



How to Recycle Batteries in July and Year-Round

Dale Cocca, Recycling Specialist

OCRRA Recycling Aide Ryan Hart sets out at 8 am every Wednesday morning to do what is affectionately referred to at OCRRA as “the battery run.” No, it is not a 5K foot race, but like many 5Ks, it is for a good cause.

Each week, around 3,000 pounds of spent household batteries – dead single use alkaline, rechargeable and button batteries – get dropped off by residents at OCRRA’s battery collection kiosks. These kiosks are in the entryways of the eight Wegmans in Onondaga County, as well as Green Hills Farms. Ryan loads these batteries into OCRRA’s box truck to take to Arc of Onondaga, where Ron and Don Grant’s team separates the batteries by their unique chemistries so that they can be sent off for recycling.

Keeping batteries out of the waste stream is important for a healthy, natural environment; not just to prevent corrosive and otherwise dangerous chemicals from affecting our air, water and soil, but also to recover and recycle rare and semi-rare metals found in many rechargeable batteries.

In tandem with OCRRA’s free and convenient battery collection kiosks, OCRRA partners with local haulers on an annual curbside collection program exclusively for alkaline battery disposal. In the month of July, participating residents can put spent alkaline batteries in a special yellow bag provided by OCRRA for curbside collection. No rechargeable batteries are accepted in the curbside program; those have to be taken to a kiosk and sealed according to the kiosk instructions.

To participate in the **alkaline-battery-only** collection program, call OCRRA at (315) 453-2866 or send an email to **info@OCRRA.org**; include your name and address in the body of the email and OCRRA will mail you a yellow battery bag, while supplies last.

During the month of **July only**, participants in this program will place the filled yellow battery bag on **TOP** of their already closed trash bin, or on **TOP** of their trash bag for collection. If the yellow battery bag is not sitting on top where it is visible and sepa-



Photo Credit: Kristen Lawton, OCRRA, Syracuse, 2018

Noah Jones of Syracuse puts his alkaline batteries out for collection on trash day (on top of his trash can, so they are highly visible). If you need a yellow battery bag, contact OCRRA. Throughout July your hauler will collect the yellow bags and bring them to OCRRA.

rate from the trash, it is at a high risk of being treated as trash. Please note: these **batteries should NEVER go in your blue bin.**

Both the battery collection kiosks and the July curbside collection are offerings for residentially consumed batteries only. Businesses are invited to visit **OCRRA.org** for options on proper channels for disposal of their spent

batteries. Until state legislation comes through to extend the responsibility of hazardous waste recovery onto the manufacturers of those materials, OCRRA and its partners will keep working hard to collect our county’s batteries to keep our environment safe and clean.

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

Apartment Managers: Recycling Help is On the Way

OCRRA welcomes Chanel Quail to Recycling Team

Chanel Quail of Camillus recently joined OCRRA as a Recycling Specialist. Quail’s previous experience in property management and marketing makes her the ideal person to help local apartments improve their recycling efforts.

If you are a property

manager of a large or small complex, contact Chanel at (315) 453-2866, ext. 209, cquail@ocrra.org or visit **OCRRA.org** to order free recycling supplies such as decals, posters and recycling containers.

Chanel is a great resource and can help you with all

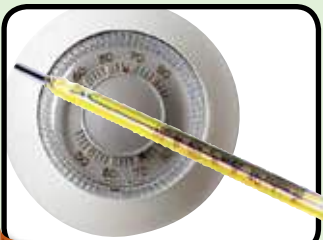
your recycling questions. Chanel is a member of the New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling and a long 911, Recycling@Work and Keep America Beautiful.

Chanel Quail can be reached at cquail@ocrra.org.



Chanel Quail, OCRRA Recycling Specialist

Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Syracuse, 2018



MERCURY THERM EVENTPG 2

Keep mercury out of the trash and environment on Monday, August 13



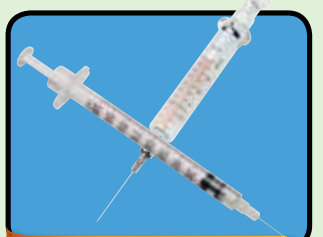
TEXTILESPG 3

Help reduce waste and improve the lives of others by donating your old clothes, linens and accessories.



COMPOST & MULCH PGS 4 & 5

Get the 411 on their benefits and how to get them from OCRRA.



SHARPS.....PG 6

Proper medical needle disposal keeps you and your hauler safe.



PropanePG 8

Find out how you can properly dispose of old propane tanks.

Wanted! Mercury Thermometers and Thermostats from Your Home

Drop them off at the Rock Cut Road Site on 8/13 and get a \$10 Lowe's gift card from Covanta

Chanel Quail, Recycling Specialist

Mercury, if not properly disposed of, can harm humans and the environment. To help keep mercury out of the waste stream and the environment, OCRRA and Covanta are hosting a takeback event.

The event happens on Monday, August 13 from 7:30 am until 10:30 am at OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Drop-Off Site (5808 Rock Cut Road, Jamesville). This is the brown facility across the road from the blue Waste-to-Energy Facility. Please note this free event is for household items generated in Onondaga County only.

Residents must complete a drop-off form before arriving and place it on their vehicle's dash the day of the event. The form may be accessed at OCRRA.org or cut out below.

Do you have a mercury item to drop off?

- Thermometers that contain mercury have a **silver, grey or black filling** in their tubes. If the filling is any other color, it is not a mercury thermometer and is not eligible for

drop off. It should go in the trash.

- Thermostats that contain mercury have levers or dials that you must physically move to change the temperature. If you remove the faceplate of your thermostat and see one or more **glass vials containing a silver substance**, it is a mercury thermostat. Do not dismantle the vials. If your thermostat is digital / programmable, it is not eligible for drop off and should go in the trash.

Broken leaking thermometers and thermostats will NOT be accepted. Follow household hazardous waste procedures and make a toxics disposal appointment at OCRRA.org (see black "toxics" box halfway down the home page.)

As an added bonus for keeping mercury items out of the waste stream, Covanta is generously providing attendees with a \$10 gift card to Lowe's*. Residents bringing in mercury thermometers will also receive a replacement thermome-

ter (mercury-free and digital) provided by Covanta. No gift card will be issued for non-mercury items.

"Covanta is excited to offer gift cards at this event which reward the outstanding efforts of Onondaga County residents who turn in mercury containing devices on August 13," said Kathleen Carroll, Covanta Onondaga client-waste solutions manager. "Removing mercury from the environment protects our children and wildlife; we are happy to be a part of this effort."

Do your part on Monday, August 13 to protect our health and the environment, and help "save the world a little each day®."

No trash or recyclables will be accepted at the Rock Cut Road Site, during the event, as it is closed for normal business on Monday, August 13.

Can't make the event? Bring mercury thermostats and thermometers to OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Drop-Off Site, year-round and a \$5 Lowe's gift card* will be mailed to you as



Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Jamesville, 2017

Bob Graves of Liverpool receives a \$10 gift card to Lowe's and a replacement digital thermometer in exchange for the mercury items he brought to the 2017 Mercury Collection Event. Covanta and OCRRA are sponsoring the 2018 event on Monday, August 13 from 7:30 am -10:30 am at the Rock Cut Road Drop-Off Site. There is no cost to attend and the event is open to Onondaga County residents only. Attendees must complete a registration form (found below or at OCRRA.org) and bring it with them the day of the event.

a reward. If you drop off mercury thermometers, you will also get a replacement digital thermometer, courtesy of Covanta.

The Rock Cut Road Drop-Off Site is open Tuesday-Saturday from 7:00 am to 2:30 pm.

**One gift card per resident drop-off, regardless of the number of mercury items turned in.*

Chanel Quail can be reached at cquail@ocrra.org.

Save the world a little each day.™

Mercury Therm Drop-Off Form

Complete this form in advance. Place it on your vehicle's dash on the day of the event.

Name:

Street:

Town: Zip Code:

Phone:

Email*:

*By providing your email address you are confirming that you want to be on OCRRA's email list (which keeps you up-to-date on OCRRA's services and upcoming events). You may unsubscribe at any time.

Signature: _____

Number of **THERMOMETERS** Dropped Off:

Number of **THERMOSTATS** Dropped Off:



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KRISTEN LAWTON
Public Information Officer
and Editor

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The Garden GURU

Terry Ettinger
Instructional Support Specialist, SUNY - ESF

What's Best? OCRRA's 1/2" General or 1/4" Premium Compost?

In the four years that I've been writing this column (yes, time really does fly), I've received a number of questions about which grade of OCRRA Compost is best for vegetable gardens, potted plants, etc.; the 1/4" Premium Compost or the 1/2" General Compost?

What I have learned over the past several years in the SUNY ESF rooftop greenhouse facility is that a wide range of tropical foliage and flowering plants including Chinese hibiscus, numerous species of *Ficus* and *Citrus*, banana, and others grow quite well when planted directly into very large containers filled with OCRRA's 1/2" General Compost.

Therefore, if it were me, I would not hesitate to plant a vegetable garden directly into the 1/2" General Compost – IF it was put into place the previous fall.

This "aging" process allows the larger woody pieces to continue decomposing, it allows the soluble salt level to drop a bit, and it allows the compost to settle.

To provide a sufficient root zone, a compost-only raised bed should be eight to ten inches deep. (Note: one cubic yard of compost covers a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area to a depth of three inches. Therefore, three cubic yards of compost is needed to create a 10 ft. x 10 ft. garden.)

This compost-only garden can then be refreshed at the end of each growing season with a three inch layer of new 1/2" General Compost – mixed with a foot of tree leaves, if you have them hanging around!

You can also do this on top of an existing garden (non-raised bed), then plant right into the compost/leaf mixture the following spring without first turning it under.

I'll soon pick up some 1/4" Premium Compost to see how useful it is for growing a wide range of plants in smaller containers, as compared to typical peatmoss-based potting soils.

OCRRA USCC Certified Compost



1/2" General Compost



1/4" Premium Compost

OCRRA sells two different grades of compost. The General Compost (1/2" screened) is available by the trunk load and by the cubic yard at both the Amboy and Jamesville Compost Site. The Premium Compost (1/4" screened) may be purchased by the bag at more than 30 local retailers and by the cubic yard at both Compost Sites. Either compost can be used in various lawn and garden applications. Visit OCRRA.org for price and location details.

I will also repeat a couple of informal studies my students conducted last year to see how well the 1/4" Premium Compost works for starting a variety of vegetable and flower seeds. So, stay tuned for those results

later this year.

In the meantime, give OCRRA's 1/2" General Compost a try in your vegetable and/or flower garden.

Terry Ettinger can be reached at tlettinger@esf.edu.



Recycling Rhoda

Talks Trash –
and Recycling!

Recycle clothes and textiles year-round

Dear Recycling Rhoda,

I've heard that my jeans can be recycled, but when I threw them in the blue bin, my roommate snatched them out before our bin even hit the curb. Apparently, my jeans can be recycled, just not in my blue bin. So, if I can't put them in my recycling bin, then how exactly am I supposed to recycle them?

Confused in Camillus

Dear Confused,

Since I'm a denim expert (a.k.a. jeans expert), I have an answer for you! The great thing about recycling your jeans, as well as other clothing items and textiles (things like linens, towels, curtains, shoes, hats, belts,

purses and even stuffed animals), is that you can do it anytime!

Textiles are accepted for recycling all year long, so you don't need to wait for a fancy-pants drop-off event. What's more, there are plenty-o drop-off options for you to choose from. Just not your blue bin, as your roommate, oh-so helpfully, pointed out.

To find a textile drop off location near you, visit www.tinyurl.com/cny-textiles for a list of more than 50 locations.

You might be wondering what actually happens to textiles after you bring them to one of these spots,

well I'm glad you asked!

Approximately 20% (or for those of you who need visual context: let's say 2 out of every 10 pounds) of donated textiles are sold in charitable shops such as the Salvation Army, Rescue Mission and Goodwill, for example. These charities then sell the remaining 80% (or 8 pounds out of every 10) to private sector recyclers, who can sell them to export markets and/or companies that recycle them into industrial cleaning rags or fiber-fill found in carpet padding and insulation.

According to the US Environmental Protection

Agency, textiles have one of the lowest recycling rates of any reusable material. Yeah, that's right, even though you can recycle those items 365 days a year at more than 50 locations in our community, only about 15% are donated or recycled. That's pathetic people!

That means 85% of textiles out there are trashed – over 20 million pounds in Onondaga County alone.

We can do better. All of us can make a difference by donating our unwanted clothes, shoes and other household textiles. Even the ones you think no one else would ever want or use, like items with missing but-

tons, broken zippers, small tears, permanent stains or even those socks that never found their mates. As long as the textiles are washed and dry, they are good to go to one of the locations noted in the previous link.

When you recycle your textiles, you are helping the environment, supporting jobs and supporting local charities that help those in need in our community. Pretty sweet deal for an old pair of jeans, right?

Recycling
Rhoda

Buy Compost And Mulch

Compost and mulch both suppress weeds, retain moisture so you can water less, and give your garden, and landscape a professionally finished look. In addition, compost suppresses the spread of plant disease and reduces the need for chemicals and pesticides, which keeps pollutants out of our water supply. Get some OCRRA Compost and Mulch today!

No Compost Site Pass is needed to purchase mate-

rial in any of the ways listed below. A pass is only necessary if you are looking to drop off yard waste or food scraps at OCRRA's Compost Sites.

A \$25 pass provides unlimited drop offs. As an added bonus, pass holders get two bags of OCRRA's Premium Compost. Passes may be purchased at the Compost Sites or online at: www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAcompostpass.



Photo Credit: Andrew Radin, OCRRA, Camillus, 2017

OCRRA personnel loads compost by the cubic yard into a resident's trailer at the Amboy Compost Site. Mulch can be purchased the same way. Residents may also purchase compost and mulch by the trunk load (self-load). Compost may be purchased by the bag at more than 30 local retailers – see list on page 5.

AMBOY COMPOST SITE (6296 Airport Road, Camillus, NY 13209)

Hours – April 1 to November 30:
Monday through Saturday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

JAMESVILLE COMPOST SITE (4370 Route 91, Jamesville, NY 13078)

New Hours – April 1 to November 30:
Thursday through Saturday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Compost

- 1) Buy it in Bags** (1/4" Premium Compost only)
Find it at over 30 retail locations. *See list on page 5.* Each retailer sets their own price point. Call for details.
- 2) Buy it by the trunk load** (1/2" General Compost only)
Car, van and SUV owners can hand load their trunk for \$10 per visit.
- 3) Purchase in Bulk** (1/4" Premium Compost or 1/2" General Compost)
Bring your truck or trailer to either of our Compost Sites and get it by the cubic yard; or contact a hauler who can deliver it for you. See list on page 5 for hauler details.

Mulch

- 1) Buy it by the trunk load** (1/2" General Compost only)
Car, van and SUV owners can hand load their trunk for \$5 per visit.
- 2) Purchase in Bulk** (Double Ground or Triple Ground Mulch)
Bring your truck or trailer and get it by the cubic yard; or contact a hauler who can deliver it for you. See list on page 5 for hauler details.
Triple Ground Mulch is only available at the Jamesville Compost Site.

In the last newsletter, B'ville Supply was inadvertently left off the list of retailers that carry OCRRA Compost. If you are in their neck of the woods (82 East Genesee Street, Baldwinsville), know they have OCRRA's Premium Compost in stock by the bag! This nutrient-rich, garden-safe compost is the perfect way to improve your garden or landscape. Call for pricing – (315) 635-5408.

Pricing (cash or check accepted):

- Compost by the Trunk Load**
1/2" Screened: \$10/trunk
- Bulk General Compost**
1/2" Screened: \$15/cu. yd.
- Bulk Premium Compost**
1/4" Screened: \$20/cu. yd.
- Mulch by the Trunk Load**
Natural Color, Double Ground: \$5/trunk
- Bulk Wood Mulch**
Natural Color, Double Ground: \$12.50/cu. yd.
- Premium Triple Ground Wood Mulch**
(Jamesville Site Only)
\$15/cu. yd.



Photo Credit: Barton & Loguidice, Liverpool, 2018

Barton & Loguidice President and CEO, John Brusa, Jr. (center), receives the Blue Ribbon Recycler certification from OCRRA's Executive Director Dereth Glance (left) and Recycling Specialist Dale Cocca (right).

Barton & Loguidice's offices in Liverpool demonstrate an uninterrupted commitment to waste reduction and recycling in all work spaces, as well as break rooms where food scraps and coffee grounds are diverted from the trash for composting, and reusable eating wares are incentivized.

Become a Blue Ribbon Recycler next quarter!
Apply at: www.tinyurl.com/BRrecycler

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 – Baldwinsville
- CountryMax – Cicero
- Deaton's Agway – Pulaski
- Green Acres Lawn & Garden Center – Liverpool
- Lan's Flower Farm – Clay
- Oliver B. Paine Greenhouses Fulton
- 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 Springs Farm Market Onondaga Hill
- Sollecito Landscaping Nursery Syracuse
- Town Square Ace Hardware Skaneateles
- Westvale Gardens – Syracuse

South Area

- Carol Watson's Greenhouse LaFayette
- CountryMax – Cortland
- CountryMax – Norwich

RECYCLE



Newspapers, Magazines, Catalogs and Softcover Books

Keep loose, don't tie.



Papers, Mail, Envelopes



Cardboard, Pizza, and Cereal Boxes

Flatten.



#1 and #2 Plastic BOTTLES*

Empty and rinse.



Can and Jars

Empty and rinse out, labels are okay.



#5 Plastic Tubs

Empty and rinse, no lids.

*ONLY #1 and #2 BOTTLES are recyclable. Bottles have necks and smaller tops than bottoms. Can't read the numbers on the bottom? Most bottles are #1 or #2 – so if it is a plastic BOTTLE, recycle it!

Save the world a little each day.



Want to know about an item that is not listed? Search our recycling list at OCRRA.org.

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	(315) 247-8111	Onondaga County	8 cu. yds.
Landscapes Etc. LLC	(315) 447-5844	Cazenovia: Serving Manlius, Fayetteville, Chittenango	10 cu. yds.
Larry Belge: Commercial Lawn & Landscape	(315) 415-2833	Liverpool, Clay, Cicero, North Syracuse	5 cu. yds.
Northern Firewood	(315) 668-9663	West Monroe	15 cu. yds.
The Outside Guys	(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.

Photo Credit: Andrew Radin, OCRRA, Camillus, 2017

Guest Column

Written by Mrs. Welling's 5th Grade Classes
Wellwood Middle School, Fayetteville

Our Oceans, Our Future



Photo Credit: Shutterstock, 2018

Mrs. Welling's classes at Wellwood Middle School in Fayetteville conducted research about the environmental impacts of plastic pollution in our oceans. The research included finding the causes and effects, as well as some solutions to help reduce plastic consumption and stop the pollution.

The following is an excerpt from an article they composed based upon their research. To read the full article, visit fmschools.org/webpages/ewelling/news.cfm.

Plastic pollution in the oceans is affecting marine life, people, and the environment.

Scientists have found plastic in the drink-

ing water of more than a dozen nations around the world. Plastic is also responsible for the death of over 100 million marine animals each year according to the Sea Turtle Conservancy. Sea turtles are eating plastic bags because they mistake them for jellyfish. When the turtles eat the bags, they feel full and they don't eat real food. Aquatic birds are also dying due to plastic consumption. Adult birds are regurgitating it to their chicks which harms them as well. Plastic has even been found in marine animals that live as far as seven miles deep!

Earth Day Cleanup



Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Syracuse, 2018

More than 7,100 volunteers turned out for our community's annual Earth Day Litter Cleanup in April. The Upstate Medical Physical Therapy group pictured here was just one of hundreds of groups that helped make the event a success. Thanks to all the volunteers and the Highway Departments that brought more than 50 tons (103,000 pounds) of collected litter to OCRRA for free disposal.

Rid Your Home of Household Toxics

Theresa Evans, Recycling Specialist

As delightfully warm temperatures have finally settled in, time spent outdoors is calling us all. This includes not only recreational activities such as hiking, swimming or kicking around a soccer ball, but also the chance to catch up on some household chores, like finally cleaning out the basement or garage.

When doing so, it is important not to dispose of toxic household materials down the drain, on the ground or in your garbage can. Things like automotive products, driveway sealers, oil-based paints, adhesives, pool chemicals, herbicides, pesticides and more* should be handled in a special way. Take advantage of OCRRA's no charge, year-round drop off program for common household toxics.

Chances are, there are many toxic items currently taking up residence in your home. There is that oven cleaner under the kitchen sink, leftover bottle of paint thinner in the basement and wasp spray out in the garage. Scour your house for these old, unusable toxic products and you might be surprised at how many you find.

Improper handling of these hazardous materials can be dangerous to your health, as well as pose a threat to water, air, wildlife and pets. OCRRA's environmentally-sound household toxics disposal program is



Photo Credit: Klineberg Photography, Syracuse, 2016

Cleaning toxic items out of your home is easy with OCRRA's year-round household hazardous waste program. Make a free appointment online at OCRRA.org and help protect the environment.

a convenient remedy to the possible harm done by these products.

To participate in OCRRA's household hazardous waste disposal program, simply make an appointment through our website (OCRRA.org) or call the office to schedule a drop-off (315-453-2866). Appointments may be made from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday-Friday. A confirmation email shares packaging instructions and directions to the drop-off location, Environmental Products and Services of Vermont, a local company that specializes in proper disposal of hazardous materials.

There is a limit on how much material one may bring in: a maximum of 20 gallons of liquids and 30 pounds of solids.

Speaking of liquids, only oil-based paints are hazardous. Latex or water-based paints can be properly disposed of by drying them

out with kitty litter or paint hardening crystals and then throwing the paint can (lid off) in your trash. When your trash makes its way to the Waste-to-Energy Facility, where it is converted into electricity, magnets will extract the metal cans and they will be recycled.

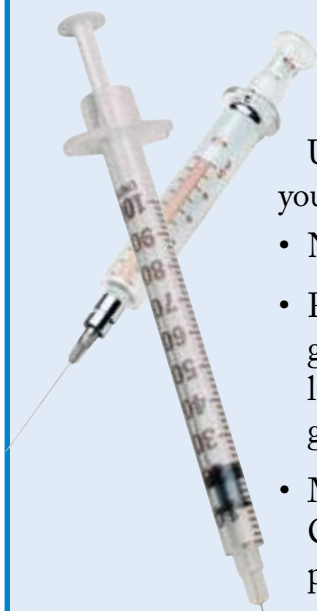
There is no fee to Onondaga County households using this program; program costs are underwritten by OCRRA with grant assistance from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Check off a honey-do list item while helping protect human health and the environment – make a household hazardous waste appointment today!

*Visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAtoxics for an extensive list of acceptable household hazardous waste items.

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

Special Disposal: Medical Needles / Sharps



Used needles can harm family members or those who manage your trash if not properly managed. Here's the 411 on sharps:

- NEVER put sharps in the blue bin,
- Place sharps in a clean, heavy plastic bleach or laundry detergent bottle with screw-on cap. Containers must be leak-proof, labeled as "Sharps" and tops must be taped shut. Then they can go in the TRASH,
- Many health centers / hospitals take sharps and Onondaga County has a "Sharps, Needles and Drug Disposal" drop off program. Visit www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAsharps for details.



From the Executive Director's Desk...

What's in Onondaga County's Trash?

Take the quiz below & learn where to focus your recycling efforts

DERETH GLANCE, Executive Director, OCRRA

After you separate your cans, bottles, cardboard, cereal boxes and junk mail from your garbage for recycling, what's left in the trash? In reality, what are the best items to focus on to reduce garbage in our community? Test your knowledge and take the OCRRA Trash-to-Treasure quiz below to find out how you can make the biggest impact.

QUESTION: Based on total annual trash generated by our community (about 282,000 tons), place the following four items in order, with #1 being the largest total weight and #4 being the smallest total weight:

_____ Textiles, including clothes, shoes, blankets and hats

_____ Food scraps

_____ Plastic food containers like the kind that held fresh fruit, leftovers or take out items

_____ Plastic shopping bags and other film plastics, such as bread bags and newspaper bags

See page 8 infographic for the answer.

The top three items are all recyclable, just NOT in the blue bin. We could reduce our trash by as much as 30% if we:

1) composted our food scraps or reduced our **food waste**;

2) returned **plastic bags** to the store for recycling; and

3) donated unwanted **clothes and shoes**, even if they're not in perfect condition.

This quiz highlights: while many people focus on the plastics that are NOT included in our community's recycling program, because **there is no market demand for these materials**, we often neglect those items that can be recycled and have a stable demand.

For example, we could reduce our trash by as much as 28 million pounds by donating unwanted clothes, shoes, hats, towels, and linens to the Rescue Mission, Salvation Army and other drop off locations in our community. All textiles will be accepted, even if torn or missing a button, as long as they are cleaned and dry. If the items aren't suitable to be worn again they can be recycled into wiping rags for industrial applications. There is no need to trash textiles, help them live another useful life by dropping them off at a location near you, visit: [**do-i-get-rid-of/textiles/**](http://www.ocrra.org/how-</p>
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We could further reduce our trash by as much as 79 million pounds by composting food scraps or taking simple measures to reduce our food waste. Visit www.tinyurl.com/foodsavingtips for some easy to implement food waste reduction tips.

OCRRA offers a food scrap drop off program to compost food scraps from residents, businesses, and schools. To learn more about this nationally-award winning effort, visit: www.ocrra.org/services/compost/

Finally, we could reduce total trash by over 28 million pounds by dropping off plastic bags / film plastics at local supermarkets, pharmacy chains and other big box stores for recycling. To learn more about what types of plastic bags and film plastics are acceptable, visit: www.tinyurl.com/DECplasticbags

Plastic bags should NEVER be placed in the blue bin, nor should residents put their sorted recyclables inside plastic bags in the bin; they will likely be trashed. The best approach is to **reduce plastic bag waste by using reusable bags.**



What about plastic food and beverage containers? Even though they may have a recycling symbol on the bottom, not all plastic containers are recyclable. **The only plastics with a stable market demand so, the only ones that go in the blue bin in Onondaga County are: #1 or #2 bottles and #5 dairy tubs.**

If put in the blue bin, "other" plastics (think plastic clamshells, that berries come in, for example) contaminate those that can be recycled.

Please put all other plastics, as well as egg cartons (paper and Styrofoam), in the trash.

Many communities and countries are now moving to ban unnecessary plastics in the first place, such as single use plastic straws and flimsy plastic bags. These items easily become litter that can harm our oceans and bans have encouraged folks to choose more durable

reusable options. Reusable bags are surprisingly easy to carry with you and not hard to clean.

Keeping the three R's, reduce, reuse, recycle, in the forefront of our mind helps guide smart choices. Reducing the amount of garbage that we generate helps "save the world a little each day" by ensuring our resources are recovered for their highest possible use.

Dereth Glance can be reached at dglance@ocrra.org.

See page 8 infographic for the answer.

OCRRA Recycling Specialist Earns State Award



Photo Credit: Kristen Lawton, OCRRA, North Syracuse, 2018

Not only did OCRRA's Theresa Evans win the local Ellen Swallow Richards Award from the New York State Association of Family & Consumer Sciences Educators, but she was subsequently entered into consideration for the New York State award – and guess what?!

She garnered the state-wide award for her outstanding contributions and significant impact to

the field of Family and Consumer Sciences for the fabulous recycling presentations she shares with thousands of students each and every year.

Theresa is pictured here (left) with Eagle Hill Middle School teacher Beth Robinson (right) who nominated her.

Great job, Theresa!

How Do I Dispose of Old Propane Tanks?

Chanel Quail, Recycling Specialist

Grilling season is upon us, so it is time to learn how to responsibly dispose of old propane tanks.

What you need to know:

- Reuse old propane tanks. Exchange **empty outdoor grill tanks** (20-pound tanks) for a full tank at locations that sell them.
- **Small one-pound camp-size tanks** can go in the trash if they are **EMPTY**; but never in the blue bin, even if they are empty. Be sure to use up ALL the contents before tossing one in the trash in order to avoid ignition and potential bodily harm.
- Twenty-pound (and larger) tanks should **NEVER** go in the trash or blue bin.

Ultimately, these metal tanks will be collected and recycled at the Waste-to-Energy Facility. OCRRA's Rock Cut Road and Ley Creek Drop-Off Sites will also accept the small, empty one-pound propane tanks for recycling.

If at end-of-life, the businesses below will accept propane tanks for disposal (contact them in advance for preparation details and pricing):

- Ben Weitsman & Son, Solvay, (315) 488-3171
- BJ's Wholesale Club, Clay, (315) 622-2600
- BJ's Wholesale Club, East Syracuse, (315) 434-9100



- Bodow Recycling, Syracuse, (315) 422-2552
- Country Propane, Central Square, Clay and Dewitt
- Energy Gases, East Syracuse, (315) 446-8400
- Farmers Co-op, Baldwinsville, (315) 635-5221

Happy grilling!
Chanel Quail can be reached at cquail@ocrra.org.

Turning Food Waste into Wonderful



Photo Credit: Theresa Evans, OCRRA, Syracuse, 2016

Students at Walberta Park Elementary School in Syracuse prove that composting leftover lunch is as easy as 1, 2, 3! Currently, more than 6,700 students in 16 schools across 4 districts in Onondaga County are separating their cafeteria food scraps from their trash and recyclables. In turn, OCRRA transforms them into nutrient-rich compost that is used to grow thriving plants throughout the community. To bring this innovative, educational, plant and planet-happy program to your child's school, contact Theresa Evans at tevens@ocrra.org.

What's in Onondaga County's Trash?

Quiz answer from page 7



What's in the trash?

FOOD SCRAPS

79 Million Pounds

15%

PLASTIC BAGS & OTHER FILM PLASTICS

28 Million Pounds

5%

TEXTILES

28 Million Pounds

5%

PLASTIC FOOD CONTAINERS

11 Million Pounds

2%

Bottom Line: Focus your efforts on the top three items as they have very reliable recycling markets and can be recycled outside the blue bin year-round, unlike plastic food containers, which make up a small percentage of our trash and do not have stable markets.

Mark Your Calendar

ALL OCRRA SITES CLOSED
JULY 4
Happy Independence Day!

ALKALINE BATTERY COLLECTION
MONTH OF JULY
Place yellow battery bag on top of your trash. See page 1 for details.

TV & ELECTRONICS RECYCLING
YEAR-ROUND
Search OCRRA.org for "electronics" for details

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