

MEDIA RELEASE
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For Immediate Release



Onondaga County Residents Invited to Bring Old Mercury Thermometers and Thermostats to August 3 Collection Event

Covanta and OCRRA host free event to protect the environment; Covanta offers \$10 Lowe's gift card incentive

SYRACUSE, N.Y., Jul. 24, 2019 – Help protect human health and the environment by bringing old mercury thermometers and thermostats to a drop off event on **Sat., Aug. 3, 8 am – 11 am** at Environmental Products and Services (532 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse).

This free event is open to households in Onondaga County. Check out these two short videos for details on what is acceptable and how to prepare for the event: www.tinyurl.com/Therms2019



Dispose of mercury thermometers and thermostats on Saturday, August 3 from 8:00 am to 11:00 am at Environmental Products and Services in Syracuse. Check out these short videos for details: www.tinyurl.com/Therms2019

“Safely get rid of old mercury-containing thermometers and thermostats at this drop-off event,” said Dereth Glance, OCRRA executive director. “Mercury harms people and wildlife and needs to be properly disposed. Do your part for the environment and human health by removing toxic mercury from your home.”

Mercury is commonly found in old thermometers and thermostats. When exposed to air mercury escapes into the environment exposing humans to potential nervous system damage. Mercury is a heavy metal that bio-accumulates up the food chain impacting wildlife as well as people.

Mercury containing thermometers have silver, grey or black filling in their tubes. Thermometers with any other color filling do not contain mercury and should be thrown out. Mercury containing thermostats have levers or dials that must be physically moved to change temperature, as well as glass tubes filled with a silver substance behind the faceplate. Newer programmable thermostats do not contain mercury and can be discarded normally.

Covanta will provide replacement digital thermometers for each mercury thermometer brought in, and \$10 gift cards for each resident that brings mercury thermostats or thermometers to the event. Only one gift card per resident drop-off will be offered, regardless of the number of mercury items turned in at the event. A gift card is not issued for non-mercury containing items.

“Covanta is excited to reward the outstanding efforts of Onondaga County residents who turn in mercury containing devices,” said Kathleen Carroll, Covanta Onondaga client-waste solutions manager. “Removing mercury from the environment protects our children and wildlife, so we are happy to continue our partnership with OCRRA on this important effort. Since 2014, more than 6,220 grams of mercury have been removed from the environment through this partnership. This is the equivalent amount of mercury found in more than 1.5 million compact fluorescent bulbs.”

To encourage participation, the Thermostat Recycling Corporation, the entity that manages the collected mercury thermostats, will buy 500 lbs. of carbon off-sets for every mercury thermostat returned. This will not only cover the environmental costs of driving a car to the event, but will also cover above and beyond to make sure the event recovers more carbon than it uses.

To help attendees move quickly through the event, those dropping off mercury thermometers or thermostats must complete a short form beforehand and place it on their dash the day of the event. The form can be downloaded at www.OCRRA.org.

No other mercury-containing items, broken / leaking thermometers or thermostats, nor other hazardous materials will be accepted at the event. To make a no-cost household toxics disposal appointment to get rid of those items safely, visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAtoxics for details.

Year-Round Disposal Options:

Residents unable to attend the event have year-round disposal options for mercury thermometers and thermostats. They may be dropped off at **OCRRA’s Ley Creek Transfer Station**, year-round Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM to 1:30 PM; Saturdays, 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM. (5158 Ley Creek Dr., Liverpool, NY 13088.) Residents will receive a \$5 Lowe’s gift card in the mail, courtesy of Covanta.

***About OCRRA:** OCRRA is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation created by the New York State Legislature in 1990 to deliver a comprehensive solid waste management and resource recovery system to Onondaga County residents. OCRRA’s system includes: a strong recycling and composting program, a foundation for local waste disposal at the Waste-to-Energy Facility, two convenient trash and recycling drop off sites, a robust education component and programs for hard to manage materials, such as household hazardous waste, batteries, fluorescent bulbs and other mercury-containing devices. OCRRA’s award-winning programs are funded by trash drop-off fees and the sale of electricity generated at the Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville, NY. Learn more and get involved at www.OCRRA.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#).*

About Covanta Onondaga: Covanta Onondaga operates the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Facility, which serves Onondaga County and the greater Syracuse region with sustainable waste disposal, processing approximately 990 tons of municipal solid waste per day into more than 39 megawatts of clean, renewable electricity. The facility also recycles approximately 12,000 tons of metal annually – enough to build 10,000 automobiles. For more information, visit covanta.com.

About Thermostat Recycling Corporation: Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC) was founded in 1998 as an industry-funded nonprofit. Membership consists of 31 manufacturers who either branded and sold mercury thermostats in the U.S. prior to their discontinuation in 2007, or produced devices that may replace mercury-containing thermostats.

With a network of more than 3,000 collection sites nationwide, TRC has recovered over 2.1 million thermostats, or 10 tons of mercury, to date. All costs to transport and properly dispose of recovered thermostats are assumed by TRC. Visit thermostat-recycle.org to learn more and find a recycling location near you.

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