

Recycle This, Not That In Your Recycle Bin

Updated recycling brochure helps Onondaga County residents recycle right

Will Wallak, Public Information Officer

Did you know that frozen food boxes, egg cartons, cords / hoses, plastic “clam-shell” containers, disposable cups, prescription vials and drinking glasses—among other items—should never be placed in your curbside recycling bin?

Here are the basics: If you have a paper item, metal or glass food / beverage container, or a plastic bottle, jar,

jug or dairy tub, put it in the recycle bin.

Onondaga County residents are knowledgeable about the recycling, but we can all use a reminder here and there (plus things change). OCRRA’s new Recycling Rules brochure is a great tool to help residents and businesses recycle right with confidence. It tells what to put in your

recycling container and it offers guidance on where to bring items that can be recycled, just not in your recycling container, such as plastic bags and electronics. It also provides a list of common items that cannot be recycled but should go in the trash instead.

Download the new Recycling Rules brochure on OCRRA’s website (www.ocrra.org)

tinyurl.com/Recycling-Rules). Share it with your friends and family and help spread the recycling word!

If you are an apartment complex, business, or school and would like brochures to hand out, please visit www.ocrra.org/order-supplies/ to place your free order. The order form also offers posters, decals and recycling containers at no cost.



ROCK CUT ROAD.....PG 2

Residential service at Rock Cut Road hums along. Ley Creek remains closed.



AEROSOL CANS..... PG 3

What you do with aerosol cans depends on what they once held.



WASTE-TO-ENERGY... PG 4

Latest independent test results confirm stellar operations.



DONATE TEXTILES..... PG 6

Support local charitable organizations and your community.



COMPOST & MULCH..... PG 6

Get compost or mulch for your fall garden and landscape projects.



RECYCLING RULES

Don't bag recyclables in paper or plastic bags! Place recycling loose in bin. • All containers: Empty, rinse and reattach cap/lid.

PAPER



- Boxes: Cardboard, pasta, takeout pizza, etc. (flatten; no frozen food boxes)
- Newspapers, magazines, catalogs, mail, papers
- Cartons: Milk, juice, etc. (plastic spouts OK)

PLASTIC

Ignore numbers; recycle by shape



- Bottles (no toxics)
- Jars
- Jugs (items with a handle)
- Stackable tubs (dairy/dairy alternative only)

METAL



- Food & beverage cans
- Aluminum foil, disposable aluminum pans and plates (clean and crumple)
- Aerosol cans (empty only)

GLASS



- Food containers
- Beverage containers (any color)
- Wine/liquor bottles
Visit OCRRA.org for more options.

This is a scaled-back version of OCRRA’s Recycling Rules brochure. It outlines what paper, plastic, metal and glass items are recyclable in Onondaga County. Visit OCRRA.org to see the full brochure that includes tips on how to recycle electronics, film plastics and other items that you can recycle. but just not in your recycle bin.

Meet The New Recycling Mascots

There’s Sour Cream Tub, Pasta Sauce Jar and Milk Jug just to name a few. No, it’s not a list of recipe ingredients. They are the witty, and somewhat goofy looking, characters who are on a mission to teach Onondaga County what to recycle and what not to recycle.

You may have seen them on TV or heard them on the radio. They also hang out on OCRRA’s

website, Facebook page and YouTube channel. They are also easy to share with that friend or family member who just doesn’t seem to recycle right. (Hint, hint).

Check out the videos! They offer friendly reminders that will stick with you and help you out the next time you’re holding a plastic bottle or garden hose and wondering whether to recycle or



OCRRA, Syracuse, 2022.

trash it. (Spoiler: Recycle the first one, trash the second one.)

Rock Cut Road Now Serves Residents; Ley Creek is Closed

The transition of residential waste drop-off service from OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station to the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station in June went very smoothly. The move expanded the number of days residents can drop off their household trash, construction and demolition debris and recycling. The site now offers the convenience of payment using credit and debit cards in addition to cash or check.

Residents may bring materials to the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station at 5808 Rock Cut Road in Jamesville, Monday – Friday, from 3:30 pm to 7:00 pm and Saturdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. Commercial customers have separate hours. Please visit [OCRRA.org](http://www.OCRRA.org) for more information.

The OCRRA Board of Directors continues to evaluate options for redeveloping the Ley Creek site. A primary goal is to build sufficient capacity for temporarily managing municipal solid waste in the event of Waste-to-Energy Facility maintenance shutdowns and other system slowdowns. The planning, permitting and construction process could take several years to complete.

To be kept aware of future developments, please join our email list. Sign up at the bottom of www.OCRRA.org.



OCRRA, Syracuse, 2022.

Rock Cut Road Residential Fees & Acceptable Items

OCRRA's Residential fees here are the same as they were at Ley Creek. In addition to cash and checks, credit cards are now accepted at Rock Cut Road.

Trash Disposal Flat Rates

Visit www.tinyurl.com/debrisdisposal for acceptable items.

- Cars and minivans: \$15
- Pickup trucks, SUVs, vans, trailers: \$30
Larger vehicles/loads may cost more. Visit [OCRRA.org](http://www.OCRRA.org) for details.
- Untarped vehicle fee: \$25

Trash By the Bag

Alternatively, residents may drop-off trash in bags. Simply purchase trash bag stickers for \$3 each online or at the site. You do not pay the vehicle entrance fee if you dispose of bags of trash using stickers.

Food Scraps

OCRRA accepts food scraps from residents who hold a current Compost Site Pass. See www.tinyurl.com/CompostSites for acceptable items or to buy a drop off pass.

Additional Disposal Fees – Special Items

Fees charged in addition to regular disposal fees. These charges defray the cost of properly disposing of these items in compliance with environmental regulations.

- Appliances with refrigerants: \$15 each
- Mattresses: \$15 each
- Microwaves: \$5 each
- Passenger tires up to 20" in diameter. Rims must be removed. No tires over 20", no off-road or tractor tires. Limit 10 tires: \$7 each

If you **ONLY** drop off these special items, you do not pay the flat rate entrance fee based on vehicle type.

Recycling

Residential recyclable drop-off: \$2 per visit, regardless of volume. (If you bring **ONLY** recyclables, you do not pay the flat rate entrance fee based on vehicle type.) Visit www.tinyurl.com/RecyclingRules for acceptable items.

RECYCLING RIGHT TIP

DON'T BAG
RECYCLABLES
IN PAPER OR PLASTIC BAGS!



PLACE RECYCLING LOOSE IN BIN!



BLUE BIN OR NO?

Not all plastics can go in the blue bin. Ignore the NUMBERS on plastics. Use the shape as a guide instead. If you have an item that fits these general descriptions, put it in—or keep it out of—your recycling container per the instructions below. Still not sure? When in doubt, check with OCRRA, or throw it out.

YES

Plastic Bottles

Smaller opening than base



Plastic Jugs

Has a Handle



Plastic Jars

Screw on lids with necks



Plastic Dairy Tubs

Stackable inside same item



NO

Clamshell Containers (Trash)



Film Plastics* (Trash)



Plastic Cups (Trash)



Cords & Hoses (Trash)



*Stretchy film plastics are recyclable at big box retailers, grocery stores and chain pharmacies; they simply have to be clean, dry and devoid of labels.

Recycling Rhoda



Aerosol Cans

Dear Rhoda,

What's the deal with metal spray (aerosol) cans? Aren't they all recyclable because they're metal? Recently a neighbor noticed empty spray paint cans in my blue bin and said they are not recyclable. Does it matter what used to be inside of those cans? Is that how you tell if the spray can should be recycled or not?

— Confused in Clay

Dear Confused,

Well, sweat pea, it most certainly does matter what used to be inside of an empty aerosol can! Aerosol cans that held toxic or hazardous materials cannot be recycled. (BTW, same goes for plastic bottles and containers.)

Let's crush any confusion about this matter.

EMPTY aerosol cans that contained **hazardous substances** (paint, automotive chemicals, pesticides, etc.) must be placed in the trash. Do not recycle them. Rest assured, though, that when these spray cans go to the Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville the metal will be recovered and recycled.

What about aerosol cans with hazardous contents that are partially full, you may ask? Easy. Take them to OCRRA's free Household Toxics Drop-off program open Monday, Thursday, and Friday. An appointment is required. Visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAtoxics for more information and to make an appointment.

On the flip side, let's look at aerosol cans with **non-hazardous** contents (hair spray,

cooking oil, sunscreen, etc.). If these cans are **empty**, place them in your recycling bin. If they are not empty but you don't want to use up the contents (too old, no longer useful, etc.) or you can't give it to someone who can use it, empty the contents by spraying them into a garbage can. Then place the empty can in your recycling bin.

All of this information about aerosol cans, and information on recycling / disposal of many other items, can be found on OCRRA's website www.OCRRA.org in the handy searchable database.

Candidly yours,

Recycling Rhoda

Onondaga County Waste-to-Energy Facility Continues to Operate Well Within State Permit Limits



The Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency's Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville has been in operation for 28 years, converting our community's trash into enough electricity to power more than 30,000 homes each year, all while remaining well within NYSDEC permit limits, as this year's third-party testing once again demonstrates.

Constituent	Average Measured Emissions ¹			Permit Limit ²	Pass/Fail P/F	3-Boiler Average	% Permit Limit ³
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3				
FEDERAL							
Cadmium (mg/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	< 0.000150	< 0.000139	< 0.000200	0.035	P	0.000163	0%
Cadmium (lb/hr)	< 0.0000234	< 0.0000206	< 0.0000340	0.0019	P	0.0000260	1%
Carbon Monoxide (lb/hr)	1.90	1.01	1.92	8.04	P	1.61	20%
Dioxins/Furans (ng/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	0.788	0.138	0.320	30	P	0.42	1%
Hydrogen Chloride (ppmdv @ 7% O ₂)	4.52	5.07	2.58	25	P	4.06	16%
Hydrogen Chloride (lb/hr)	1.06	1.14	0.65	5.24	P	0.950	18%
Hydrogen Chloride Removal Efficiency (%)	99.4	99.2	99.6	95	P	99.4	--
Lead (mg/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	0.00198	0.00161	0.00195	0.400	P	0.001847	0%
Lead (lb/hr)	0.000306	0.000239	0.000330	0.0381	P	0.0002917	1%
Mercury (lb/hr)	< 0.0000684	< 0.0000633	< 0.0000698	0.004	P	0.0000672	2%
Nitrogen Oxides (lb/hr)	52.3	46.9	50.2	58	P	49.8	86%
Particulate (gr/dscf @ 7% O ₂)	0.000318	0.000212	0.000615	0.010	P	0.000382	4%
PM ₁₀ (gr/dscf @ 7% O ₂)	0.0000851	0.000020	0.0001690	0.010	P	0.000091	1%
PM ₁₀ , Filterable (lb/hr)	0.0278	0.0062	0.05730	3.16	P	0.030	1%
Sulfur Dioxide (lb/hr)	2.81	0.860	0.349	16.2	P	1.3397	8%
STATE							
Ammonia (ppmdv @ 7% O ₂)	< 0.654	< 1.08	< 1.16	50	P	0.965	2%
Ammonia (lb/hr)	< 0.0728	< 0.113	< 0.136	4.88	P	0.1073	2%
Dioxins/Furans-2,3,7,8 TCDD TEQ (ng/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	0.00508	0.00038	0.001490	0.4	P	0.002317	1%
Dioxins/Furans-2,3,7,8 TCDD TEQ (lb/hr)	0.00000000814	0.00000000058	0.000000002450	0.000000129	P	0.0000000037	0%
Mercury (µg/dscm @ 7% O ₂)	< 0.440	< 0.425	< 0.412	28	P	0.426	2%
Mercury Removal Efficiency (%)	> 97.5	> 97.8	> 98.6	85	P	98.0	--

NOTES:
¹ Based on 3 test runs for each unit; used for compliance with permit limit.
² NYSDEC Title V Permit #7-3142-00028/00009
³ Based on 3-Boiler Average; informational only.

UNITS:
 gr/dscf = grains per dry standard cubic foot
 ppmdv = parts per million dry volume
 lb/hr = pounds per hour
 dscm = dry standard cubic meter
 ng = nanograms
 µg = micrograms
 mg = milligrams

Q: What is the purpose of annual air emissions "stack" testing?

A: Stack testing is an important tool that measures the amount of regulated pollutants being emitted from a facility. Stack testing consists of a series of sampling events, in which a probe is inserted into the stack to collect a representative sample of the gases released, over a defined amount of time. Sampling and laboratory analysis must be conducted in accordance with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) protocols. NYSDEC oversees, and is generally onsite during stack testing at the WTE Facility.

Q: How do the 2022 stack test results look?

A: The results from the 2022 stack testing indicate that the Facility is operating acceptably and that the air pollution control devices are functioning properly. As shown by the following graph, many of the tested constituents were well below the permit limit.

Q: Does the Facility conduct any other air emissions testing besides the annual stack testing?

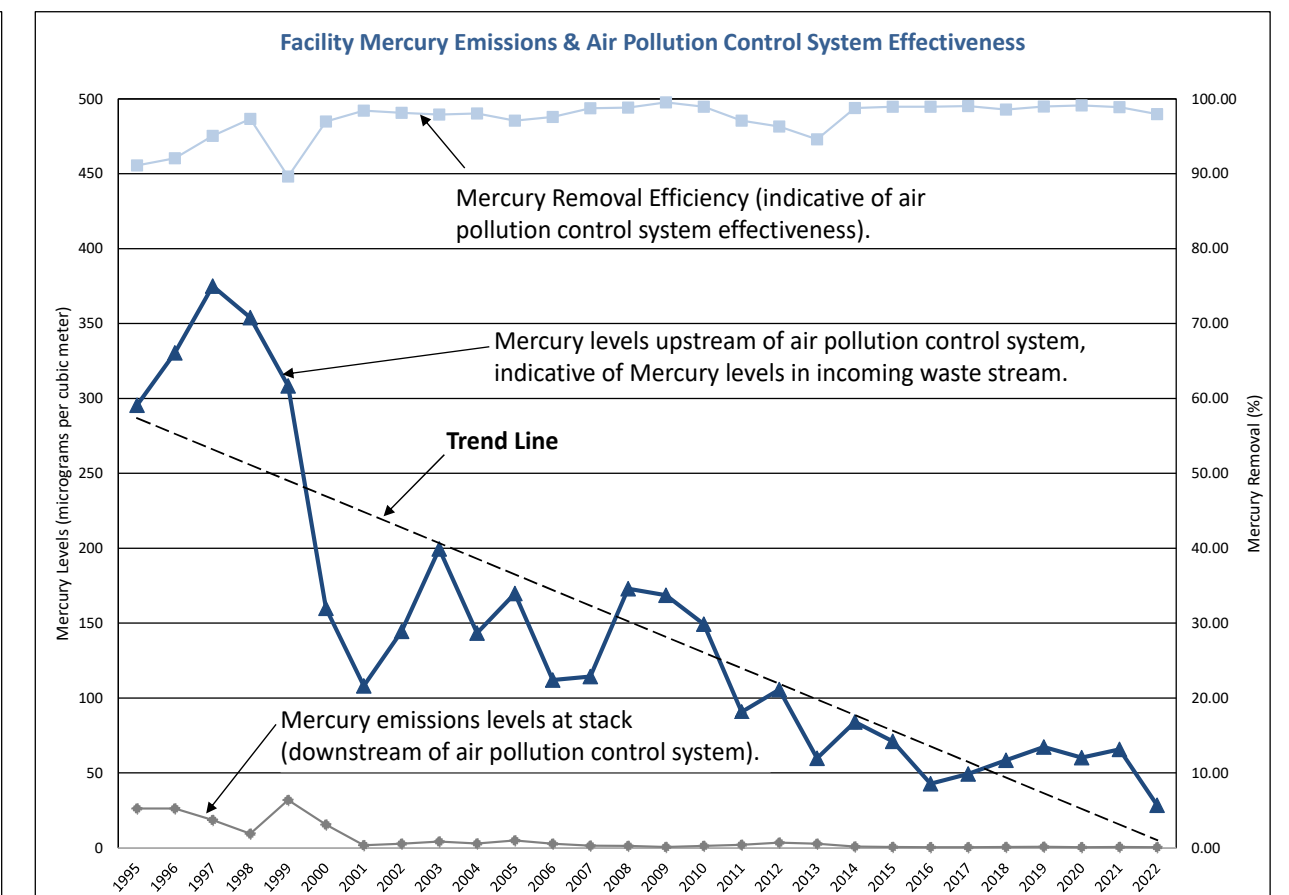
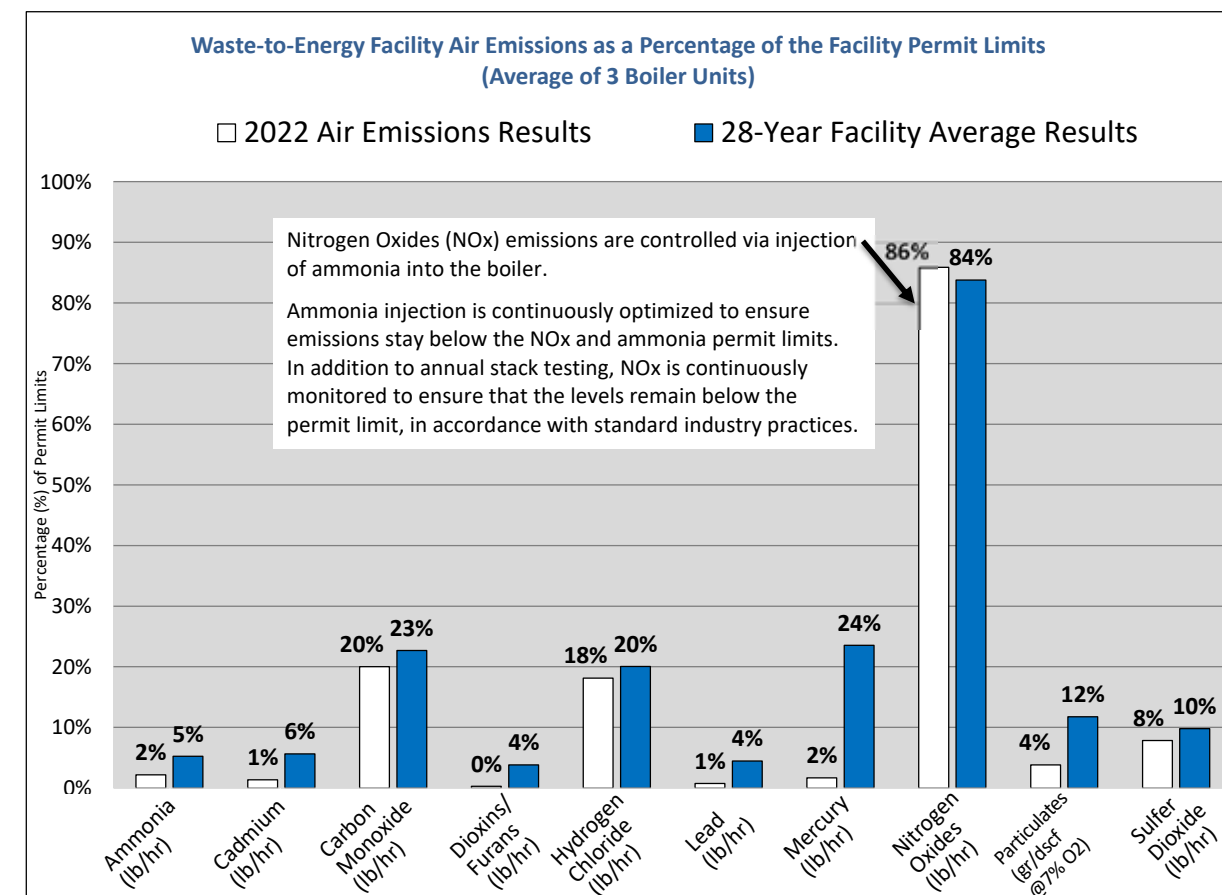
A: Yes. The Facility has a continuous emission monitoring system (CEMS) that measures combustion efficiency, air pollution equipment performance and stack emissions. The CEMS monitors carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, oxygen, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides (NOx) as well as opacity and combustion temperatures. The CEMS is being expanded over the next year to monitor mercury and hydrogen chloride.

Q: What is the status of the WTE Facility's Air (Title V) Permit?

A: The WTE Facility's Air Permit was most recently issued on January 25, 2021 and expires January 24, 2026. The permit can be accessed on NYSDEC's website at www.tinyurl.com/WTEpermit21.

Q: Who can I contact for more information?

A: For more detailed information on the test results please contact OCRRA's Agency Engineer, Cristina Albunio, at (315) 295-0743 or calbunio@ocrra.org.



Why Fall is the Best Time to Add Compost and Mulch to Gardens

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

When the squirrels get busy burying seeds, gardeners know it is time to get their beds ready for winter. If you think that means to get out the down comforter, you are not far off! Fall is the perfect time to add a layer of mulch or to enrich the soil with compost.

Mulch is ground up woody material that insulates the ground and smooths out extreme temperature changes to protect plant roots. Remember, to avoid tree-killing girdling roots, keep the root flare exposed. Mulch around trees should resemble a crater, not a volcano.

OCRRA **compost** is made of a mix of yard waste and food scraps. Thanks to that ideal mix of carbon to nitrogen, composting mimics a fast-forward version of natural decomposition and recycles nutrients back to your plant's roots. Adding it in the fall gives the soil's ecosystem time to make the nutrients available for spring growth.

If dry spells made your soil look cracked, or it stuck to your boots after the rain and pulling weeds felt like mining for coal, you probably have heavy clay. Mix two inches of compost into the top foot of soil with a digging fork. This will break up the clods to provide room for air, water, and roots to get into your dirt.

If you found water and soil washing away all summer, you probably have very sandy soil. Mix compost in the same way to help bind it together and hold water.

Unless the soil is in awful shape, tilling it will actually cause compaction and disturb the soil ecosystem, making it harder to grow healthy plants. If your soil already has good structure—it's easy to plant into and it soaks up and holds water well—top dressing with compost adds food for the tiny ecosystem living in your garden. When it is well fed, it makes the food your plants need! Just spread an inch or so of compost between the soil and any mulch you add, and the goodness in the compost will filter down with each watering.



Compost is a finely screened, nutrient-rich soil amendment that is added to plants, lawns and gardens to improve their growth, amongst other benefits.



Mulch is a coarser, woody material used to beautify landscapes, while suppressing weeds and retaining moisture.

FACT: Compost and mulch can be purchased at OCRRA sites by the trunkload or by the yard. Visit OCRRA.org for fees and hours.

Donate Wearable Clothes and Help Residents in our Community

Support charities with textile donations and reduce waste

Will Wallak, Public Information Officer

The change of seasons usually means switching out one set of clothes for another. It is also a great time to reclaim some valuable closet space by getting rid of old clothes no longer being worn. What is the most sustainable way to ditch your old clothes / textiles? Donate them so they can be reused!

Usable / wearable textiles such as clothing, linens, blankets, drapes, towels, stuffed animals, footwear, belts, hats, handbags, gloves, and other accessories in good condition may be donated to the Salvation Army, Rescue Mission, St. Paulie drop boxes and churches, where a good portion gets resold. In addition, gently used blankets, towels, and comforters can be donated to animal rescues. Be sure all donated items are washed and dry. Donating helps extend the items' useful lives, keeps them out of the waste stream and provides

a financial benefit to local community organizations. Visit www.tinyurl.com/donate-textiles-cny for a list of locations that accept textile donations.

If you have torn, stained, worn out or otherwise unwearable clothing, only the Rescue Mission can accept them for recycling. Please be sure to pack these in separate bags or boxes from the wearable items and label accordingly, to make sorting most efficient. If you prefer not to donate your unwearable clothing, get rid of them in the trash.

For health and safety reasons, pillows and mattresses cannot be donated. Likewise, fabric scraps from crafting (unless you know any quilters/artists who want them), rags, and soiled fabrics should also go into the trash. In Onondaga County, these items go to the Waste-to-Energy Facility where they will help create electricity—which benefits us all!



Photo Credit: iStock.com

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Textiles

- REDUCE** by only purchasing what you really need and will use.
- REUSE** by altering the size, repairing items, or gifting hand-me downs. Or, if old textiles are no longer wearable or usable, consider turning them into rags for cleaning. Clothing that is in wearable and sellable condition can be washed and donated to places like the Rescue Mission or Salvation Army. Shopping for pre-owned items at thrift stores is a great way to reuse, too!
- RECYCLE** textiles by turning them into something else. Textiles CANNOT go in the blue bin. Recycling textiles can look like turning old drapes into play costumes, an outgrown sweater into puppy clothing, or torn jeans into an apron.



From the Executive Director's Desk...

The Road to Capacity

Kevin Spillane, Executive Director, OCRRA

As the old saying goes, if you don't know where you are going, then any road will take you there. That is why, for me, the time that the OCRRA Board spent on strategic planning this year was so beneficial.

Staying focused on long-term goals and not getting dragged down by day-to-day operations is key. This is especially true when assessing how the community's needs and wants are related to OCRRA's capabilities. Thus, our focus remains on maintaining the Agency's capacity to handle the County's garbage and continuing to find ways to remove more items from our waste stream either through reuse or recycling. This will help us achieve one of our bedrock missions, to make our community a healthier and more sustainable place to live, and it will allow us to preserve the capacity we have to handle the County's solid waste.

Onondaga County has an award-winning recycling and reuse program. As we continue to separate items from the waste stream the characteristics of our waste stream requiring disposal will change. Organics such as yard waste and food scraps are being recycled in new ways, such as through composting. Plastics have become more plentiful in packaging materials and disposable single use products. OCRRA's capacity to handle the community's solid waste must be flexible as our waste

stream changes. The Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility, compost sites and landfill space must balance the needs of the future's ever-changing waste streams.

Why would knowing what is in the garbage be important to the OCRRA Board as they consider the future of waste disposal in the County? It's important because our community relies on WTE to manage most of our waste that cannot be reused or recycled.

WTE can be more or less efficient depending on the heating value, or the amount of heat obtained from combustion, of the waste stream. As the heating value of the waste stream increases, less waste can be processed using WTE technology.

Garbage is like a river, and it never stops flowing. If the WTE Facility can't process as much waste, or can't process it at a rate that keeps pace with the community's disposal needs, the WTE Facility can become overwhelmed. Then it begins to back up and OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Transfer Station gets overwhelmed as well.

For this reason, the Board, in our strategic plan, continues to prioritize improvements to our newly renovated Rock Cut Road Transfer Station to maximize capacity. The Board is focused on projects that will optimize throughput so that we can han-

dle more waste, up to our permitted tonnage, and maximize the amount of material that gets trucked out in each vehicle. These efforts recognize the long-term need of preserving as much transfer capacity as possible to take pressure off of the WTE Facility during high-waste periods.

Now that OCRRA has moved all its transfer operations to Rock Cut Road, including the residential drop-off program, the Board formed an Ad-Hoc Committee to focus on the next steps for the Ley Creek Transfer Station. Our strategic plan supports a feasibility study to investigate the possibility of rebuilding the Ley Creek Site into a new transfer station that will meet all New York State regulations, while also being robust enough to handle the remaining waste in our system.

A new transfer station will take further pressure off the WTE Facility and the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station. However, this is a very long-term strategy. Realistically, a new facility at Ley Creek would not be available until 2026 or 2027 due to permitting and construction work. So, first steps first—the feasibility study is prioritized for this year.

In addition, the Board prioritized continued support for extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs which target

producers of consumer goods, so that they too have a stake in the disposal and recycling costs associated with the end-life of their products. One such recent EPR success is the PaintCare program implemented this summer, allowing free paint recycling at multiple locations across NYS. OCRRA continues to support additional green initiatives that contribute to greater waste diversion and recycling activities.

With our new strategic planning road map, the Agency is also focused on ensuring waste disposal capacity at our regional landfills. This is needed for the portion of our waste that cannot be processed at the WTE Facility, known as "bypass waste," which includes items such as pressure treated lumber and oversized materials. The ash byproduct from the WTE energy generation process, an inert ash, is also sent to area landfills for use as daily cover. Thus, the Agency is exploring local waste disposal options as landfill space continues to dwindle in the Northeast and is becoming more expensive to access.

Now that we know where we are going, we hope you all will join in and support our organization's efforts to preserve and expand local waste disposal capacity to make our community a more sustainable place to live.



Photo Credit: iStock.com

FACT: Only metal cans go in the blue bin. All other metal goes in the trash; it is pulled out at the WTE Facility and recycled.

Do NOT Bag Your Recyclables

Recyclables should go in your bin **LOOSE**. **Recyclables in a plastic bag end up as trash.** The recycling sorting facility is a mechanical process. Humans cannot hand open bags to free the recyclables.

Each year 2 million pounds of recyclables are thrown away because they are enclosed in bags.

Feel free to put recycling in a bag to transport it to your bin, but please empty the items into your bin (and dispose of your bag) before putting it at the curb. Otherwise, your recycling efforts are completely in vain.



Art Credit: Pinckney Hugo Group, Syracuse, 2019.



QUESTION OF THE QUARTER

Q: I'm finally starting to get used to recycling by shape—bottles, jars, jugs and dairy tubs—while ignoring the numbers on the bottom. But what about the tops? Can we recycle these in the blue bin?

A: Great job of ignoring the numbers on plastic items and recycling by shape only! It really simplifies knowing what is and isn't recyclable. Another way that OCRRA is simplifying recycling is by instructing residents to put ALL caps and lids back on containers before placing them in the recycling bin. This applies to all containers and bottles, whether made of plastic, glass or metal.

Empty the contents of the food or beverage container. Rinse or wipe out to remove any remaining food or liquid. Items with food or liquid still in them, even a small amount, are not recycled and they can even end up contaminating other recyclables, so be sure to empty and clean out your food / beverage containers before recycling them. Replace the cap / lid. Place in your recycling bin.

Got a question about recycling or proper disposal of a particular item? Ask us your question on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/OCRRA or contact us at www.ocrra.org/contact-us/ via our website.



Follow OCRRA on Facebook and ask us all your recycling and disposal questions!

Blue Bin or Not?



YES



NO

- **Cardboard and paperboard pizza boxes (the kind you get delivered or pick up at a pizza shop) go in the recycle bin.**
- **ALL frozen pizza boxes go in the trash.**

Mark Your Calendar

JAMESVILLE COMPOST SITE

SATURDAY, NOV. 19

Last Day of Operation This Season

ALL OCRRA SITES CLOSED

THURSDAY, NOV. 24

Happy Thanksgiving!

OCRRA'S ROCK CUT ROAD AND AMBOY SITES WILL BE OPEN

**FRI., NOV. 25
MON., DEC. 26
MON., JAN. 2**

HOUSEHOLD TOXICS DROP-OFF

MON., THURS., FRI. BY APPOINTMENT

Miller Environmental Group
8:00 am–3:00 pm
Register at OCRRA.org.

FACT: Egg cartons are not recyclable, even paper ones; their fibers are too short to recycle again. Trash or compost them at home.