



Spring 2015 Newsletter | Volume 23 | No. 1



SCHOOL PROGRAM... PG 2
New video education series (curriculum-aligned) unveiled to educators this spring.



RECYCLE YOUR FOOD SCRAPS AT OCRRA.... PG 4
New residential program makes food scrap composting easy as pie.



COMPOST FOR SALE BY THE BAG PG 4
More than 20 local retail stores to sell OCRRA compost this spring.



SHRED-O-RAMA PG 6
Confidential paper shredding event hits NBT Bank Stadium on Saturday, May 16.



TV RECYCLING PG 8
How to recycle TVs and other electronic waste.

Join OCRRA's 2015 Earth Day Cleanup: As They Say "Every Litter Bit Helps!"

Register your group at www.OCRRA.org for the April 24 and 25 event
Ann Fordock, Recycling Specialist

Shake off the winter weather and help Onondaga County get cleaned up and ready for spring!

Form a group at work for a lunchtime cleanup on Friday, April 24. Work with your family and neighbors on Saturday, April 25. Or, do both!

As the snow melts, the trash that has been buried begins to rear its ugly head. It is unsightly and reflects poorly on our community, but the good news is that there are thousands of amazing residents out there like yourself who step up each year to clean up litter. In 2014 over 5,700 residents participated in the OCRRA Earth Day Litter Cleanup.



WHEN:
Friday, April 24 and / or
Saturday, April 25, 2015.

WHO:
Groups of all sizes and ages. Friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, or community groups.

WHERE:
Any public area in Onondaga County that has litter.
You get to pick!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
Friday, April 17, 2015.



Members of the InterFaith Works of CNY cleanup group display litter they collected along North McBride Street in Syracuse during the 2014 Earth Day Litter Cleanup. Register your group at OCRRA.org for the 2015 event that happens **Friday, April 24 and Saturday April 25. Registration deadline is Friday, April 17.**

Why Register Online with OCRRA?

- 1) Registrants get trash bag stickers from OCRRA that ensure you / your municipality gets free disposal of all the litter you collect.
- 2) OCRRA documents the number of event participants so that our community can continue to have an award-winning program!
- 3) OCRRA can suggest areas to clean up if you do not have a specific location in mind. Remember, "every litter bit helps!"

Last year volunteers like you picked up 99,000 pounds (nearly 50 tons) of litter. Register your group today and help surpass that amazing mark in honor of Earth Day 2015! Register at OCRRA.org by April 17.

Interactive Video Project Brings Recycling Education in Onondaga County to the Digital Age

Theresa Mandery, Recycling Specialist

To foster the environmental champions of tomorrow, recycling education is essential. Engaging both teachers and students in recycling lessons and activities can be a lot of fun while also providing the community a path to a greener future.

OCRRA recently unveiled a new education initiative that brought classroom recycling education to the next level. This web-based program includes a series of professionally-produced videos*, interactive games and curriculum-aligned classroom activities, kicking recycling education up a notch by bringing it into today's modern, digital age.

Aimed at third through fifth graders, this new program teaches students about recycling and waste

reduction, composting and the waste-to-energy process.

There are many benefits to the web-based approach including teacher and student convenience. The videos and games can be accessed via the internet in and out of the classroom. Students may participate on their own with individual computers, tablets and mobile devices, or they can work together on classroom "smart" boards.

Additionally, the content adheres to New York State curriculum requirements, ensuring that teachers are able to use these tools as part of their lessons, rather than something extra to squeeze in at the end of the year. As an added bonus for educators, all topics include a list of vocabulary words with full definitions to review, as well as pre- and post-test-



OCRRA's new classroom environmental education program brings curriculum-aligned, instructional videos and games to third through fifth grade classrooms in Onondaga County with the click of a button. Check it out yourself at www.ocrra.org/educational_resources.

ing questions to evaluate student knowledge.

To check this new program out for yourself, visit www.OCRRA.org/educational_resources. Student feedback in the initial rollout has been very positive. The games are

modeled after those that are popular with kids and the videos highlight local landmarks, such as the Carrier Dome, that make the concepts tangible.

"The students really enjoyed the videos and games," said Jean Kaminski, 5th grade teacher at Nate Perry Elementary School in Liverpool. "Both were a huge topic of conversation after the presentation."

Program success is also illustrated in the early metrics, with student test scores increasing an average of thirteen percent after viewing the videos and working on the classroom activities.

This project complements OCRRA's overall education efforts which also include in-person classroom presentations, where students beyond the initial third-to-fifth grade audience are targeted as well. A consistent, but ever-evolving education program sets this community apart and helps us all learn how to save the world a little each day.

**A huge thanks goes out to the team at Pinckney Hugo Group – they brought the creative and programming magic to this innovative project!*
Theresa Mandery can be reached at tmandery@ocrra.org.

2015 Earth Day Litter Cleanup Registration Form

Name of Group: _____

Number of Workers: _____

Name of Contact Person (one name only): _____

Address of Contact (where information/stickers are to be sent):

Street: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone #: (W) _____ (H) _____ (Fax) _____

E-Mail: _____

Day(s) Your Group Will Be Cleaning:

☐ Friday, April 24 ☐ Saturday, April 25 ☐ Both

You will receive two trash bag stickers per worker. Please indicate if you will need more.

Number of ADDITIONAL Stickers _____

Remember, NO chemical waste, paint cans, furniture, appliances, yard waste or gas tanks are acceptable. OCRRA encourages groups to recycle any bottles and cans they find.

Municipality (city/town/village) where you are cleaning. This info is used to provide instructions on litter drop off.

What area are you cleaning? (You may choose any public space in the county. Be as specific as possible to avoid cleanup overlap):

Cleanup supplies are your group's responsibility. OCRRA provides the stickers for free disposal through the municipality.

Any questions, please call OCRRA at 453-2866, ext. 202.

Register Online at OCRRA.org

OR RETURN REGISTRATION

VIA FAX 453-2872

OR MAIL TO: OCRRA

100 Elwood Davis Road

North Syracuse, NY 13212



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brought to you by

OCRRA

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KRISTEN LAWTON
Public Information Officer

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The Garden GURU

Terry Ettinger
Instructional Support Specialist, SUNY -ESF

Turn Your Yard into a Thriving Garden with Compost

Despite the prolonged bitter cold and snow we've experienced this winter, I am absolutely certain that spring will arrive sooner or later. And with it, a new gardening season filled with the promise of baskets, bags, pails and buckets overflowing with fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs from our gardens. Or not.

Unfortunately, for many of you reading this column the above scenario is likely more of a wish than a reality. Water may sit in your yard for days as the snow melts, or after a heavy summer rain. Dense clay or cobble-filled soil that's nearly impossible to turn with a spade or rototiller might dominate the only sunny spot in your yard. Or, maybe the soil in

your yard is sandy and dry throughout the entire growing season.

If one of these scenarios describes your gardening dilemma, I've got great news for you. The days of wishing you had deep, rich, easy-to-work soil are completely over!

How's that? Simply create a raised bed garden with OCRRA's food scrap compost!

This can be as simple as planting two or three tomato transplants into a two-foot deep pile of compost placed right on top of a spot in your lawn that receives full sun all day. There's no need to kill the grass as the compost will smother it in short order. By the time you harvest the last of the tomatoes late this

coming summer, the mound will have settled and shrunk to about half its original size. Next spring simply repeat the process by dumping a fresh load of compost in the same spot!

Of course, you can also get as orderly and/or elaborate as you'd like by creating square, rectangular or even circular beds with crisp edges cut with a spade or edging tool, wood-lined beds (don't use pressure treated wood), or even "high end" beds built with concrete landscape blocks!

OCRRA's annual \$20 Yard Waste Pass entitles you to six cubic yards of compost. With that amount of compost you can create a raised bed garden that's 10 feet wide, 20 feet long and almost 10 inches deep.

That's large enough for four really productive tomato plants, two or three pepper plants, a row of green



A raised bed made from food scrap compost will allow you to grow a great garden in any sunny spot on your property! Check out page 4 or visit **OCRRA.org** to learn more about getting an OCRRA Compost Pass or buying OCRRA compost by the bag at participating retail locations.

beans, a couple crops of leaf lettuce, several broccoli and a few leeks or carrots – all from a spot in your yard that was impossible to grow a garden in the past!

What are you waiting for? Check out page 4 to learn

more about getting a pass or buying OCRRA compost by the bag at participating retail locations.

Terry Ettinger can be reached at tlettinger@esf.edu.



Recycling Rhoda

Talks Trash – and Recycling!

Fluorescent Facts

Dear Rhoda,

I've been hanging on to a bunch of burned out compact fluorescent light bulbs and a couple of 4-foot tubes from my basement lights, because I heard I shouldn't put them in the trash. Someone told me they can pollute our water and our bodies if we don't recycle them. Is that true and if so, where the heck do I bring them?

Fluorescing in Fabius

Dear Flo,

You've got it right, darlin' – fluorescent bulbs contain mercury and mercury is not the environment's best friend. While they may save energy over incandescent bulbs, fluorescent bulbs need special handling.

Let me clue you in on a little secret. Okay, it isn't really a secret – more than 15 hardware stores in Onondaga County will take your fluorescent bulbs, and through a partnership with OCRRA, will have them sent out for mercury reclamation.

That's a fancy way of sayin' they make sure they don't get broken and a certified company safely extracts the mercury. So then it can be reused instead of infiltrate our environment and endanger water, wildlife, pets and human health. This take-back program is underwritten by OCRRA, so there is no charge to you. Good deal, right?

So, how do you know what kind of fluorescent bulbs the hardware stores will take back and which stores participate? Take a gander at www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAbulbs or call OCRRA at 453-2866 to find out what local stores take back compact fluorescents (CFLs), 4-foot straight tubes, U-shaped and circular fluorescent bulbs. None of these stores can take in 8-foot bulbs, so don't bring 'em in.

Spiral-shaped CFL bulbs may be brought to Home Depot or Lowe's (they only take the CFLs, they do NOT take other bulbs; local hardware stores are your best option if you have

CFLs and other bulbs).

Most bulb manufacturers remind us, typically in very small print, to recycle their bulbs; however, DON'T put 'em in your blue bin. I mean it. They'll break and release mercury, thereby endangering you, your hauler and the environment.

Don't find yourself at the hardware store often? Have other toxic household items you want to get out of your house, too? Then sign up for OCRRA's no charge Hazardous Household Waste Program where you can drop off fluorescent bulbs from your home (including 8-foot bulbs), as well as other household toxics that require proper man-

agement. This drop off program runs by appointment only, year-round Monday – Friday. Visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAtoxics for details and to make an appointment.

Let me leave you on a high note: since 2007, our community, local hardware stores and OCRRA have recycled more than 62,000 fluorescent bulbs! Seems we're actually pretty bright bulbs ourselves; keep up the good work friends.

Sincerely,

Recycling Rhoda

Enrich Your Soil with OCRRA Premium Compost

One cubic foot bags are now conveniently available at many retail stores in Central New York

Dave Nettle, Recycling Specialist

For decades, residents purchased OCRRA's locally produced compost in bulk at the Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites. Now, this premium ¼" screened compost is available in one cubic foot bags at more than 20 local garden centers, nurseries and hardware stores!

This means that residents looking for OCRRA's nutrient-rich product have to look no further than their neighborhood garden center. Use it as:

- 1) An amendment to improve garden soil structure and nutrient level (see article on page 3 for details),
- 2) A top dressing for lawns, or
- 3) A component of a healthy soil mix for your potted plants.

OCRRA compost helps grow healthier, more vibrant plants, all while adding vital nutrients to the soil and reducing the need to water, which is an all around win for the environment.

So how is OCRRA compost produced? Yard waste and food scraps brought to the Amboy Compost Site by residents, or from commercial entities, municipalities, schools and institutions are mixed

in a 3:1 ratio and processed using simple, but state-of-the-art technology. Basically, the material is mixed together and arranged in a bay where it sits atop a pipe that pumps air into the mixture. This speeds up the decomposition process, which is closely monitored, and heats the product to temperatures that make the compost virtually weed- and seed-free.

To see how the whole process works, check out www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcompostProcess for a one minute video.

OCRRA's Premium Compost is one of only a few in New York State to carry the U.S. Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance (STA). This certifies that OCRRA's product is regularly tested by third party laboratories for consistency and quality. The STA classification guarantees the compost meets all state and federal requirements. OCRRA's compost is also a Pride of New York product which confirms OCRRA's commitment to supporting quality-made local agricultural goods that help keep New York green.

Collaborations with forward-thinking retailers and Arc of Onondaga made the sale of OCRRA bagged

compost a reality. In 2014, OCRRA acquired a bagging machine and partnered with Arc of Onondaga to staff the bagging operation. As a result, this spring over 20 retail outlets will carry OCRRA compost (see list below). If your preferred retailer does not carry OCRRA compost, have them contact OCRRA to supply their location. For an up-to-date list of retail sales locations, visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcompostRetailers.

To learn more about our community's award-winning composting program visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcompost.

Dave Nettle can be reached at dnette@ocrra.org.



Stop by one of the many retailers carrying OCRRA Premium Compost this spring and get this U.S. Composting Council certified product – made of local food scraps and yard wastes – conveniently packaged in one cubic foot bags. Your plants will thank you. For an up-to-date list of retailers visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcompostRetailers.

Area Suppliers of OCRRA's Premium Compost

- Aspinall's Tree Nursery and Landscaping, Chittenango
- Ballantyne Gardens, Liverpool
- Buyea's True Value Hardware, Cazenovia
- Deaton's Agway, Pulaski
- Gravina Gardens & Ace Hardware, Liverpool
- Green Acres Garden Center, Liverpool
- Green Hills Farms, Syracuse
- Green Scapes, Jamesville
- Lan's Flower Farm, Clay
- Lee's Feed Store, Syracuse
- Manlius True Value Hardware, Manlius
- Oliver B. Paine Greenhouses, Fulton
- Robinson's Florist, Blossvale
- Silver Spring Farm Market, Syracuse
- Skaneateles Town Square Ace Hardware, Skaneateles
- Sollecito Landscaping Nursery, Syracuse
- T.J.'s Lawns Plus, Phoenix
- The Evergreen Mart, Syracuse
- Twin Oaks Nursery, Syracuse
- Vollmer Farms & Farm Market, East Syracuse
- Wagner Farms, Rome
- Watson Farms Landscaping & Garden Center, LaFayette
- Westvale Gardens, Syracuse

OCRRA Announces Residential Food Scrap Drop Off Program

Andrew Radin, Director of Waste Reduction and Recycling

Take a guess: What is the largest component (by weight) of potentially recyclable material in most communities' trash streams? Glass bottles and jars? Newspapers? Old magazines? Well, from the headline of this article, you probably guessed, it is FOOD SCRAPS!

Here in Onondaga County, OCRRA estimates that

residents toss over 39 million pounds of food scraps into the trash annually; about 85 pounds per person. (Some estimates are as high as 240 pounds per person annually!) That is a lot of material that could be processed into nutrient rich compost, and returned to our local soils.

Unable to compost food scraps at home, or not inter-

ested? OCRRA now offers a new way to hop on our community's composting bandwagon. Residents can drop off food scraps at either the Amboy Compost Site on Airport Road in Camillus, or the Jamesville Compost Site off Route 91. A Combination Food Scrap / Yard Waste Compost Pass cover-

Continued on page 5



Conserve Your Cash — Love your Leftovers

Nine simple strategies to help reduce food waste at home and save money throughout the year

Ann Fordock, Recycling Specialist

Got \$2,000 to throw away? According to the Natural Resources Defense fund, that is a conservative estimate of the value of food a family of four tosses out each year! It is not just an economic loss though; imagine the environmental resources that are wasted on growing food that is thrown away. If we wasted just 15 percent less food, it would be enough to feed 25 million people.*

The average American throws out 20 pounds of food each month.* (Most of this waste is food that is simply forgotten and allowed to spoil, such as leftovers or vegetables). Unfortunately, studies show this trend is on the rise; since 1970, food waste has increased more than 50%.*

Now is the time to reverse this costly food waste movement.

Recipe to Reduce Waste:

- 1) **Buy only what you need.** Check the fridge and make a list of what you NEED before heading to the grocery store.
- 2) **Avoid sales** that prompt

you to buy more food than you need - particularly perishable items such as produce.

- 3) **Eat older food first.** Keep it visible in the fridge so that you do not forget about it.
- 4) **Learn about labels.** “Best By,” “Use By” and “Sell By” dates are not expiration dates. They also do not indicate if a food is safe to eat. Check out www.tinyurl.com/FoodLabels101 for the inside scoop.
- 5) **Mine your fridge.** Websites such as www.lovefoodhatewaste.com or www.ivaluefood.com help you get creative with recipes and provide tips on how to use up things that might go bad soon.
- 6) **Befriend your freezer.** Freeze fresh produce and leftovers if you will not eat them before they go bad.
- 7) **Store it better.** If you regularly throw away stale chips/cereal/crackers/etc., try storing them

in airtight containers—this will help them keep longer (or, of course, just buy fewer of these products).

- 8) **Preserve your produce.** Produce does not have to be tossed just because it is reaching the end of its peak. Soft fruit can be used in smoothies; wilting vegetables can be used in soups. And both wilting fruits and veggies can be turned into delicious, nutritious juice.
- 9) **Monitor what you throw away.** Designate a week in which you write down everything you throw out on a regular basis. Tossing half a loaf of bread each week? Maybe it is time to start freezing half of that loaf the moment you buy it. That way it will not go stale before you can eat it.

After taking these steps, there may still be some food waste, but it does not have to go to “waste.” It can be composted instead of being thrown out! As of 2010,



Food is one of the largest parts of our waste stream that could be recycled, but ends up as trash. A good chunk of food waste in America is items that are simply forgotten in the fridge and spoil, such as leftovers or vegetables. Learn how you can reduce your waste using the tips and resources outlined in this article.

the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that less than 3 percent of food waste was recovered and recycled through composting. Help do your part to increase the amount of food waste that is recycled.

OCRRA provides instructions on how to set up various “backyard” compost systems; visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAbackyardComposting for a “do-it-yourself” video and details.

Or, let OCRRA help and compost your food scraps for you! Take advantage of OCRRA’s new food scrap

drop-off program that starts April 1, see page 4 for details.

Wondering if there are other ways you can reduce your food waste? Take a look at the *Food: Too Good to Waste* toolkit for more information at www.westcoastclimateforum.com/food.

Be sure to check the resources in this article out so you can do your part to turn waste into wonderful!

**Source: www.nrdc.org
Ann Fordock can be reached at afordock@ocrra.org.*

Food Scrap Drop-Off

Continued from page 4

ing the 2015 compost season (April 1 to November 30) offers these benefits:

- Drop off unlimited amounts of yard waste and food scraps (from your home) at either site.
- Take away up to 6 cubic yards of compost or 6 cubic yards of mulch per pass. A cubic yard is roughly equivalent to a standard size pick-up truck load (3’ x 3’ x 3’). Multiply that by six and you’ve got a whole lot of compost or mulch! You may load material on your own, or for a modest fee, OCRRA will load it for you.

The cost of the 2015 “combo” or Food Scrap / Yard Waste Pass is \$35.

The pass can be purchased online at www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcomboPass (and it will be mailed to you). Or, when the Compost Sites open on April 1, stop by either site and get one there.

When it comes to food waste, last Friday’s lasagna, and soggy salad and crusty bread are all part of the new recipe for recycling in Onondaga County!

Andrew Radin can be reached at aradin@ocrra.org.



Value for Your Dollar

OCRRA provides award-winning trash and recycling services to our community at a great price.

For perspective, compare OCRRA’s costs to what you might spend each month on a cell phone bill.

As you can see from the graph to the right, the contrast is stark.



**J.D. Power & Associates reports the average American cell bill runs \$70 – \$78 a month. (2011 data).*

***The average family of four generates about a ton of trash each year. Disposing of a ton of trash through OCRRA costs \$84 (this excludes your public or private hauler’s waste transport costs). The \$84 fee includes trash disposal services as well as recycling services, which encompass blue bin distribution, recycling education, household hazardous waste disposal and a host of other green services. Divide that by 12 and you will see OCRRA’s services cost less than \$10 a month!*

Confidential Paper Shredding Event Sure to be a Hit

First of two events takes place May 16 at NBT Bank Stadium (second follows on September 19)

Dave Nettle, Recycling Specialist

Shredding paper records such as medical documents, bank information, tax documents and other items containing personal account numbers is one way to combat identity theft. In 2015, OCRRA brings you two opportunities to safeguard your identity by shredding all your confidential documents, at no charge! Mark your calendar to attend either or both events.

The first event happens Saturday, May 16, from 8 am to noon at NBT Bank Stadium. No reservations are required to attend.

OCRRA asks residents to bring no more than five banker size boxes per vehicle and to:

- Pack confidential documents, loosely, in durable boxes, containers or paper bags.
- Avoid bringing items in plastic bags as they slow down the shredding process.
- Remove binders or other non-paper contaminants (plastic – bags, binders, folders; spiral

notebooks; laminated items; electronic media including computer disks, CDs, etc.).

Please note the event is open to household residents in Onondaga County only. Business materials will not be accepted. If your workplace needs shredding services, visit www.OCRRA.org or contact a shredding service.

Attendees must enter the event from the Grant Boulevard / Hiawatha Boulevard intersection. Since OCRRA started hosting Shred-o-Rama in 2004, more than 410 tons of personal papers have been safely shredded and recycled.

While the event is free to residents, the Muscular Dystrophy Association will have representatives on hand collecting voluntary donations to benefit their organization.

Many thanks go to:

- Onondaga County Parks and the Syracuse Chief's Management who allow OCRRA the use of the stadium's spacious park-

ing lot, which makes for a convenient and safe event.

- Confidata / SMR Fibre and Shred Solvers who provide a generous donation of staff time and mobile shredding vehicles.

Not able to make the event in May? Stop by the Saturday, September 19 event from 8 am to noon, also at NBT Bank Stadium.

Interested in reducing the amount of confidential documents you amass? Save some trees and reduce clutter by signing up for e-statements with your bank, utilities, etc.

Dave Nettle can be reached at dnette@ocrra.org.



Paul Mierek of Confidata unloads a resident's vehicle at OCRRA's May 2014 paper shredding event at NBT Bank Stadium. Prevent identity theft and shred your confidential documents by attending the first of two shredding events happening on Saturday, May 16 from 8 am to noon at NBT Bank Stadium. The event is free to residents; reservations are not required.

Did you know...

OCRRA posts detailed annual Waste-to-Energy Facility reports on its website. These reports explain the operations, environmental record and financial status of the Facility. Please visit www.tinyurl.com/annualWTEreports to learn more.



The Onondaga County Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville, NY turns our community's trash into electricity, the sale of which helps fund OCRRA's green programs. Learn more about the Facility at www.OCRRA.org.

OCRRA's 2014 Achievements

1

Collected more than 13,000 **mercury containing fluorescent lamps** (4 tons+) in partnership with local Ace, TrueValue and Valu Home Center hardware stores.

Over 62,000 fluorescent lamps collected since 2007.

2

Improved or **established recycling programs** at over 90 apartment complexes, 100 schools and 170 local businesses.

3

Organized more than 5,500 volunteers who collected over 99,000 pounds of litter as part of OCRRA's annual **Earth Day Cleanup program**.

Over 2 million pounds of litter collected since 1994!

4

Received National Recycling Coalition's **Community Recycling Excellence Award**.

5

Sold over 8,500 cubic yards of **compost** and 12,650 cubic yards of **mulch**; generated revenue exceeding \$373,600; a 38% increase over 2013.

Compost revenues increased more than 565% since 2008.

TODAY'S
RECYCLING



TOMORROW'S
RESOURCES

See how at
OCRRA  org

WASTE-TO-ENERGY | COMPOSTING | RECYCLING

Printed on FSC Certified paper with 30% recycled content.



From the Executive Director's desk...

Jobs, the Economy, Recycling and Sustainability

How all four are inextricably linked in our county and far beyond

Mark Donnelly, Executive Director

In February, Governor Cuomo pointed out that our community needs more jobs to be sustainable. I think you would be hard-pressed to find someone who disagrees with this sentiment.

“Sustainable” is a word that conjures up visions of longevity. OCRRA’s mission is to “serve our community by providing a comprehensive solid waste management system that is environmentally, socially and financially sound. Through innovative strategies such as waste reduction, recycling, composting, disposal and education, we make our community a more healthy and sustainable place to live.” Clearly, we care about environmental sustainability and know that jobs are key to our local economy’s longevity.

According to a 2001 U.S. Recycling Economic Information Study, prepared by RW Beck for the National Recycling Coalition, (www.epa.gov/waste/conserve/rrr/rmd/rei-rw/index.htm), growth in the Reuse and Recycling employment sector was five times the growth in total employment nationwide!

Did you know that recycling operations in Onondaga County support more than 750 jobs in our area?

There are numerous businesses throughout Central New York that rely upon thousands of tons of “waste materials,” each year, as their raw material for re-manufacturing, or for recovery and sale to downstream markets (such as plastics, fiber and metal). These local businesses include Bodow Recycling, Bruin Computer Trading and Recycling, Clifton Recycling, CNY Resource Recovery, Confidata, CXtec, Goodwill Finger Lakes, JACO Environmental, MacIntosh Pallet, Recycle America, Rock-Tenn, SMR Fiber, Syracuse Fiber and TOMRA.

Recycling serves as an economic engine for our community as hundreds of people are employed by these firms. More jobs are also anticipated as several new companies have recently opened in the area with plans to recycle Styrofoam and paper.

Nonetheless, in spite of these local businesses, and the tremendous reduction in trash that occurs in the

wake of their material recovery and processing efforts, several hundred thousand tons of trash are generated annually (enough to overfill the Carrier Dome each year)! This trash requires proper disposal, and that’s where OCRRA plays an additional role in the total solid waste management system.

OCRRA has received numerous national awards recognizing the community’s outstanding recycling and material recovery efforts, most recently in 2014 from the National Recycling Coalition for Outstanding Local Community Recycling Program, besting some 70 other municipalities nationwide. Consequently, **Onondaga County can make as meaningful a claim to striving for ‘zero waste’ as any community** in the country. With your help, we will continue on this journey of waste reduction.

Despite decreasing waste tonnage, OCRRA has continued to pursue new opportunities for increased recycling and waste reduction. This includes a \$2.4 million investment in the largest municipal food waste composting facility in New



Hundreds of people are employed by recycling firms in our community. The sustainability of our local economy is directly influenced by the improvement of our environment, which is one of the many reasons that OCRRA works so hard each day to expand recycling in our community.

York State, which will divert approximately 10,000 tons of food waste over the next five years. (Learn more about our Amboy Composting Facility at **OCRRA.org** or check out details on page 4).

OCRRA knows that recycling-related industries

create jobs and we applaud such economic development. We look forward to future private sector investments that will expand our community’s already robust recycling-related economy.

Mark Donnelly can be reached at mdonnelly@ocrra.org.

Videos Show "How it Works"

Short YouTube vignettes highlight OCRRA operations

In the spirit of television shows like “How It’s Made,” OCRRA embarked on a video series that demonstrates “how things work” at three of our locations, as well as at the privately-owned recycling sorting facility...

Ever wonder what it is

like to be a hauler who brings truckloads of trash to the Ley Creek Drop-Off Site? Want to see what goes on behind the scenes at the Recycle America sorting facility? Curious how your trash is safely converted into electricity at the Waste-to-Energy

Facility? Wish you could see how compost is actually made?

Check out OCRRA’s YouTube videos which feature a glimpse into the OCRRA system*! www.tinyurl.com/YouTubeSystemVideos

**Special thanks to Pinckney Hugo’s creative team for putting together amazing videos!*

Household Hazardous Waste...

CONQUERED BY:

Kathy Pelkey



Pelkey, of Cicero, is OCRRA’s Summer Household Hazardous Waste appointment raffle winner. Pelkey won a basketful of green cleaning products. Get rid of your household toxics safely at OCRRA’s year-round drop off; make an appointment at OCRRA.org and be entered for a chance to win too!

OCRRA Receives “Ton of Thanks” Award for Outstanding Mercury Education and Collection

Covanta honors select communities for removing one ton of mercury from the environment

Kristen Lawton, Public Information Officer

Covanta, a world leader in sustainable waste management, recently honored OCRRA with one of three “Ton of Thanks” awards for helping to remove mercury from the environment. Covanta is celebrating the milestone of collecting over one ton of mercury throughout the country with partners like OCRRA. The “Ton of Thanks” award recognizes exceptional leadership in mercury education and collection.

OCRRA has been working with residents to collect mercury since it began its Household Hazardous Waste Collection program in 1993.

In 2003, OCRRA also

introduced an incentive program to encourage residents to recycle their mercury thermometers and thermostats, year-round. Today, this program offers residents who turn in a mercury thermometer or thermostat at the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station a \$5 gift card* to Home Depot and a replacement thermometer (mercury-free), if applicable. This program is made possible through a partnership between OCRRA and Covanta. A portion of the program cost is also underwritten by a grant from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

All in, Onondaga Coun-

ty residents have kept more than 32,000 pounds – or over 16 tons – of mercury out of our environment through the Household Hazardous Waste and Thermometer/Thermostat collection programs!

Join thousands of residents helping the environment by participating in either mercury removal program today. Register for a household hazardous waste appointment at www.OCRRA.org or stop by the Rock Cut Road Drop Off Site, Tuesday through Saturday from 7:00 am to 2:30 pm, to drop off a mercury thermometer or thermostat.

Preventing mercury from

entering the waste stream is important to protecting our environment and water supply. An average fever thermometer contains one gram of mercury, an enormous amount when contrasted with a compact fluorescent light – which contains approximately 1/250

of that amount. Once in the waste stream, these items may break and release mercury into the environment.

** One gift card per drop off, regardless of the number of items turned in.*

Kristen Lawton can be reached at klawton@ocrra.org.



Does Your Item Contain Mercury?

Mercury THERMOSTATS typically have dials or levers that you need to manually adjust.

Mercury THERMOMETERS have a silver filling (not red or blue, those contain alcohol and can be disposed of in the trash).



Facebook Question of the Quarter



TELEVISIONS



Jay Subedi sent us a question that is very timely in light of the recent state law that prohibits NY residents from putting electronic waste in the trash.

Q: Where do I recycle a TV?

A: Check out the link below for local recycling spots (which include Best Buy, Battery World and The Salvation Army), as well as details on free manufacturer take back programs for items that do not meet local drop off sites’ size and/or product restrictions. www.tinyurl.com/ewaste2015.

Follow OCRRA on Facebook and ask us all your recycling and disposal questions!



Mark Your Calendar

Search our disposal database



COMPOST SITES OPEN

APRIL 1

Buy a Yard Waste or Food Scrap Pass
See page 4 for details.



Register at OCRRA.org by April 17.

SHRED-O-RAMA

SATURDAY MAY 16

NBT Bank Stadium
8 a.m. to Noon
Enter from Grant Blvd.

TV & ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

Year-Round at Various Local Businesses

See Facebook question above for details.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF

Year-Round by Appointment ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES
6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Register at OCRRA.org.

FACT:

Get a free blue bin from OCRRA, visit www.tinyurl.com/bluebininfo for a list of pick up locations in your area.