyurl.com/needlesandsharps for a list of drop-off locations or place them in a clean, heavy plastic laundry detergent bottle. Label it as “Sharps” and tape the top shut. **Put it in the trash.** Please, do not put it in the blue bin.

Household Hazardous Waste continued from page 3

time there from start to finish was only nine minutes! Much faster than I expected. Thank you for such a great job.”

As a reminder, latex paint is not hazardous waste; it is not accepted at these events. If the paint is in good condition (*at least 1/3 of a gallon in original rust-free can with legible label*) please contact ReStore at the number or website listed on page 3. They are always looking for latex paint that is white or a shade of white.

If you need to dispose of latex paint, just add cat lit-

ter or paint drying crystals and leave it in a well-ventilated area with the lid off. Once it is dry, put it with your regular trash, lid off. The metal of the can will be reclaimed for recycling at the Waste-to-Energy Facility (and its sale will help fund future Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off events)! How’s that for closing the loop?

Commercial hazardous waste is prohibited from these events; please contact Environmental Products and Services at 451-6666 or epsofvermont.com for

disposal assistance. So far, in 2012, 1,466 residents participated in these collection events! OCRRA sincerely appreciates your help in protecting the health of humans, wildlife and the environment by responsibly disposing of your hazardous household materials. Thank you for doing your part to *save the world a little each day!*

Allison Stuart can be reached at astuart@ocrra.org.

Green Garden Supplies: Get 'Em While They Last

Ann Fordock

Did you miss out on OCRRA's rain barrel and compost bin sale in June? Wishing you could get your hands on one of those 50% off rain barrels or compost bins? OCRRA has about 20 bins and barrels left-over; come get yours today, before they are gone!

You can get them at the Amboy Compost Site located at 6296 Airport Road in Camillus. The site is open Monday through Saturday

from 9 am to 4 pm. Make checks payable to Plastics Solutions, Inc. No cash or credit cards are accepted.

Interested in the kitchen caddy bins, compost turners, or rain barrel stands sold at the June event? Contact our vendor EcoSafe Zero Waste directly for these items; please email Doug@ecosafezerowaste.com.

Ann Fordock can be reached at afordock@ocrra.org



Rain Barrels - \$59
Helps minimize water bills and reduces rainwater runoff.



Compost Bin - \$49
Turns your kitchen and garden waste into valuable compost.

Bi-Annual Shred-O-Rama Winding Up to Be a Grand Slam

Paper shredding event takes place Saturday, September 22 at Alliance Bank Stadium

Dave Nettle

Shredding confidential materials is an important step in preventing identity theft. Personal records such as medical documents, bank information, tax documents and other personal items containing account numbers or private details may be harmful if they get into the wrong hands.

So protect yourself from identity theft and attend OCRRA's 2nd Shred-O-Rama of the year! The event happens Saturday, September 22, from 8 am to noon at Alliance Bank Stadium. The shredding is free and no reservation is needed to attend. Please note the event is open to households in

Onondaga County, only.

If your workplace needs shredding services please visit OCRRA.org or contact a shredding service listed online or in the phone book, as documents from businesses are not accepted at these events.

Participants must enter the event from the Grant Boulevard / Hiawatha Blvd. intersection. Since OCRRA started hosting Shred-O-Rama in 2004, more than 249 tons of personal papers have been safely shredded and recycled.

Participants are asked to bring no more than five boxes of personal documents per vehicle, that are

generated or received at home. These documents will be shredded onsite at the stadium.

To prepare your paper for shredding, please:

- Pack confidential documents in durable boxes, containers, or paper bags.
- Avoid bringing paper documents in plastic bags.
- Remove any binders or other non-paper contaminants.

At past events, the wait, from start to finish, has been brief (between 5—10 minutes)! Rick Rogala an Onondaga County resident had this to offer about his experience at the event. "I attended the Shred-O-Rama for the first time ever. I had two boxes of documents to have shredded. I was very impressed at the operation. From the time we turned into the stadium until we exited took eight minutes. The people working the event were friendly and helpful. Thanks for the service you provide."

Onondaga County Parks and the Syracuse Chief's Management made this year's events convenient by allowing OCRRA the use of the stadium's spacious parking lot. A huge thank you goes out to Confidata / SMR Fibre who have been providing their shredding services since this event began nine years ago. With-

out their generous support and donation of their staff and trucks this shredding extravaganza would not be possible.

Event participants will leave satisfied knowing that all of the shredded paper is recycled into new paper products. Recycling paper saves water and energy and

produces less pollution than making paper out of virgin resources.

For more information on preventing or addressing identify theft, please visit: www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/

Dave Nettle can be reached at dnette@ocrra.org



Tom Bush of Confidata/SMR Fibre unloads a resident's confidential papers at a past Shred-O-Rama event. No reservations are needed for the 2012 event happening on Saturday, September 22 from 8 am – noon at Alliance Bank Stadium.

Compost Site Hours

Sites are open through
Friday, November 30

Amboy Site:
6296 Airport Road
Camillus, NY 13209

Monday through Saturday:
9 am - 4 pm
Sunday: CLOSED

Jamesville Site:
4370 Route 91
Jamesville, NY 13078

Monday through Saturday:
9 am - 4 pm
Sunday: CLOSED



From the desk of Mark Donnelly - Executive Director

What's the Best Way to Address a Problem? Eliminate it.

I want the area I live in to be cleaner for myself, my family and my community.

Keeping our community free of litter is not only about improving property values and attempting to draw new businesses to our area, it is also a reflection of our core principles and self-worth. A community that turns a blind-eye to trash on its roadsides and in its waterways, doesn't appear to care very much about itself or its prospects.

While there is visible litter on our roadsides, it is clear our community as a whole does care about how Onondaga County looks. Both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County have recently issued sustainability plans that speak to the importance of changing behaviors for the betterment of our community's future. Residents and local journalist Sean Kirst persistently raise their voices in anger over the litter that is seen in our community.

In particular, trash that litters our highways, which are traveled by thousands of people each day, has been a sore spot for many. When it comes to litter on highways there are a few barriers to maintaining pristine conditions:

- Heavy traffic poses safety concerns for cleanup crews,
- Legal jurisdictions on interstates add coordination challenges,
- Cost is extensive. It takes equipment, labor, and administration to mobilize employees.

In today's cash strapped times, this final item presents an even larger challenge than the first two on the list.

The good news is that many elected officials, the NYSDOT, Onondaga County, the City of Syra-

cuse, OCRRA and local activist groups have teamed up to beautify our major highways. Their approach is well-researched and breaks from traditional attempts to clean up our community. This on-going collaboration is an excellent example of government entities working together with the public to eliminate obstacles and implement a solution. It has addressed three specific areas: cleanup, enforcement and awareness.

CLEANUP:

The first roadside cleanup took place on Route 690 between the Townsend Street and Thompson Road exits the week of July 9. It amassed over 3 tons of material, which OCRRA accepted free of charge at our Ley Creek Drop-Off Site. Projections say, if this cleanup were to extend to all the highways that run through the City of Syracuse alone, more than 25 tons of trash could be amassed in one cleaning.

Additional cleanups are planned for Routes 81 and 690. When you see crews roadside, please slow down and give them space as they do their very important work.

ENFORCEMENT:

Because you can't entirely eliminate the problem of litter without first changing people's behaviors, the addition of an enforcement component is essential to the success of this ef-

*Every little bit you do adds up over time
and when everyone pitches in,
anything is possible.*

fort. The Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, the Syracuse Police Department and City Court are now coordinating to ticket litter of-



A collaboration between the City, County, State, elected officials, OCRRA and local residents is making strides toward eradicating litter on our highways. Accept the OCRRA Challenge of collecting one pound of litter per month and do your part to help the cause.

fenders and sentence them to Community Court for cleanup duty.

If you are caught littering, you won't simply pay a fine, you will now have to put time in cleaning up with one of the roadside crews! A first offense nets a maximum of 10 hours cleaning up; subsequent violations can result in a maximum of 15 hours of cleanup.

AWARENESS:

An awareness campaign will be rolled out to draw the public's attention to the hard costs of littering; each piece of litter that needs to be cleaned up by government workers comes out of taxpayers' pockets. The goal of the campaign, whose ta-

is the equivalent of throwing money out of your car window.

Litter is visual as well as environmental pollution. That cigarette butt carelessly tossed out a window will make its way through our storm water system and end up in our streams or Onondaga Lake, polluting our water and poisoning wildlife. Roadside TVs, computers, tires, mattresses, furniture, fast food wrappers, bottles and cans all bring negative environmental consequences. Is this litter accidental? Not the majority of it; oftentimes, littering is a purposeful act. But we can change that.

You can make a difference in your own neighborhood by accepting the **OCRRA Challenge**: Collect one pound of litter per month, per household. That's really not a lot. Think about it. It's the equivalent weight of four Quarter Pounders, or maybe it is better to think about this in terms of Quarter Pounder wrappers...

If all 180,000 households

in our community jump on board, we'll collect 90 tons of litter a month. In conjunction with the awareness campaign, in short order, we could eliminate the need for expenditures on roadside litter cleanups!

In keeping with another tagline (can you say OCRRA's - "Save the World a Little Each Day"?), every little bit you do adds up over time, and when everyone pitches in, anything is possible.

Mark Donnelly can be reached at mdonnelly@ocrra.org

**Over 51 billion
pieces of litter
appear on U.S.
roads each year.**

**52% from motorists,
23% from
pedestrians,
16% from improperly
covered trucks.**

Source: 2009 Keep
America Beautiful survey



*“Like” us today
to start saving the environment.*



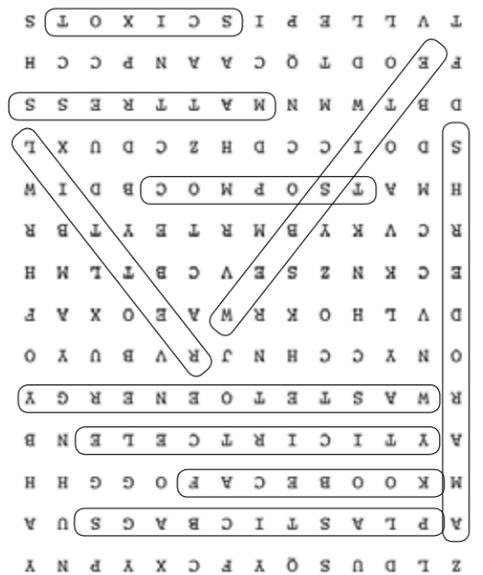
OCRRA Word Search Puzzle

Z L D U S Q Y F C X Y P N Y
 A P L A S T I C B A G S U A
 M K O O B E C A F O G G H H
 A Y T I C I R T C E L E N B
 R W A S T E T O E N E R G Y
 O N Y C C H N J R V B U Y O
 D V L H O K R W A E O X A F
 E C K N Z S E V C B T L M H
 R C V K Y B M R T E Y T B R
 H M A T S O P M O C B D I W
 S D O I C C D H Z C D U X L
 D B T W M N M A T T R E S S
 F E O D T Q C A A N P C C H
 T V L L E P I S C I X O T S

SEARCH LIST

- compost
- electricity
- facebook
- litter
- mattress
- plastic bags
- shredorama
- toxics
- waste to energy
- website

Word Search Answer Key



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KRISTEN LAWTON
Public Information Officer

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Mark Your Calendar

SHRED-O-RAMA
SEPTEMBER 22

Alliance Bank Stadium
8 am - Noon
(Enter from Grant Blvd.)

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS
WASTE DROP-OFF
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6

Ley Creek Drop-Off Site
8 am - 2 pm
Register at OCRRA.org

COMPOST SITES
CLOSE FOR SEASON
NOVEMBER 30

Drop off your yard waste and
pick up your compost before
the end of the season.