



Earth Day Litter Cleanup – Help Make a Difference!

Dale Cocca, Recycling Specialist

“The environment” is a two word phrase that has taken on a noble status; something to be preserved, revered and respected. But, there is an implication in the concept of “the environment” that it is separate from us. It is our environment, and it does not only include areas of natural beauty, panda bears, coral reefs, sea turtles and polar ice caps. It also includes the air we breathe every moment, the water we drink each day, the grass in front of our homes, the walls at our work, the seats of our vehicles and so on. Everything around us is part of “our environment.”

The disconnect between our environment and how we impact it is very poignant when someone creates litter. It is as if they are saying through their actions that continuing to possess that particular item was too much to bear anymore. It is

not just litter; it is reflective of an attitude.

Everyone is a contributor to our environment. We all contribute, for better or worse, in many direct ways and endless indirect ways, to the current state of our environment. Only you can choose how you will impact the environment.

Each year around Earth Day, OCRRA organizes a county-wide litter cleanup to improve not only the look of our immediate environment, but also the health of its denizens. Join this effort and be a direct contributor to the improvement of our county’s environment.

This year the Earth Day Litter Cleanup takes place on Friday, April 26, and Saturday, April 27. Volunteers may form a group (large or small) and clean up on either – or both – days in any location of their choosing in the county.

Signing up is very easy.



Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Syracuse, 2018

Salvation Army volunteers did a great job collecting litter in DeWitt along Route 298 near Military Circle during the 2018 Earth Day Litter Cleanup. Register your group for the 2019 event taking place Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27. Sign up at OCRRA.org today and help save the world a little each day.

Simply visit OCRRA.org to register. Your efforts will be added into the county-wide totals. Last year more than 7,000 volunteers collected more than 100,000 pounds of litter from roadsides, parks and public spaces in our community!

So, join the thousands of other citizens who are working to be the change they want to see in the world, and help save the world a little each day.

Dale Cocca can be reached at dcocca@ocrra.org.



ROCK CUT ROAD CLOSED
..... PG 2

Customers invited to use Ley Creek Transfer Station until further notice.



FILM PLASTICS PG 3

Plastic bags and wraps don't belong in the blue bin, but you can recycle them elsewhere.



SMOKE DETECTORS... PG 3

Rhoda sounds the alarm on proper disposal.



COMPOST & MULCH
..... PG 4

Learn three ways you can buy OCRRA garden products this spring.



HOME & GARDEN SHOW
..... PG 8

Visit OCRRA in the foyer of the Expo Center.

Shredding Event

Looking to shred your confidential documents at an upcoming OCRRA event? Details are still being ironed out for 2019. Join OCRRA’s email list to be notified when the next event is taking place. Register at OCRRA.org (see the green “Join our mailing list” area at the bottom of the homepage).

Thanks!



Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Syracuse, 2017

Ley Creek Site Serves Customers During Rock Cut Road Closure

Kristen Lawton, Public Information Officer

Due to recent New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulations that require the majority of OCRRA's operations to take place indoors, the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station is closed for major renovations. It will be closed for at least a year, possibly longer pending construction progress.

While the upgrades are ongoing, all users - residential, small business and commercial - may bring their materials to OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station. It is located at 5158 Ley Creek Drive in Liverpool (exit 25 off Route 81; take a left onto 7th North St. and then a left onto Ley Creek Dr., opposite the

Pilot Gas Station).

All services offered at the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station are offered in a similar manner at the Ley Creek Transfer Station.

Please note that the Ley Creek Transfer Station sees heavy commercial traffic. Residential users should exercise caution as large trucks navigate the site as well. **Tip:** Residential users should follow signs and bear left after they pass the gate to access the residential trash and recycling drop off area. Stop at the gatekeeper shack on the left to be directed according to your drop off needs.

The Ley Creek Transfer Station is open to residents Monday-Friday from



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2019

All Rock Cut Road Transfer Station customers are directed to use OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station (5158 Ley Creek Drive in Liverpool, just off the 7th North Street exit of Route 81) until further notice. When entering Ley Creek, follow signs for residential traffic; as the roadway opens up, turn left into the lane formed by orange barriers; stop at attendant shack for further direction.

6:30 am to 2:00 pm and **Saturdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm;** to allow for unloading time, last vehicle enters site a half hour prior

to close. For a list of disposal fees, please visit: **OCRRA.org/locations/drop-off-locations/ley-creek**

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



Shredded Paper: The Dos and Don'ts

Theresa Evans, Recycling Specialist

Protecting your identity and protecting the environment are both very important objectives. A common method to protect private information found on a bank statement or tax form, for example, is to shred the document, effectively destroying the ability of an outside source to view your confidential information. But, what do you do with the shredded paper?

Shredded paper can be managed in various ways; however, it cannot go in the blue bin any longer. Why not? Recycling facilities are not able to capture that material. Previously, bags of shredded paper could be hand removed, but as the sorting process has become more efficient, manual removal is no longer an option. Any shredded paper in the blue bins will simply become trash.

The best way for a dedicated resident to **recycle** shredded paper is to take it to Bodow Recycling located at 1925 Park Street, Syra-

cuse (off Hiawatha Boulevard, near DestinyUSA); enter building off Exchange Place through the "bottle return" entrance. **Bodow Recycling accepts shredded paper at no charge and sells it to companies that turn it into recycled paper products like toilet paper and tissues.**

Shredded paper can also be treated as **trash**. Place your shredded paper in a tightly closed plastic bag and put it in your trash. All trash collected in Onondaga County is sent to the Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville, where it is processed at high temperatures and converted into electricity. Each year our community's trash generates enough electricity to power 30,000 homes in our community. So, while not being recycled into a new paper product, your shredded paper will have a new life in the form of electricity.

Another option is to consider skipping home shred-

ding and bring your documents to a location that will shred and recycle them for you. Contact Simple Shred (www.simpleshredny.com) or the nearest Office Max, Staples or UPS Store location, to verify pricing and material preparation instructions.

In addition, familiarize yourself with what is actually confidential and consider switching to online statements to reduce the number of documents that need to be shredded in the first place.

What is a confidential document?

According to the Federal Trade Commission, the US government entity that "works to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them," the following documents should be shredded to help protect your identity: credit offers, credit applications, insurance forms, phy-



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2019

Protect your identity and the environment with ease: shred confidential documents at home and then drop your shredded paper off for free at Bodow Recycling. From there it will be turned into new paper products (Alternately, put your shredded paper in the trash where it will be turned into electricity).

sician statements, checks, bank statements, receipts, expired charge cards and similar documents.

Your name and address are not confidential information, so junk mail, flyers and magazines can be recycled in your blue bin;

they do not need to be shredded.

Working together we can all help save the world a little each day!

Theresa Evans can be reached at tevans@ocrra.org

Plastic Bags: Think Outside of the Bin and Improve Recycling Prowess

Plastic bags and other film plastics must be recycled at big box retailers; not in the blue bin

Dale Cocca, Recycling Specialist

Each year, over 10 million pounds of single use plastic bags are disposed in Onondaga County. Unfortunately, some of these bags are placed in recycle bins where they get entangled in equipment at the sorting facility causing expensive shutdowns and endangering workers who must cut them from the gears. Not to mention, they contaminate the rest of the recycling stream and ultimately end up as trash. But, there is a recycling solution for most plastic bags and the broader family of “thin film plastics” to which they belong.

Plastic bags and other “stretchy” film plastics are recyclable when separated and returned in a clean and dry state to large retailers’ plastic bag recycling receptacles (all adhesive labels must be removed). Most large grocery stores, pharmacies, big box hardware

stores, pet stores and retail stores have these recycling receptacles; simply ask if their location is not visible upon entry.

If you pull or tug on recyclable film plastics hard enough, the plastic will stretch. **Some examples of “stretchy” film plastic that can be recycled include:**

- shopping bags
- bread bags
- plastic storage bags and sandwich bags
- produce bags (no labels)
- dry cleaning bags
- newspaper bags
- plastic shipping bags
- bubble wrap and air pouches
- plastic over-wrap around paper plates, paper towels, toilet paper and cases of water bottles.

Some thin film plastics, however, are NOT recyclable. These are “crinkly” film plastics that can tear

cleanly and easily. These “crinkly” film plastics are a different type of plastic than the stretchy plastics and should be **put in the trash**. These include:

- pre-made salad bags
- snack food bags such as pretzel bags and potato chip bags

Another type of plastic that can be tricky is cereal bags. These days most cereal comes in plastic bags, but not all. Some are still in waxed paper bags, be careful not to recycle those. If the bag does not stretch when you try to tear it, it is not recyclable.

So, now you know the rules of thin film plastic recycling. Here is a recap:

- 1) **Never put plastic bags and thin film plastics in the blue bin** (not even if you put your recyclables in them for easy transport. Always
- 2) **Take plastic bags and stretchy film plastics back to the store for recycling** (grocery, pharmacy, big box retail, hardware and pet stores).
- 3) **Make sure they are empty, clean and dry; remove all adhesive labels and stickers.**



Photo Credit: iStock, 2018.

Plastic bags and film plastics cannot go in the blue bin. Bring “stretchy” (not “crinkly”) film plastics to big box stores with collection bins. From there, they are sold to third parties and are ultimately made into composite deck lumber or new plastic bags.



Recycling Rhoda

Talks Trash - and Recycling!

Smoke Detectors

Dear Rhoda, I have a smoke detector that is no longer working. I am pretty sure it's bad to throw it in the trash, but what do I do with it?

– Smoke In My Eyes in Spafford

Dear Smoke,

When you're hot, you're hot – and by that I mean, you are right CERTAIN smoke detectors do NOT go in the trash. Some have radioactive components that can harm the environment; they are called ionizing smoke detectors. Don't

worry, you won't turn into the Hulk if you touch a radioactive smoke detector, just don't dismantle one or you could have some health problems on your hands.

How do you know if you have a radioactive smoke detector? Do your own detective work and check on the front, back or the inside for the word “ionization” or the symbol “i,” or any indication that it contains radioactive materials (such as the radiation symbol or the word “radiation” or “radioactive.” Get a magnifying glass if necessary,

Pookie-Bear, this is a crucial step to proper smoke detector management.

If you see indications it is radioactive or is the ionization type of smoke detector, **send it back to the manufacturer**. For details on where to send them (often the address is listed on the device itself), visit **OCRRA.org** and search for “smoke detectors.” There's a handy page that lists contact information for the manufacturers that have takeback programs.

If there is no sign that it contains radioactive com-

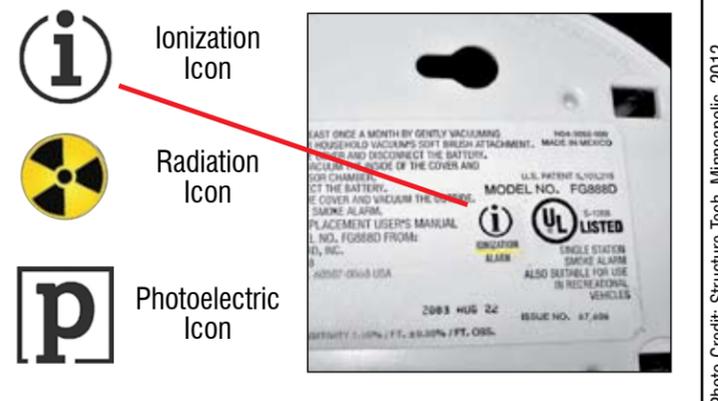


Photo Credit: Structure Tech, Minneapolis, 2012

The type of smoke detector you have determines how you should manage it at the end of its life. Look on the back of your smoke detector for the words, “photoelectric,” “ionization,” “radioactive,” or the icons pictured here to determine if it contains radioactive materials. Then, listen to Rhoda's pearls of wisdom on proper disposal.

ponents, you can **put it in your regular trash**. Yup, that's right. Put it in the trash. Just make sure if it has a battery that you remove and properly manage it. Not sure what to do with spent batteries?

Quick – make your way to **OCRRA.org** and search for “batteries” to get the 411. Hey, I can't tell you EVERYTHING! Sometimes you have to do a little

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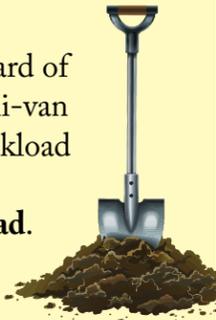
In Search of Compost or Mulch? Finding it is as easy as 1-2-3!

As the last of the snow melts away this spring, it is time to think about new garden and landscape projects. When planning these projects, knowing where and how to acquire OCRRA's mulch and STA*-certified compost is crucial to growing the best vegetables and creating the most beautiful landscapes in the neighborhood. To join the company of thousands of local residents and landscapers that rely on OCRRA's high-quality mulch and compost for their gardens and lawns each year, consider the these options:

1) FILL YOUR TRUNK

If you are looking for less than a cubic yard of mulch or compost and have a car, mini-van or SUV, you may self-load with the trunkload option. **No site pass is needed.**

- ½" General Compost: **\$10 / trunkload.**
- Double Ground Wood Mulch: **\$5 / trunkload.**



2) BUY IT BY THE YARD

Mulch and compost can be purchased in bulk; OCRRA will load your truck or trailer for you. There is no self-loading and no site pass is needed. A pass is only needed if you are looking to drop off material. Don't have a truck or trailer? Check out a list of local haulers that will deliver mulch and compost to you by the yard at www.tinyurl.com/haul4u.



- ½" General Compost: **\$15 / cubic yard.**
- ¼" inch Premium Compost: **\$20 / cubic yard.**
- Double Ground Wood Mulch: **\$12 / cubic yard.**

3) BUY COMPOST IN BAGS

OCRRA compost is available at more than 30 retail locations (¼" premium compost only). Each store sets its own price point. Check page 5 for a list of retailers, which can also be found at OCRRA.org.



If you are only looking to drop off material at either the Amboy or Jamesville Compost Site you will need a 2019 Compost Site Pass. This **\$25 residential pass** allows unlimited, year-round drop-off of yard waste and food scraps at both Compost Sites. It also comes with two free bags of ¼" premium compost. The drop off pass is for residential use only, and is not available to commercial customers. To purchase a 2019 Compost Site Pass, visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcompostpass, or stop by one of the Compost Sites when they are open.

Visit OCRRA's award-winning Compost Sites and help "Save the World a Little Each Day," while also creating beautiful landscapes and gardens at home.

**STA or Seal of Testing Assurance is a certification bestowed upon organizations that rigorously test their compost products through third party laboratories. It is given by the US Composting Council, a national organization devoted to the development, expansion and promotion of the composting industry.*

Theresa Evans can be reached at tevens@ocrra.org.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2018

Mark Buselli of Syracuse gets compost from OCRRA by filling his trunk with buckets of compost. You can do the same, or have OCRRA load it by the yard in your truck or trailer, or purchase it by the bag at more than 30 retail locations in our area. You do not need a pass to purchase compost or mulch, a pass is necessary only if you are dropping food or yard waste off at an OCRRA Site.

Site Hours

Jamesville Compost Site
4370 Route 91
Jamesville

Seasonally open to residents
April 1 to November 30
Thursday – Saturday
7:30 am – 4:00 pm

Amboy Compost Site
6296 Airport Road
Camillus

Open to residents
Year-Round
Monday – Friday
7:30 am – 4:00 pm

Residential Mulch & Compost Haulers



The businesses listed below may be contacted to haul materials from OCRRA Compost Sites

HAULER	PHONE	BASED IN	SINGLE TRIP MAX VOLUME*
Alan Seabrook	(315) 481-9677	Syracuse: Serving Onondaga County	7 cu. yds.
Bill Guptill	(315) 345-5451	Nedrow	6 cu. yds.
Jeff's Cutting Edge Landscaping And Lawncare	(315) 488-2924	Van Buren – Serving West & Northwest Sides of Syracuse	10 cu. yds.
J.M. Landscape & Plowing	(315) 430-5549	Baldwinsville	4 cu. yds.
John Majowsky Landscapes Etc. LLC	(315) 247-8111	Onondaga County	8 cu. yds.
Larry Belge: Commercial Lawn & Landscape	(315) 447-5844	Cazenovia: Serving Manlius, Fayetteville, Chittenango	10 cu. yds.
Mosher's Landscape	(315) 699-4912	Liverpool, Clay, Cicero, North Syracuse	5 cu. yds.
Northern Firewood	(315) 678-1431	Lysander, Clay	9 cu. yds.
The Outside Guys	(315) 668-9663	West Monroe	15 cu. yds.
	(315) 863-9114	Camillus	2 cu. yds.

***Heavier products may have lower maximum volumes for a single trip.**
OCRRA is neither recommending nor endorsing any of the service providers above.

Fast Food: A Win for Busy Weeknights, But Not for the Recycling Bin

Theresa Evans, Recycling Specialist

With increasingly busy schedules, it is no wonder that many occasionally turn to restaurants for a convenient meal. A little bit of trash goes part and parcel with takeout meals, but it can really add up. Ideally, restaurants would not serve so many single-use, disposable items (the vast majority of which cannot be recycled in the blue bin). Until the quick-service industry becomes more reuse-oriented, here are some tips for reducing waste.

Straws: According to the Plastic Pollution Coalition, over 500 million straws are used in the U.S. each day. When dining in, skip the straw. Drinking a beverage in the car? Don't use a straw or consider investing in a set of reusable straws that can be easily stored in the glove box.

Styrofoam and Plastic To-Go Containers:

Ask to have leftovers wrapped in recyclable aluminum foil instead of

foam or plastic containers (which are trash), or bring your own container to fill up (which can be used over and over again).

Condiment Packets:

Eating at home? Stock up on your favorite sauces and skip condiment packets altogether. When on the go, ask your server for only the amount that you need.

Plastic Utensils and Chopsticks:

Avoid using plastic utensils wherever possible, they are not recyclable. Invest in an affordable reusable utensil set that can be stored in a car, purse or desk.

Cups & Cup Holders: No plastic or paper cups should ever go in the recycling bin. These materials will not be recycled, but rather cause contamination in the paper and cardboard recycling, which devalues it. Bring a reusable cup or travel mug with you. They keep your drink at a better temperature, and already easily fit in the cup holder of your



Photo Credit: iStock, 2018

Most fast food packaging such as wrappers, straws, cups, plastic or Styrofoam food containers, receipts and the like are not recyclable. They should go in the trash.

car! While on the subject of beverages, the fiber cup holders used to carry multiple drinks at once or the cup sleeves are also trash, not recyclable.

Napkins:

Even though napkins are typically made from recycled paper, they themselves are not actually recyclable in the blue bin (though they

can be composted). Ask for fewer napkins or only take as many as needed.

Wrappers & Receipts:

Even though most wrappers and receipts are paper-based, many are not pure paper. Wrappers often contain plastic to maintain food temperatures. All wrappers and receipts are trash; they are not recyclable.

Bottom line: To reduce waste, make the reuse tips here a habit and encourage your friends and family to do the same; together we can help save the world a little each day!

Theresa Evans can be reached at tevens@ocrra.org.



Buy OCRRA Compost By the Bag

These fine retailers set their own pricepoint for OCRRA's high quality, 1/4" US Composting Council certified material. Call for details.

North Area

- B'ville Supply – Baldwinsville
- Ballantyne Gardens – Liverpool
- CountryMax – Lysander
- CountryMax – Cicero
- Deaton's Agway – Pulaski
- Green Acres Lawn & Garden Center – Liverpool
- Oliver B. Paine Greenhouses Fulton
- Pond & Rock Shop – North Syracuse
- T.J.'s Lawns Plus – Phoenix
- Village Ace Hardware Baldwinsville
- Green Hills Farms – Nedrow
- Lee's Feed Store – Syracuse
- Neil Casey's Farm Market – Tully
- Valley View Gardens – Cortland
- Watson Farms Landscaping & Garden Center – LaFayette

East Area

- Aspinall's – Chittenango
- CountryMax – DeWitt
- EverGreen Landscaping and Garden Center – Syracuse
- Green Scapes – Jamesville
- Manlius True Value Hardware Manlius
- Spruce Ridge Landscaping & Garden Center – Cazenovia
- Syracuse Cooperative Market Syracuse



- Village Ace Hardware – Fayetteville
- Vollmer Farms – East Syracuse
- Wagner Farms – Rome

West Area

- Maldonado Gardens – Elbridge
- Oliver's Produce – Marcellus
- Silver Spring Farm Market Onondaga Hill
- Sollecito Landscaping Nursery Syracuse
- Town Square Ace Hardware Skaneateles
- Westvale Gardens – Syracuse



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OCRRA's waste reduction, reuse and recycling program efforts (including this newsletter) are partially financed by a grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Protecting our Assets: WTE Facility Improvements

Cristina Alburnio, Agency Engineer

OCRRA's Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility has been processing our County's trash since 1995. In 2018, it processed over 360,000 tons of waste, resulting in the generation of more than 245,600 megawatt hours of electricity used to power over 30,000 homes. The Facility also recovered more than 12,000 tons of metal that were recycled last year.

OCRRA partners with Covanta to enable the responsible, local management of our community's non-recyclable waste at the WTE Facility. Covanta is responsible for the operation of the WTE Facility and day-to-day maintenance. The Facility continually relies on a robust system of air pollution controls to comply with a strict air permit and has been operating dependably for more than twenty years.

In 2015, OCRRA and Covanta agreed to engage in significant capital improvements to the WTE Facility. These improvements were not normal maintenance activity; they were important repairs and replacements that will allow the Facility to continue to operate at a high degree of reliability for another 20 years. As part of this agree-

ment, OCRRA committed \$15 million towards capital improvement projects. Covanta is also responsible for a portion of the capital improvement projects' costs.

In 2016 and 2017 four projects were completed. These projects were related to the WTE Facility's truck scales, ash dischargers, carbon system and water demineralizer. In 2018, three more projects related to air pollution control equipment, the air treatment system and cranes were completed.

OCRRA has seen significant improvements in the WTE Facility's operation following the completion of these projects. Mercury emissions have dropped below laboratory detection limits due to the new dry carbon injection system. The Facility is recognizing lower ash generation rates, in part due to the new ash dischargers. The WTE Facility is also using significantly less ammonia to remove nitrogen oxides (NOx) from the flue gases. Air in-leakage (i.e., the amount of atmospheric air entering the Facility's closed air treatment system) has also decreased due to new ductwork and insulation that was installed.

The success of the capi-

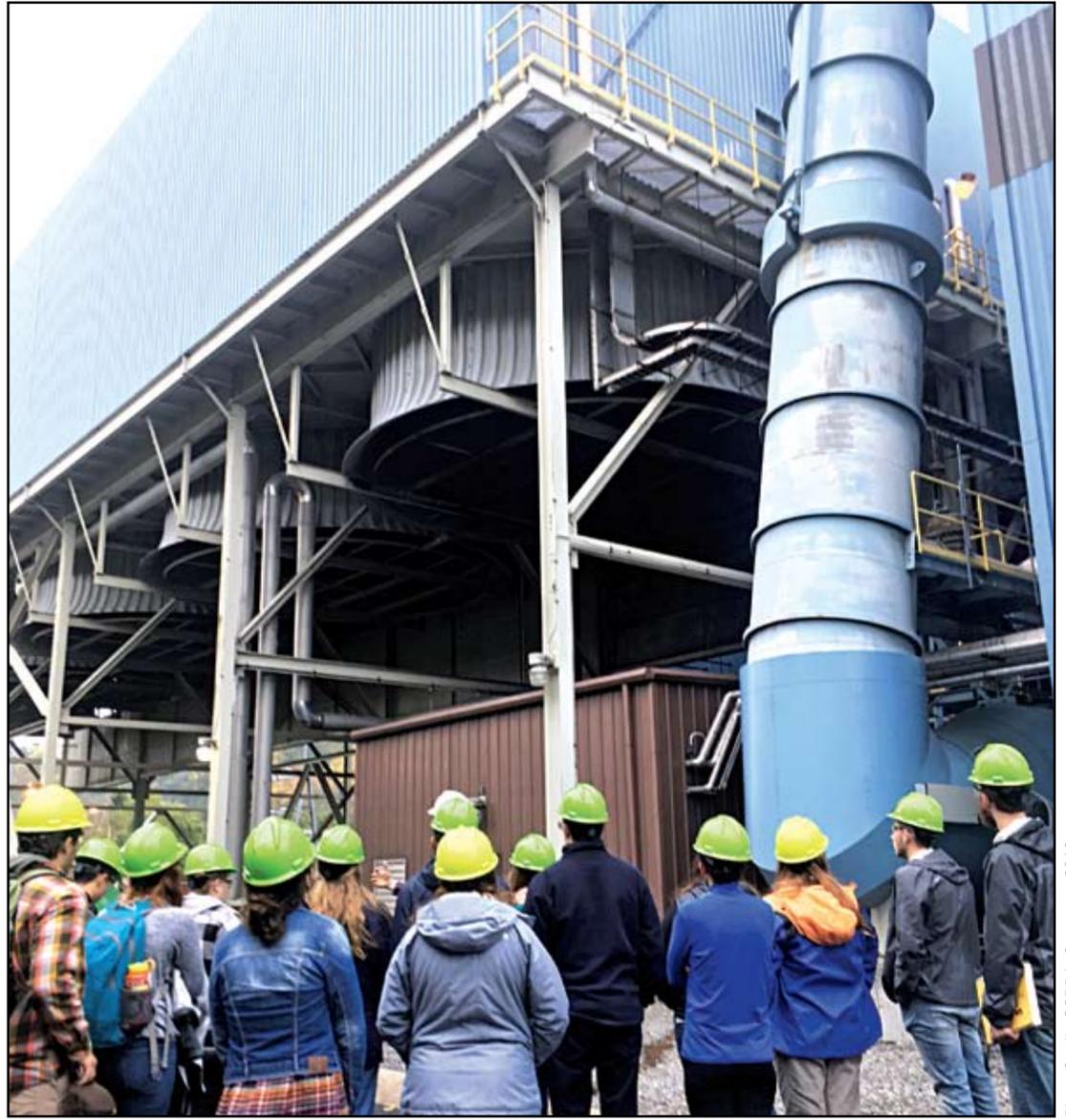


Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2018

SUNY-ESF students and faculty tour the Waste-to-Energy Facility in 2018 for a look at some of the capital improvements that were recently completed. In 2015, Covanta and OCRRA agreed to invest more than \$15 million in site upgrades that would prolong the life of and improve the efficiency of the Facility.

tal improvement projects is just one way that OCRRA is reinvesting in our mission to sustain a world-class waste management system that benefits our community and environment.

Covanta's team of professionals have led the Facil-

ity through these capital improvement projects with great success. OCRRA's WTE engineering consultants, HDR, Inc., have continually assisted with the projects as well. This collaboration speaks to the accomplishments of

the team's ability to maintain our WTE Facility and its 24-year track record of operational and environmental excellence.

Cristina Alburnio can be reached at calburnio@ocrra.org.

Metal Matters

When we think of blue bin materials there's paper and plastic bottles, but let's not forget about metal.

In Onondaga County, metal food cans (coffee, soup, tuna fish and even pet food cans) go in the recycling bin. Give your metal cans a quick rinse and toss the lid AND can in the bin.

Metal cans are recycled into many products, including new cans, bicycle frames, pipes and train tracks. According to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, every

can that you recycle, saves enough electricity to run a 60 watt light bulb for 26 hours.

Make sure your metal cans go in the blue bin. Wondering what else is recyclable? Search OCRRA's recycling list at tinyurl.com/OCRRAlist.



TEXTILES: old clothing, linens, towels, curtains, bags, shoes, stuffed animals, etc.

These items can be donated year-round to charitable organizations like the Rescue Mission and Salvation Army. Even if you think no one would want them because they are stained, ripped, torn or missing buttons, they still can be recycled. They simply have to be **clean and dry**. Textiles can be recycled into new products like industrial rags and insulation. Visit www.tinyurl.com/cny-textiles for a list of donation locations near you.





From the Executive Director's Desk...

Strengthening the Recycling Loop Locally

DERETH GLANCE, Executive Director, OCRRA

Recycling is best represented by the image of chasing arrows, an icon embodying the concept of “closing the loop” or a process where inputs become outputs and then those outputs become inputs, repeatedly. The U.S. recycling market dependency on exportation, in particular to China, has proven to be quite the Achilles heel for the U.S. But, unlike for the half-god Achilles, this injury is not fatal. It hurts a lot, but recovery is likely, and it will take time.

Injuries, like torn Achilles tendons, can be avoided by adopting the right regiment of strengthening and stretching. Strengthening the recycling loop locally requires understanding the system's points of vulnerability. Stretching means expanding the number of local businesses that need recyclable commodities to make their products. Together, this strength/stretch routine will yield a strong, local closed loop system.

End markets.

Where do blue bin items go? They go to a privately run Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Liverpool that separates and bales cardboard, cans, plastic bottles, jugs and wide-mouth dairy tubs. These baled materials are then sold to secondary material markets or businesses that turn these items into new products. The processing costs (sorting, baling and marketing) of household recyclables is relatively stable. On occasion, the sale of these materials exceeds the processing costs, as was the case in 2017. But, for 2018 and projected through

2019, the commodity value will not cover the processing costs, far from it.

Commodities.

In today's market, plastic, metal and cardboard fetch a positive value, while glass and mixed paper are a financial drag. The end market for **plastics** is primarily in the United States. Post-consumer plastics in demand include: laundry detergent bottles, milk jugs, plastic sports drink bottles and margarine tubs. For **metal**, end markets are reliable and often, quite local; with the bulk of these materials being aluminum and steel cans. **Cardboard** is readily recycled within our county at WestRock located in Solvay, NY. The West Rock Mill processes approximately 860,000 tons of cardboard into new cardboard annually.

Mixed paper was once a commodity that generated significant value in the recycle bin, due to reliable export markets and its sheer volume. Mixed paper, such as junk mail, white office paper, newspaper etc., comprises more than half of the weight in the recycle bin. Presently, end markets are very depressed due to the closure of the Chinese market, which once commanded 50% of the global paper recycling market.

The mixed paper that Onondaga County households recycle is currently going to Indian and Southeast Asian markets to begin the process of becoming paper again. Domestic capacity for processing mixed paper cannot immediately fill the void created by China. However, there are signs that existing

domestic mills are expanding capacity; Chinese companies are also purchasing long-shuttered U.S. paper mills, but refurbishing takes time. We are hopeful we have reached the bottom of the mixed paper market and technological advances will increase demand for the items we recycle.

Glass is inert and infinitely recyclable. However, glass bottles that go in the blue bin (and tumble around with other recyclables and break) contaminate other recyclables and damage sorting equipment. This type of crushed glass is used to construct road base and to cover landfills, in lieu of natural resources that must be mined, like shale. Glass bottles returned to the store for its 5-cent bottle deposit become glass bottles again. As a result, OCRRA strongly supports placing a deposit on wine and liquor bottles

to ensure this glass is collected and recycled into new products.

Recycle beyond the bin.

Unwanted clothes, sheets and shoes are valuable **textiles** that can live another day. While they cannot go in the blue bin, you can deliver clean and dry textiles, even if torn or stained, to a charitable organization like the Rescue Mission or Salvation Army. Clothes that can still be worn will be sorted for sale and non-retail worthy items will be sent to the industrial rag market or turned into insulation fibers.

The **thin stretchy plastics** like plastic bags and overwraps on cases of water bottles or paper towels are recyclable – providing they are clean and dry – **just not in the blue bin**. Recycle your thin-film plastics at any big box retailer in New

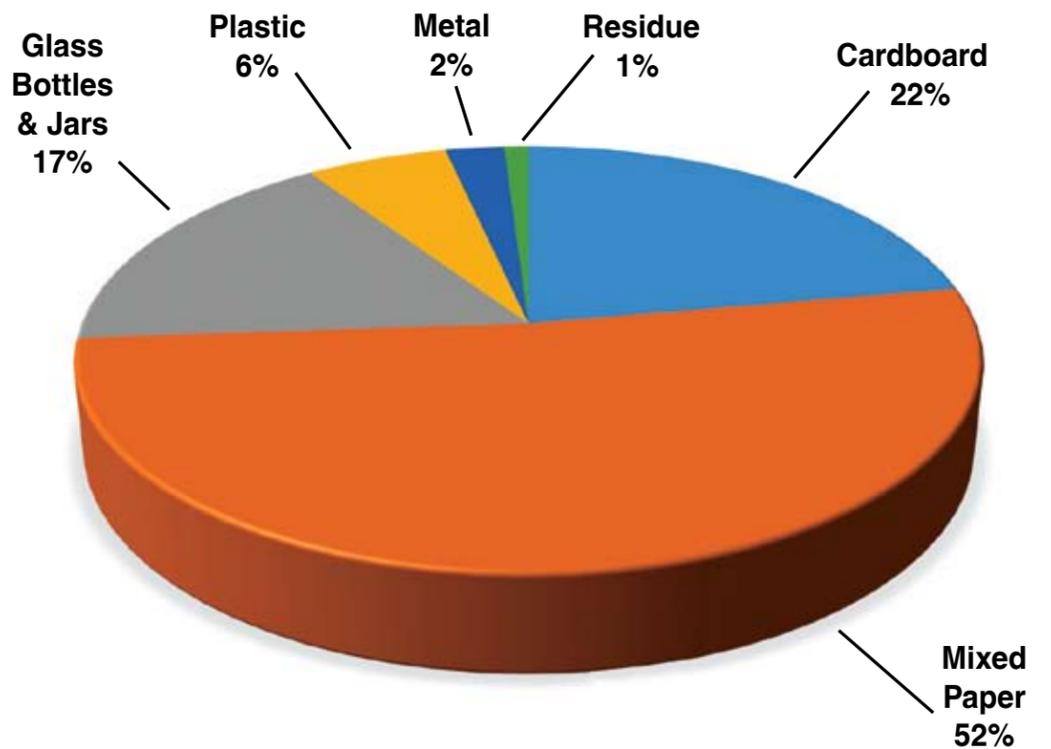
York (e.g., grocery and pet stores). These items are transformed into weather-proof decking and many other durable products. Estimated to be about 5% of our community's garbage, by weight, this lightweight stuff really adds up! Try separating clean and dry thin film plastic at home for store take-back. You will be amazed at how much more your household could recycle.

Embrace Strong Loop Recycling Locally.

Collectively addressing vulnerabilities, such as ensuring local outlets for mixed paper will help communities better weather inherent recycling market volatilities. Industry, academia, elected leaders, entrepreneurs and public collaboration can

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Blue Bin Contents by Weight



In today's recycling market, plastic, metal and cardboard fetch a positive value, while glass and mixed paper, a large chunk of our blue bins, are a financial drag. Help keep our local recycling system working strong by recycling the right things (and keeping the wrong things out of the blue bin – “when in doubt, throw it out”); the less contamination or residue in our recycling, the higher value it nets and the more sustainable our system will be, even in these challenging markets.

Home and Garden Show



Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Syracuse, 2018

Learn about OCRRA compost and mulch or get a blue bin (while supplies last)! Come see OCRRA and hundreds of other companies that are ready to help you with home remodels, decorating and landscape needs.

WHEN: Friday, March 15 – Sunday, March 17
 Friday & Saturday, 10:00 am to 8:00 pm
 Sunday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

WHERE: NYS Fairgrounds at the new Expo Center. The OCRRA booth is conveniently located in the foyer, right as you enter.

Strengthening the Recycling Loop

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stretch and strengthen the recycling loop to ensure that unwanted items are transformed into new treasures.

The good news is that public education and consistent recycling messaging works. The proof is how low Onondaga County's "residue" rate is, meaning our community knows what to recycle and what to trash. Good recycling habits must be refreshed regularly. Recycling works because of you; your individual actions combined with those of your friends and neighbors are what makes Onondaga County's recycling system work so well.

Recycling Rhoda: Smoke Detectors

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research on your own...

If you have a radioactive smoke detector and other household toxics, such as insect repellent, weed killer, drain cleaner, oil-based paints, etc. – you could kill two birds with one stone and make an appointment with OCRRA to drop off those materials. OCRRA accepts HOUSEHOLD toxic materials Monday through Friday at a special drop off location at no charge. (Business materials are not accepted.) You

must make an appointment in advance. You can't just show up people, this isn't McDonalds. But, don't worry, the process is painless (and easy)!

Make your way over to www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAtoxics or call OCRRA at (315) 453-2866 to find out what items are acceptable and make an appointment today.

While OCRRA provides this service for free, it costs about \$50 a vehicle, to safely manage these materials.

So, do OCRRA and yourself a favor and make your trip worthwhile.

Hint: ask your neighbors if they have anything that needs to go and you can help them out while helping the environment. Plus, you might get a pie or something out of the deal. You have those kind of neighbors, don't you?

Peace,

Recycling Rhoda



QUESTION OF THE QUARTER

Plastic Garden Hoses



Q: Are plastic garden hoses something I can recycle in my blue bin?

A: Garden hoses, although plastic are not recyclable in the blue bin. Garden hoses belong to a category of blue bin contaminants called "tangles" – tangles include hoses, ropes, chains, electrical cords, Christmas lights and the like.

A single tangler can cause a massive disruption at the recycling sorting facility. They wind around equipment resulting in mechanical problems and safety issues for workers. All this leads to downtime and extra expense.

Garden hoses rank in the top five most problematic contaminants and the third most expensive contaminant to a recycling facility, so please keep them out of the blue bin. If you can't reuse it in some other capacity (to cover saw blades or as a soaker hose), be sure to put them in the trash.

In Onondaga County the only plastics that should go in the blue bin are plastic bottles, jugs and dairy tubs that are stackable (e.g., butter tubs, cream cheese containers, Cool Whip tubs and the like).

No other plastic should go in your blue bin as there are not reliable markets for these items, which means they are not able to be recycled, consistently, into new products.

Mark Your Calendar

HOME and GARDEN SHOW
MARCH 15-17
 New York State Fairgrounds

JAMESVILLE COMPOST SITE
THURS., APRIL 4
 Open for the season
 3 days/week

EARTH DAY LITTER CLEANUP
APRIL 26 & 27
 Sign up at OCRRA.org by April 19
 See page 1 for details.

ALL OCRRA SITES CLOSED
MON., MAY 27
 Happy Memorial Day!

HOUSEHOLD TOXICS DROP-OFF
Year-Round by Appointment
ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES
 M – F, 6:30 am – 6:00 pm
 Register at OCRRA.org.

FACT: Oil-based paint is accepted at OCRRA's year-round Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off. Latex paint is not.