



AWARD PG 2 **OCRRA** garners another esteemed award for its food waste composting program



TEXTILESPG 3 Rhoda tells you where to put your old clothes and shoes



HOLIDAY RECYCLING...PG 4 Tips for a festive and earth-friendly holiday



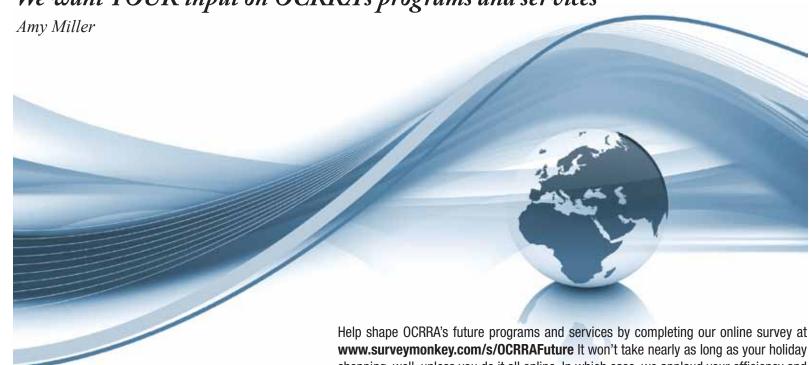
TREECYCLINGPG 5 How to recycle your live **Christmas trees this year**



RECYCLING LAWPG 6 **County legislature** passes updated law, effective January 1, 2012

Help Shape OCRRA's Future

We want YOUR input on OCRRA's programs and services



www.surveymonkey.com/s/OCRRAFuture It won't take nearly as long as your holiday shopping, well, unless you do it all online. In which case, we applaud your efficiency and the survey will take longer than your holiday shopping.

OCRRA has been serving the community for more current programs and services, we recognize that OCRRA is only successful to the extent we ad-

Believe it or not, needs and concerns of our community.

That's where YOU come than 20 years! While we in - we would like your • OCRRA's public educaare certainly proud of the help in shaping OCRRA's future programs and services. More specifically, we would like you to provide your feedback on:

dress and service the • OCRRA's current ser-

vices (which programs you use and the quality/ value of the programs);

- tion messaging;
- Waste-to-Energy Facility; and
- Changes you would like to see in the future.

To gather this information, we put together an online survey. Please visit www. surveymonkey.com/ • OCRRA's role with the s/OCRRAFuture to complete the survey. We want to hear from you!

> Amy can be reached at amiller@ocrra.org



Are Your Friends Good to You?

OCRRA's friends get advance notice and insider eco tips -"Like" us today!

Allison Stuart

Have you ever felt like you were the last to know about an upcoming event, such as a Household Hazardous Waste Day? By the time you heard about it the reservation times had already been filled? Well, OCRRA can put an end to your woes.

"Like" us at www. facebook.com/OCRRA

• Be the first to know about upcoming OCRRA events, such as Household Hazardous Waste Days and Shred-O-Rama! post advance notices of our events here (even sooner than our email subscribers get).

Let us help you stay up on the latest "green"

news! OCRRA's Facebook page also shares local and national environmentally-friendly events, programs and products.

• Have a question or comment for OCRRA? We'd love to hear from you – join the interactive conversation on the ocrra.org "wall," where residents can learn from OCRRA as well as one another.

tell your fami-So ly, friends, coworkers and neighbors to join the OCRRA Facebook community. Log on now and get a useful tip today!

Allison can be reached at astuart@ocrra.org

Post your most pressing recycling or disposal questions on our "wall" and get answers in short order. We want to hear from you!

NYS DEC Honors Community with Yet ANOTHER Award!

One of five coveted Excellence Awards given to OCRRA's Commercial Food Composting Program

Greg Gelewski

In 2005, OCRRA learned that 15% of our community's trash is food waste. That meant a large portion of our trash could actually be turned into a valuable material. So, OCRRA converted the Amboy Compost Site into a facility that accepted commercial and institutional food waste, in addition to yard waste—and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation took notice.

On December 6, 2011, OCRRA was honored by the DEC with one of five Environmental Excellence Awards at the 2011 Healthy Economy & Environment Conference in Albany.

OCRRA's food waste composting program has:

• HelpedOnondagaCounty achieve an impressive recycling rate of 60%, by diverting over 2 million pounds of food waste from the trash and processing it into a nutrient-

rich soil amendment that is highly sought after by local gardeners and landscape firms.

• Earned the US Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance (USCC STA). OCRRA sells the only municipally generated compost in New York State that is so certified. It is also the only non-biosolid compost product in Central New York that adheres to the USCC STA Program, which ensures product quality and safety.

One of the many reasite to sons the DEC honored OCRR OCRRA with the Environmental Excellence Model. Award is OCRRA is using an innovative vironmental echnique program called Extended Aerated local journal of Static Piles. As a result, OCRRA composts food and correct waste in a fraction of the

time and with less energy use than traditional composting systems.

The environmental benefits of this process include energy savings, greater greenhouse gas reductions, the recycling of organic waste as opposed to disposal and the creation of a high-quality soil amendment that is used in place of environmentally damaging fertilizers.

Environmental professionals from throughout New England, as well as Indonesia, Kenya, Russia, Tanzania, Thailand and Zimbabwe have visited the site to learn more about OCRRA's cost-effective food waste composting model.

In addition to the environmental impacts, the program is also generating local jobs and reducing disposal costs for institutional and commercial food waste generators, including Syra-

time and with less energy cuse University and others.

See the article on page 3 for more details on how your workplace can partici-

pate and save the environment – AND some cash!). Greg can be reached at ggelewski@ocrra.org



On December 6, OCRRA received another esteemed award for its innovative, commercial food waste composting program. The New York State DEC honored OCRRA with one of five Environmental Excellence Awards for converting traditional trash into a valuable resource that can be used in place of damaging fertilizers.



Melissa Cerio of Lockheed Martin recycles paper in one of the 18 combined recycling / trash stations throughout the complex. Workstations also have paper collection bins and cafeteria and eating lounges have bottle and can collection bins. The ubiquitous collection bins are all placed directly next to trash containers to maximize the recycling that happens.

Go Green – Become Blue...

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

- Lockheed Martin Corporation
- Montage Café & Bar
- Roji Tea Lounge

www.blueribbonrecycler.com

has been completely revamped – take advantage of the easy navigation and simple application process.

OCRRA.ORG 315-453-2866

The Midas Touch: Businesses Turn Trash Into Gold!

Enterprising commercial entities take advantage of OCRRA's Food Waste Composting Program

Do your business operations involve throwing food waste or other organics out in a trash dumpster or maybe a compactor? If so, keep reading.

Did you know, you could divert this heavy material out of your trash and recycle it instead? The up side is this also offers the possibility of saving on your trash bill. Food scraps can easily be separated from other trash and transported by your hauler to OCRRA's Amboy Compost Site.

At this NYS DEC permitted compost site, food waste items are mixed in a 1:3 ratio with yard waste to produce a nutrient rich, soil amendment used in gardening and yard applications.

That's right, you could make an organic, locally produced gardening product – out of your trash!

Join other local food waste recyclers like SUNY Upstate Hospital, Excellus Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and Syracuse Banana and turn your trash into green!

Feher Rubbish Removal, Syracuse Haulers and Waste Management are haulers that already offer local customers food waste pick-up and drop-off at the OCRRA Compost Site. Contact Dave Nettle at 453-2866 or **dnettle@** ocrra.org if you would like more information about how easy it is to get this initiative going at your business.



Betty Stroman, a Morrison Food Services employee, working in the SUNY Upstate Hospital cafeteria, puts vegetable cuttings in a food scrap bin. Upstate's food scraps are turned into nutrient rich compost at OCRRA's Amboy Compost Site in Camillus. Learn how you can take advantage of this service by contacting OCRRA today.



Recycling Rhada

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

Dear Recycling Rhoda,

My grandmother was a quilter so I have boxes and boxes of fabric swatches, which smell like a dingy basement. I have decided to unburden myself of these as well as some stained baby clothes, worn out sneakers and old undies. These things are trash, right? My nosy, recycling know-it-all neighbor says they should be taken to the Salvation Army or the Rescue Mission. I don't want to donate items that are trash, as that would be a burden to those fine organizations, no?

> Fondly Yours, Henrietta Hoarder

Dear Hoarder,

but your nosy neighbor is correct. The Salvation Army and Rescue Mission do want your old fabrics, stained / ripped clothing and worn out shoes. These items are indeed desirable

to them, even if they can't be worn by someone else.

You may not want to dress junior in less than pristine onesies, but a needy person in a 3rd world country will gladly make use of them. If you have items that are truly not wearable, the fabric can still be recycled into shoes; whether they can be worn or not, there is a recycling outlet for old shoes. Imelda Marcos and Kim Kardashian, take note.

OCRRA.org now has an interactive map that highlights locations where residents can recycle their gen-Sorry to break it to you, tly (or not so gently) used clothing and shoes.

> Residents with items in less than ideal condition are encouraged to call donation centers ahead of time to ask if their materials will be accepted. I'm not

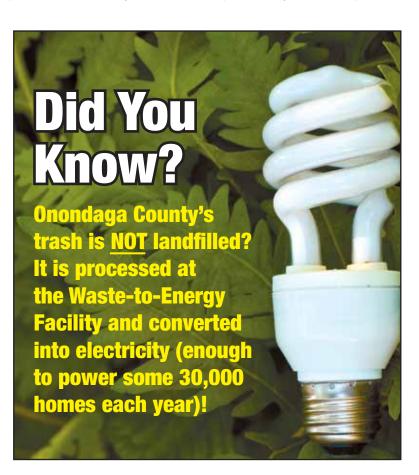
jokin' here. Call first. You wouldn't want to schlep a ton of stuff down to be recycled only to find they are closed or don't want it for some reason, would you? OCRRA's interactive map lists each donation center's phone number and address. Find the map on ocrra.org rags! The same is true for by typing "clothes" or "shoes" in the search box.

Now that we have that all cleared up, I have a question for you. Where would we be without those helpful recycling know-it-alls?

Chin up, kid. Keep recycling and don't forget that shopping at thrift stores completes the reuse cycle (and can save you dinero)!

Fashionably yours,

Recycling Phoda





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This quarterly publication is brought to you by **OCRRA**

> 100 Elwood Davis Road North Syracuse, NY 13212-4312

> > KRISTEN LAWTON Public Information Officer

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It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year...

To reduce, reuse and recycle!

Donato Mercuri

During the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, do not forget these helpful tips to help the environment and maybe even your wallet.

- Eliminate paper cards by emailing holiday greetings and pictures to your family and friends. If you cannot go without printed cards, try using ones made of recycled content. This will send a clear message to manufacturers to produce more recycled content products.
- Give the gift of time or experiences. Gift certificates for dinner, classes, sporting events or handy man repairs. These gifts require less packaging and allow recipients to spend time with you or enjoy their favorite activity, instead of adding to the "stuff" they have hanging around the house.
- If you are giving stuff, use gift bags when wrapping. This allows recipients to reuse the bags later when wrapping their own gifts! Colorful comics from the newspaper or recycled wrapping paper are other great wrapping options. Any of these items, providing they are non-metallic can go directly in your blue bin when the gift giving is over.

Remember to prevent recyclable papers from becoming litter by putting a second blue bin on top of the bin with loose paper in it to weigh it down. Tissue paper, ribbons and bows are not recyclable and must be put in the trash when they are too worn for reuse.

• One of the easiest ways to reuse is to make gift tags out of used cards or scrap paper.

- If you receive a gift that will replace an existing item in your household, donate the old item to a friend or charity.
- If you get a real Christmas tree, be sure to "recycle" your tree through your municipality or bring it to one of OCRRA's compost sites for quick and easy disposal at the end of the holidays. (See page 5 to learn more.)

If you have any questions about what can and cannot be recycled at the holidays, or anytime, in Onondaga County visit **ocrra.org**. If you need an extra blue bin and live in the city of Syracuse call 488-CITY. If you live outside the city, get in touch with your town or village highway department.

Remember that the more we reduce, reuse and recycle the easier it is to save the world a little each day!

Donato can be reached at dmercuri@ocrra.org



Cousins Julian Rendino of Liverpool and Giustina Campolito of Brewerton show off a blue bin full of holiday recyclables like non-metallic wrapping paper, cards and envelopes, catalogs, cardboard and gift boxes. Note: Bows, ribbons and tissue paper go in the trash.

Save the world a little each day.





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The Great Conifer Conundrum

What to do with your Christmas tree when the holidays are over?

Don't know what to do with your Christmas tree after the holidays? Turn it into mulch! Okay, YOU don't have to do it yourself, others can help.

Most communities, including the City of Syracuse, provide curb-side pick up for trees. Just put your tree – no plastic bags, lights, tinsel, stands or ornaments - at your curb during the scheduled pick-up time. Contact your town or village for more info.

Onondaga County residents can also bring their Christmas trees (and any vestigial leaves and brush) to either of the OCRRA 3 and Jan. 14, 2012.

Both sites are open *January 3-14*, Monday - Friday, 9 am - 4 pm and Saturday 9 am - noon

Amboy **Compost Site** 6296 Airport Road Camillus

Jamesville **Compost Site** 4370 Route 91 **Jamesville**

There is no charge to deliver trees to either site. In the spring, the trees are ground into mulch that compost sites between Jan. in turn can be used for landscaping.



Putting Out The Trash: in the Winter...



Be courteous to your trash and recycling collector. Keep your curbside collection area clear of snow this winter. Making it easier for them to collect your items means fewer injuries (which means less cost to you as the customer) and less mess.

The winter months pose challenges for all of us. Please consider those who collect trash and recyclables this winter season.

- Watch out for collection trucks. Collection vehicles are large and have multiple blind spots. Streets are narrow due to snowfall; so, as a courtesy, please slow down when approaching these vehicles. This will also help prevent accidents.
- Keep your curbside collection area clear of snow. Shoveling or snow blowing the curb area where you put your trash and recycling is a courtesy that can impact your bottom line.

That's right, making it easier for haulers to collect your items means fewer injuries and less cost to you the tax or rate payer.

OCRRA wishes all a safe and pleasant winter season.









EARTH DAY:

Join the Litter Brigade!

Friday, April 20 & Saturday, April 21

REGISTRATION DEADLINE ~ April 6

Learn more and register online at OCRRA.org

Recycling Law Gets a Face-Lift

A few nips and tucks and a new, improved County Law emerges

Andrew Radin

After 22 years, our community's Recycling Law is getting a bit of a face-lift. A lot has changed since mandatory recycling for residents, schools, businesses and apartment complexes was launched in Onondaga County over two decades ago. Improvements and updates were necessary to guarantee that waste generators, particularly businesses, implement good recycling and waste reduction practices.

Household recycling accounts for some 80 million pounds of cardboard, newspapers, plastic bottles, metal cans, #5 plastic tubs and other containers being kept out of the trash each year. Four times that amount of recyclables is generated each year by local businesses.

Hence, it is really important to clarify what the commercial sector needs to do to capture as many recyclables as possible. Here's a summary of some of the changes that go into effect January 1, 2012:

• Waste haulers must provide recycling services to their customers, unless the customers make alternate arrangements for recycling paper, cardboard and other materials. (Customers are already prohibited from

mixing recyclables with trash, so this is a commonsense addition to the law.)

- All local businesses must make recycling containers as conveniently located as trash containers. OCRRA finds that recycling increases if it is convenient to do it. Businesses can order a variety of materials from **ocrra.org** (at no cost) to make it easy for their employees to recycle.
- Mll apartment complexes must have enough recycling containers available for their tenants to recycle all their recyclables. This ensures that recyclables don't end up in the trash because there aren't enough recycling containers. It also leads to a cleaner, well-kept apartment complex.
- Waste haulers must properly label all their trash and recycling containers. This helps customers know what goes in what container, which eliminates recyclables accidentally going in the trash containers.

Why do you recycle? Your answer is probably what most people would

say: It is the right thing to do as it conserves precious natural resources for future generations. Unfortunately, it can take a legal mandate to get the small portion of non-complying businesses on board the recycling bandwagon.

OCRRA helps waste generators implement topnotch recycling programs in the workplace. In fact, each day, OCRRA Recycling Specialists show schools, apartment complexes and businesses how easy it is to start an effective recycling program, or improve an existing program. Enforcement measures, and potential fines, are pursued only when a waste generator absolutely refuses to comply with the local Recycling

aren't enough recycling The new Recycling Law containers. It also leads was approved by the Counto a cleaner, well-kept ty Legislature on Novemapartment complex. ber 1. To learn more, please visit **ocrra.org**.

Andrew can be reached at aradin@ocrra.org

The Onondaga County Legislature recently passed a revised Recycling Law, which goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2012. The changes to the law are aimed at helping businesses understand what and how to recycle properly.

DJ Caloia of Syracuse, one of OCRRA's 2009 Recycling Kid Contest winners, reminds residents that cardboard, newspapers, plastic bottles, metal cans and #5 plastic tubs are the key recyclable items in our community.



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Apartment Managers: Boost Your Complex's Marketability

Provide great recycling service to your tenants with FREE help from OCRRA

Ann Fordock

Every apartment manager's goal is to attract model tenants. What better way to do that, than to let potential tenants know that you honor the environment and take recycling seriously? Barrett Dewitt Apartments, a Christopher Community property in East Syracuse, is doing just that.

How are they doing it? Property Manager Carolyn Nojaim distributes OCRRA recycling instructions with move-in packets and has OCRRA give presentations to remind tenants of what is recyclable. Maintenance Manager Dan Friedel is diligent about trash room cleanliness and proper signage for recycling. Dan and Carolyn's conscientious efforts make recycling easy for tenants and as a result, the tenants do a great job of recycling.

Carolyn notes, "The trash rooms are cleaner and easier to manage since our last OCRRA recycling presentation. In fact, tenants are recycling more than ever. The annual presentation keeps recycling on track. Even the most avid recycler needs a little reminder."

Tips for Successful **Apartment Recycling**

- Take advantage of the FREE signs, decals and brochures that OCRRA offers. You can even order them online! This valuable resource helps maintain a clean trash and recycling area, which makes your property more desirable to new renters.
- Always put trash and recycling containers in the same location, side-byside. This makes it easier for tenants to recycle properly.

- Make sure your exterior recycling containers are big enough. If your tenants are doing a good job they could be recycling anywhere from 40-60% of their disposables. If your recycling containers are too small, or there aren't enough of them, you run the risk of overflowing containers, which is not attractive.
- for a free Arrange OCRRA recycling presentation every one to two years. The recycling rules change, tenants change and long-term tenants need refreshers.
- Make sure tenants know where to put cardboard; it is a recyclable and it <u>can't</u> be put in the trash.

Apartments that make use of OCRRA's free supplies, advice and presenta-



Patty Ellis, a resident of Barrett Dewitt Apartments in East Syracuse, brings her recyclables to the Trash / Recycling Room, where containers are clearly labeled, which makes for easy disposal. Apartment managers can order FREE recycling decals and posters for their apartment complexes online at ocrra.org.

tions can expect a reduction in their trash volumes. Be like Barrett Dewitt and make recycling a priority at your apartments.

Want to know how other apartment complexes are tackling recycling challenges? Check out apartment recycling success sto-

ries and order supplies online at **ocrra.org**. Send an email to afordock@ocrra. org to schedule a free presentation for your apartment complex.

Ann Fordock can be reached at afordock@ocrra.org

Proudly Fly Your School's Green Colors and Get Some Statewide Recognition to Boot

Sarah Stewart

a great recycling program that you'd love to see recognized? Do you know a few artistic and environmental-OCRRA has a few suggesand perhaps a few prizes.

First, consider the **Green** Schools Challenge, hosted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. This contest aims to give props to K-12 schools across New York State; public, private or parochial; that demonstrate stellar recycling.

To enter, fill out a short application on the NYS DEC's website (**dec.ny.gov** /chemical/43349.html)

Does your school have by January 31, 2012. Once accepted, you begin tracking the weight of recycling done at your school. You can do this any way you see ly-minded students? Then, fit - get the students involved! At the end of the selected from entrants tions to help your school contest, March 2012, wingain some well-deserved ners will be chosen based acknowledgement, praise on how much recycling they do, innovative programs they create, and how much student and staff participation is achieved.

There are several categories of winners. Top winners receive \$1,500 worth of environmental materials to help schools support their recycling programs.

If you're looking for a smaller-scale project, check out the New York Recycles! Poster Contest, also run by the NYS DEC. This

asks K-12 students to express their passion for recycling and waste reduction as a work of art - a colorful poster, that is.

Twelve winners are

across the state to have their artwork published in a printed calendar. Have your students create posters about recycling, composting, litter prevention or any other waste-related theme, and submit them by May 2012. Check out contest details and past winners at: www.dec.ny.gov/educa-

If you want to celebrate your school's achievements or are looking for a fun project for your students to do, check out OCRRA's

tion/32506.html.



Kevin Majano, of Hicksville, NY won 3rd place (K-Grade 2 category) for his "Recycle at School Poster" in the DEC's 2011 New York Recycles! Poster Contest. Find out how to submit your student's artwork for this annual contest at www.dec.ny.gov/education/32506.html

website for links to all sorts some ideas to help you of resources and contests. Don't forget – we're here to help. If you need assistance in setting up a school recycling program or need

receive recognition, contact us at info@ocrra.org! Sarah can be reached at

sstewart@ocrra.org

Getting to the Point: The "Sharps" Myth

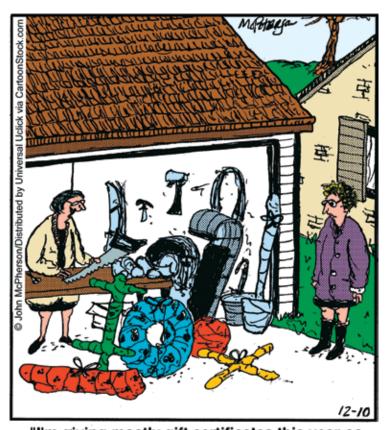
Myth: Used "sharps" or syringes can simply be tossed in the blue bin, or loosely in the trash.

Fact: NEVER place any sharps (used needles, syringes, and lancets) in the blue bin. Many local health centers and hospitals will accept sharps from residents and households. This encourages the safe people with medical conditions that require at-home, self-injections.

diseases/aids/harm_ reduction/needles_ syringes/sharps/directory_ locations; OCRRA recommends first to confirm them

disposal of sharps for hours and exact drop-off location.

Sharps can also be placed in clean, biohazard-labeled Visit www.health.ny.gov/ sharps containers, or in clean, heavy plastic bleach or laundry detergent bottles with screw-on caps. sharpscollection.htm Containers must be leakto find a list of these drop proof, labeled as "Sharps" and the tops must be taped call shut. Then they can go in the trash.



I'm giving mostly gift certificates this year, so I wrap them with junk from the garage to throw people off track."

Electronics Recycling Word Search

Find the items below that are recyclable (for free) at certain local businesses, according to NYS Law. Visit **ocrra.org** for a list of locations.

M O NITORS

Cables Cathode Ray Tubes

Computers Cords

Digital Converter Boxes

DVD Players DVRs

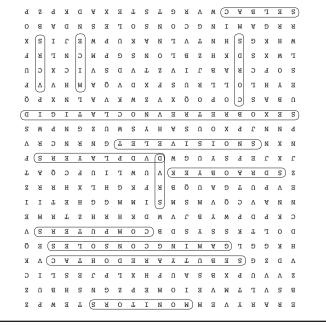
Gaming Consoles Keyboards Mice

Monitors **Televisions VCRs**

Did You Know?

The amount of trash processed at the **Waste-to-Energy** Facility, over the life of the facility, would fill the Carrier Dome more than 21 times!

Word Search Answer Key



Mark Your Calendar

CHRISTMAS TREE DROP-OFF FREE

Amboy & Jamesville Compost Sites See article on page 5 for details.

COMPOST SITES OPEN FOR SEASON MONDAY, APRIL 2

Get site info and usage details at ocrra.org

EARTH DAY LITTER CLEAN-UP APRIL 20 & 21

Register your group by April 6 at ocrra.org