

MEDIA RELEASE
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**OCRRA Sustains Continued Curbside Recycling by Adopting
2021 Budget that Includes New Recycling Fee**

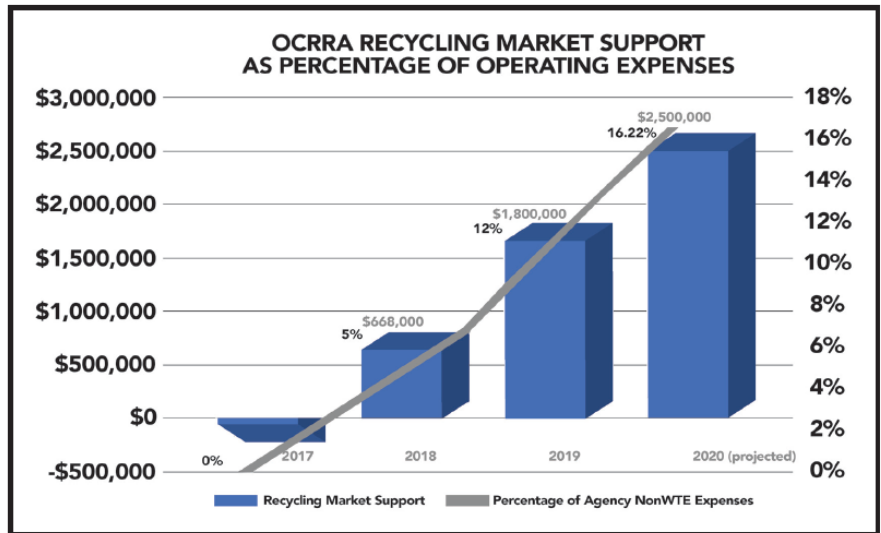
Recycling fee will equate to \$1 per month per Onondaga County household

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (October 14, 2020) — The existence of curbside recycling is threatened by extremely challenging economic times. In 2018, the recycling industry changed drastically when China, once half of the world’s destination for recyclables, effectively closed its doors to recycling; flooding markets with material. This drove the value of recyclables down precipitously. However, our community’s recycling continues to be recycled into new products.

“The value of recycling exists even when commodity prices fail to cover the costs of sorting and processing recyclables for reuse,” said Dereth Glance, OCRRA executive director. “Turning old products into new products provides real value by saving finite natural resources, reducing waste, and conserving energy, while also providing a local source of raw materials to support local manufacturing jobs.”

While there has always been a cost to sort and market recyclables, the cost has historically been covered by the sale of the recyclables. However, for the last three years, this has not been the case.

Between 2018 and the end of this year, OCRRA projects spending close to \$5 million to sustain curbside recycling. In 2020, OCRRA used reserves (budgeted at \$1 million) to cover the rising cost of recycling and held trash fees steady to keep costs down for residents. In 2021, this is an unsustainable course of action. OCRRA is a self-funded authority, not an arm of county government, and is funded primarily through trash disposal fees.



Recognizing that changed global recycling markets posed a significant impact locally, in 2019 OCRRA established an ad hoc committee of our board of directors to thoroughly evaluate options. The work product of this committee is OCRRA’s Recycling 2020 Report; available at: www.tinyurl.com/Recycle2020Report. In 2020, a second ad hoc committee worked on developing a viable recycling strategy for the 2021 budget.

In the wake of sustained low commodity values and skyrocketing recycling costs, OCRRA could no longer maintain the zero-tip fee for residential recycling. OCRRA deemed it necessary to share costs directly with haulers that deliver residential recyclables and to raise the trash tipping fee, in order to continue our community's award-winning recycling program.

The 2021 budget that was adopted by the OCRRA board of directors on October 14, 2020 includes a trash fee increase of \$5 per ton and a new residential recycling tip fee of \$34 per ton. This will cover about half the cost to sort and market residential recyclables. OCRRA will maintain these same fees for both 2021 and 2022.

"The new recycling tip fee will equate to an additional charge of \$1 per month per household in Onondaga County, or \$12 per year," said John Copanas, OCRRA board chair.

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, 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 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](#).

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