

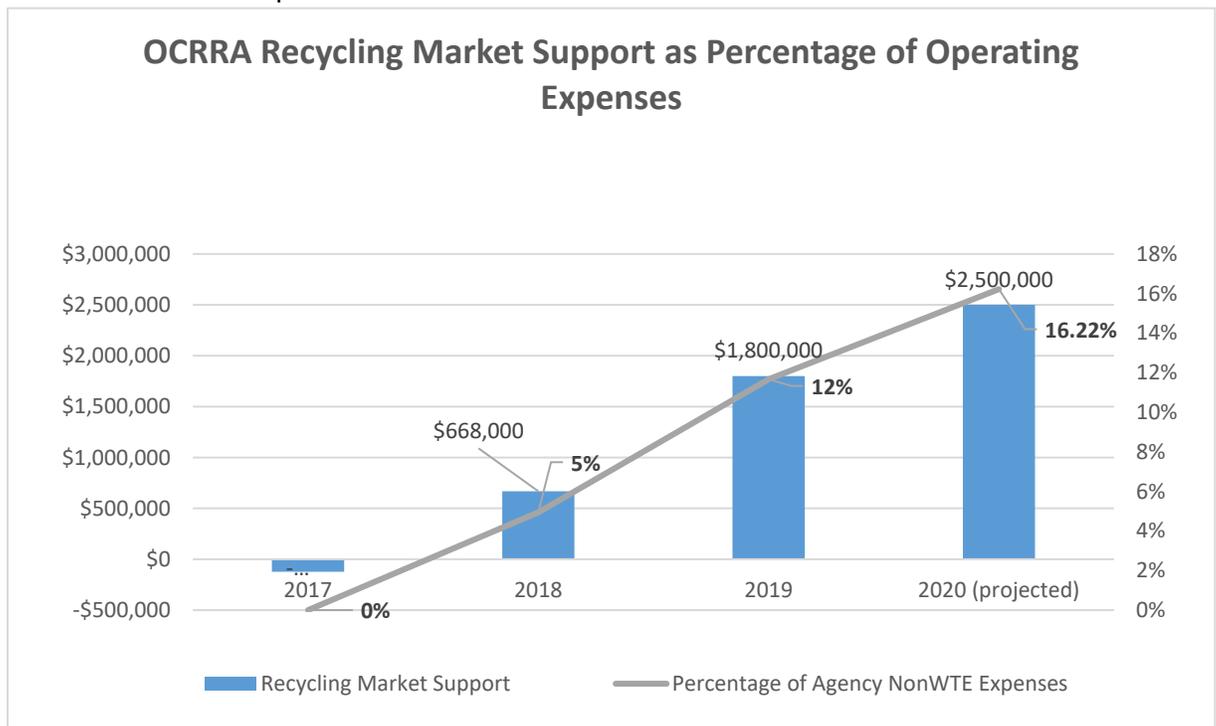
Recycling 2020 Report: FAQs

1. Why is the recycling industry in crisis?

In 2018, China closed its doors to recycling because the materials they were getting from the United States and beyond were too contaminated. They took in about half of the world's recyclables. As a result, the recycling market was flooded with material. Prices bottomed out. Today, the cost to sort, bale and market materials in many cases exceeds the value of the recyclables.

OCRRA has subsidized the costs of residential recycling since the agency began in the early 1990's. Through the years recycling has both made and cost OCRRA money; overall it was a net zero impact – until 2018.

OCRRA's financial impacts since 2018:



2. How long will this crisis last?

Industry experts expect it could take 2-4 years for markets to rebound. The key is developing more domestic or local markets to take recyclables.

3. Is Onondaga County blue bin material still being recycled?

Yes! Keep recycling. Unlike in some communities that have had to suspend their recycling programs because costs became too high to bear, Onondaga County recyclables are continuing to be recycled.

It is important to recycle the right things and avoid “[wish-cycling](#)” as the cleaner our materials are, the more likely they are to be accepted by a market and the more value they will generate.

Putting the wrong thing in the blue bin can contaminate the rest of the good recyclables. That’s why OCRRA asks everyone to refamiliarize themselves with the recycling rules as they have evolved over time. For instance, we no longer ask you to pay attention to the numbers on the bottom of plastic items. Instead, pay attention to the shape. If it is a plastic bottle, jug, jar or wide-mouth dairy tub, put it in your recycling. All other plastics should go in the trash (except clean and dry [film plastics](#), they can be recycled at big box stores).

Check out this [list](#) of the items that should go in the blue bin.

Curbside Recycling

- Newspapers, magazines, catalogs and softcover books**
Keep loose. Don't tie.
- Cardboard, pizza, pasta, cereal boxes, etc.**
Flatten.
- Papers, mail, envelopes**
- Milk and juice cartons**
Empty and rinse.
- Plastic bottles and jugs**
Empty and replace cap.
- Cans and jars**
Empty and rinse. Labels are ok.
- Plastic dairy tubs**
Empty and rinse; no lids.

Recycle it, but NOT at your curb

- Electronics** (computers, TVs, etc.)
Search [OCRRA.org](#) for drop-off locations.
- Fluorescent light bulbs** (household only)
Recycle CFLs at your local Home Depot or Lowe's. Many Ace and True Value hardware stores also accept 4-foot tube, circular and U-shaped bulbs.
- Microwaves and dehumidifiers**
Bring to OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station.
- Old clothes, shoes and textiles**
Worn/torn ok; bring cleaned and dry items to Salvation Army or Rescue Mission.
- Mercury thermometers and thermostats**
Bring to OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station.
- Household batteries**
Drop off at any Onondaga County Wegmans or Green Hills Market.
- Food scraps**
Visit [OCRRA.org](#) for compost solutions.
- Yard waste**
Bring to one of OCRRA's Compost Sites.
- Shredded paper**
Take to Bodow Recycling in Syracuse. (315) 422-2552



Don't see an item above? Find the proper disposal method at [OCRRA.org](#).

What are you looking for? [How do I get rid of...](#)



While paper materials like cardboard and newspapers are not garnering much in monetary value (and in the case of mixed paper, are garnering a negative value), there are still strong markets for:

- plastic bottles,
- plastic jugs,
- plastic jars,
- plastic wide-mouth/stackable dairy tubs,
- metal cans.

4. Will OCRRA keep recycling?

Yes. The OCRRA board of director's convened a committee to look at ways to keep recycling going in Onondaga County. The Recycling 2020 Committee released a report of their findings; it can be found here: www.tinyurl.com/Recycling2020Report

OCRRA is a public benefit corporation. It is not funded by tax support; operations must cover the costs to provide services to the community. Each October, OCRRA passes a budget for the coming year. The Recycling 2020 Report is aimed at helping OCRRA, elected officials and the community make decisions on how best to continue to support our award-winning recycling program.