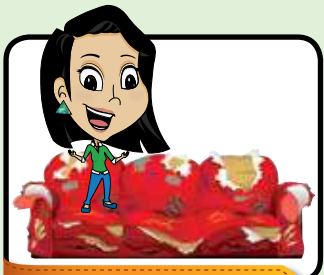




TRANSFER STATIONS PG 2

Adapting to changes and anticipating the future.



BIG FURNITURE PG 3

Rhoda tells you where to put it.

FAQs

SURVEY PGS 4-5

OCRRA shares answers to the most frequently asked questions.



HOLIDAY RECYCLING PG 6

Get tips on what can and cannot be recycled.



RECYCLING FEE PG 6

What the new recycling fee will mean for you in 2021.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, North Syracuse, 2020.

No Plastic Bags

Never bag your recycling. Dump your recyclables **LOOSE** into your recycling bin. Bagged recyclables will not be recycled, they will end up as trash.

Bags cannot be individually opened at the sorting facility, so drop your recyclables into the bin loose.

Feel free to collect items in a bag at home and dump them loose into your bin outside. If the plastic bag you carried them in is clean and dry, feel free to reuse it or recycle it at grocery stores, chain pharmacies or large retail stores. But, never put it in your blue bin.

Film plastics/plastic bags and wraps contaminate the recycling stream. They must be recycled at a drop off location. Check out this link for a list of places you can recycle plastic bags and other film plastics: www.tinyurl.com/filmplastics

Do You Need Two Blue Bins for Recycling?

Nope. You can now mix your recyclable papers with your containers, if you want. But, if you like using two bins, go for it! In fact, one way to reduce litter is to put your lightweight papers in one bin and your heavier containers in another. Then stack the heavier bin on top of your paper bin. Easy-peasy!

1 Bin

OR

2 Bins



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Dewitt, 2020.

You can use one blue bin and mix your papers with your containers at the curb. You do not have to use two bins anymore. But, you can, if you want.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Dewitt, 2020.

Alternatively, you can use two blue bins. Fill one with papers and one with containers and stack the container bin on top to prevent litter. Choose whichever method works best for you.

What's Happening with OCRRA's Transfer Stations?

Kristen Lawton, Public Information Officer

OCRRA thanks our customers for their patience as we continue to make changes at our transfer stations.

All commercial customers (large trash haulers as well as small business users, or those who bring in materials from homes besides their own) are now **using the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station in Jamesville.**

All residents bringing in materials from their own homes are using the Ley Creek Transfer Station in Liverpool, Thurs.-Sat. OCRRA acknowledges that this arrangement is a change and may not be ideal to everyone.

OCRRA is now focusing on planning for residential services. OCRRA is looking at two main options: mov-

ing residential services to the east side of the county or improving the Ley Creek Transfer Station, so it too can comply with state regulations that require all operations to take place indoors. Either option will take time to accomplish, but rest assured this concept is on our radar.

OCRRA received your survey feedback and is sharing it with our board of directors to help inform future decision making. Until those decisions are made, we appreciate your patience.

Please join our email list to be made aware of future changes. Sign up at the bottom of **OCRRA.org**.

Kristen can be reached at klawton@ocrra.org.

Transfer Station Hours

Ley Creek Transfer Station

Residents Only. No Commercial Customers.

5158 Ley Creek Drive, Liverpool
(Off 7th North St. exit of Route 81)

OPEN: Thu. & Fri., 6:30 am – 1:30 pm;

Sat., 8:00 am – 11:30 am.

CLOSED: Mon. – Wed. and Sun.

Rock Cut Road Transfer Station

Commercial Entities Only. No Residential Customers.

5808 Rock Cut Road, Jamesville

OPEN: Hand-unloading: Mon. – Fri., 6:30 am – 1:30 pm;

Self-dumping vehicles: Mon. – Fri., 6:30 am – 2:30 pm;

CLOSED: Sat. and Sun.

E-Waste and TVs



Photo Credit: iStock, 2020.

Looking to recycle an old TV or other electronics such as computers, monitors, keyboards, mice, tablets, fax machines, scanners, printers, VCRs, DVD players, DVRs, digital converter boxes, cable/satellite receivers, portable digital music players, or video game consoles? There are many year-round options in our community. Visit www.tinyurl.com/2RecycleEwaste or call (315) 453-2866 for details.

Need Confidential Document Shredding Services?

Theresa Evans, Recycling Specialist

OCRRA is working on plans for future residential shredding services. Things are not finalized yet, but please join our email list to be notified when plans for 2021 are unveiled! Sign up in the green "Join our Mailing List" section at the bottom of our website, **OCRRA.org**.

If you need to shred and recycle confidential documents in the meantime, contact Simple Shred in Syracuse (315-684-9900), or the nearest Office Max, Staples or UPS Store for pricing and material preparation instructions.

A confidential document refers to medical papers, bank information, tax forms or other records containing personal account numbers. Other documents, including those that contain only your name and mailing address, are not confidential. They do not need to be shredded. They can



Photo Credit: iStock, 2010.

be recycled in your blue bin instead.

Theresa can be reached at tevans@ocrra.org.

Christmas Trees

Contact your highway department for pick up schedules, or bring your tree to OCRRA's Amboy or Jamesville Compost Site weekdays between Jan. 4 and Jan. 15.

There are no weekend hours.

HOURS:
Mon. - Fri. from 7:30 am - 3:30 pm.

Remove all decorations, lights, tinsel, stands, and plastic bags before drop off.

There is no cost to drop off a tree.



Winter 2020
Volume 29 • No. 4

This quarterly publication is brought to you by

OCRRA

100 Elwood Davis Road, North Syracuse, NY 13212

OCRRA's waste reduction, reuse and recycling program efforts (including this newsletter) are partially financed by a grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

KRISTEN LAWTON

Editor and Public Information Officer
(315) 453-2866 • Klawton@OCRRA.org

Printed on Recycled Paper

FACT: If you have household trash, Ley Creek Transfer Station in Liverpool is your drop off site. It only serves residents.

Plastic Bag & Wrap Recycling

Plastic bags and plastic wraps should **never** go in the recycling bin.

Clean, dry plastic bags and wraps can be recycled at supermarkets, chain pharmacies and big box retailers. Find drop off sites here:

www.tinyurl.com/filmplastics

ACCEPTABLE

- Grocery bags
- Retail bags (draw strings removed)
- Dry cleaning bags
- Bread bags
- Produce bags (labels removed)
- Newspaper bags
- Zip top bags (i.e., Ziploc bags)
- Air pillows from shipping packages (air removed)
- Bubblewrap from shipping packages (air removed)
- Case wrap (i.e., found around cases of water)
- Overwrap (i.e., found around paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, etc.)

UNACCEPTABLE

- Plastic bags with food residue
- Plastic bags with strings
- Plastic soil or mulch bags
- Degradable/compostable bags or film packaging
- Pre-washed salad mix bags
- Frozen food bags
- Candy bar wrappers
- Chip bags
- Six-pack rings



RECYCLING VIDEO

Get details on what should and should **NOT** go in your blue bin:

www.tinyurl.com/RecycleRight2019



Photo Credit: Syracuse.com, 2019.

Compost Site Hours

Amboy Compost Site
6296 Airport Road, Camillus

OPEN: Year-Round

Monday – Friday
7:30 am – 3:30 pm

Jamesville Compost Site
4370 Route 91, Jamesville

CLOSED FOR THE SEASON

Site opens April 1, 2021



Art Credit: Metro Creative Connection, 2020.

Recycling Rhoda

Bulky Furniture

Dear Recycling Rhoda,

I'm moving and need to get rid of an old sofa, which was second-hand when I got it. It's definitely not in suitable condition to donate again. Can I leave it at the curb for the garbage truck to pick up?

–Moving in Manlius

Dear Moving,

Most trash pickup companies don't take bulky items like sofas each week, but some offer special pickups, so call and check with your collection company. If they don't offer that service or you want to get rid of your sofa ASAP, bring it to OCRRA's Ley

Creek Transfer Station in Liverpool. We'll dispose of it, along with any of your other household garbage or home renovation debris (fees apply).

Are you wondering, where the heck the Ley Creek Transfer Station is anyway? It is located at scenic 5158 Ley Creek Drive in Liverpool, NY. Not familiar with Ley Creek Drive, you say? It is right off Route 81 at the Seventh North Street exit, across from the Pilot Gas Station. The site serves residential customers only, so there's no big truck traffic to worry about on-site.

Residents are welcome to visit Ley Creek Transfer Station any Thursday, Friday or Saturday, with no appointment necessary. Just show up during regular hours of operation, (which are 6:30 am to 1:30 pm on Thursdays and Fridays, and 8:00 am to 11:30 am on Saturdays), talk to OCRRA's friendly gate-keeper about your fee and then unload your materials.

Now that you know where to go, the only thing left for me to clear up is the cost. OCRRA charges a vehicle entrance fee of \$15 for cars and minivans

and \$30 for pickup trucks, SUVs, vans, and single-axle trailers. Once you're in, you're in. The cost to dispose of everything that is in your vehicle is included in the entrance fee, with the exception of appliances with refrigerants (think items like air conditioners or dehumidifiers – \$15 each), mattresses (\$15 each), microwaves (\$5 each) and tires (\$7 each). Those items all require special handling, hence the extra fee. You can get specifics as well as a list of acceptable and unacceptable items at www.tinyurl.com/LeyCreekInfo.

You can even input items in the website's searchable database – found at the top of every page – for details on how to get rid of hundreds of items 24/7. We aren't the only ones that are always thinking about trash, are we?!

Enjoy furniture shopping, and if you are moving out of Onondaga County, then I hope you will always fondly remember your helpful, brilliant, and dare I say beautiful, friend, Recycling Rhoda.

Always,

Recycling Rhoda

BLUE BIN OR NO?

Not all plastics can go in the blue bin. This visual guide shows TYPES of items you should know about. Please use this as a SHAPE guide. 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.

YES

NO

Plastic Bottles



Plastic Jugs



Plastic Jars



Plastic Dairy Tubs



Film Plastics*



Clamshell Containers (Trash)



Cords & Hoses (Trash)



Plastic Cups (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. Learn more on page 3.

Survey: Residents Answered OCRRA's Questions – and Now We're Answering Yours

Kristen Lawton, Public Information Officer

In the fall, OCRRA solicited resident input on future drop off service needs through an online survey. More than 2,100 residents took the time to complete the survey and shared valuable insights. Thank you!

1,025 residents offered comments and asked questions of their own. Since the survey was anonymous, OCRRA was unable to reply back to specific questions; so answers to the most frequently asked questions are below. If your question is not addressed, please reach out to us at info@ocrra.org or call us at (315) 453-2866. Leave us a message if we don't answer, we'll get back to you readily.

Many thanks to the residents who pointed out how helpful and kind our employees are or those who expressed appreciation for the services that OCRRA offers our community.

1) Can you offer year-round services for household hazardous waste drop off, fluorescent bulb recycling, battery recycling, and / or electronics recycling?

The good news is OCRRA does offer these services year-round – or in the case of electronics recycling, it is provided throughout the year by other businesses in our community!

Residents can bring household hazardous waste in to OCRRA's drop off program by appointment, M-F from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm. There is no cost for this service. Learn what items you can bring in and make an appointment at: www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAtoxic

Fluorescent bulbs can be dropped off at various locations in our community year-round as can batteries. Check out these links for details: www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAbulbs and www.tinyurl.com/OCRRAbatteryInfo

2) My taxes cover OCRRA's costs. Why should I pay a recycling fee too?

OCRRA is not an arm of County government. We are a public benefit corporation, much like the NYS Thruway Authority, which was created by the NYS Legislature to manage our community's trash and recycling. We do not receive tax support. Our operations and the fees we charge for them cover our expenses. Recycling has always had a cost. Since 2018, recycling has cost more than the revenues made from selling the materials. For the past three years, the cost to continue recycling has increased exponentially. It went from being a revenue generator in 2017 (\$125,000), to a cost in 2018 (\$668,000), 2019 (\$1.8 million) and 2020 (projected to be \$2.5 million). A multi-year depression like this has never happened before. **Recycling in Onondaga County never stopped during this depression,**

unlike in other areas of our nation. OCRRA believes recycling is important, but we are not able to continue to use our decreasing revenues and reserves to cover the increasing costs of recycling. OCRRA needed to find another way to support recycling.

In 2021, haulers will be charged a fee for items they drop off at the recycling facility. OCRRA anticipates, when this is passed along to residents, it will equate to \$1 a month per household, or \$12 per household per year.

3) Why did you change the recycling rules and get rid of the numbers for plastics? You should have a list of what's recyclable on your website, maybe even a searchable list to make it easier to understand what gets recycled.

OCRRA did what many recycling programs around the nation did, we tried to simplify our recycling instructions to reduce the contamination that ends up in the bins and demystify plastics recycling.

For the latest recycling instructions, complete with images, visit: www.tinyurl.com/OCRRA101 You can also search OCRRA's interactive database. It can be found at the top of any page on our website. Just type in the item you are looking to get rid of – there is a white search field in the top center of all pages labeled "What are you looking for? / How do I get rid of..." – it will bring you to a list of search results. Typing in one or two word descriptions, as opposed to full

sentences, will provide the best results. Just pick the result that most closely matches what you are seeking. If you can't find what you are looking for, fill out our website improvement form and we'll get you an answer.

Plastics

There is no need to look at the numbers at the bottom of plastics, just pay attention to the **shape** of an item. If it easily fits the descriptions below, it can go in the recycling bin.

If it does not, it should go in the trash (unless it is a clean, dry stretchy film plastic including plastic bags, produce bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper bags, and the plastic overwrap found on cases of water bottles or paper towels. They can be recycled at large retail stores, grocery stores and chain pharmacies as long as they do not have any labels).

• **BOTTLE*** - something that has a smaller opening than base (has threads at the neck for a screw on cap) - this includes shampoo bottles, body wash bottles, dish soap bottles, ice tea bottles, even irregular shaped bottles.

• **JUG*** - something with a handle - like a milk jug or laundry detergent bottle.

• **JAR*** - similar to the bottle description: i.e., peanut butter jar, pickle jar, mayo jar, etc.

• **WIDE-MOUTH, STACKABLE DAIRY TUB †** - a dairy tub that previously contained a DAIRY product or DAIRY SUBSTITUTE like butter, yogurt, Cool Whip, sour cream, cream cheese, etc. It must be able to nest inside itself. If you cannot stack them inside themselves, they are not recyclable. Lids are NOT recyclable.

*PLASTIC CAPS on bottles, jugs or jars can be recycled, but only if you reattach them. If they go in the bin loose they end up as trash.

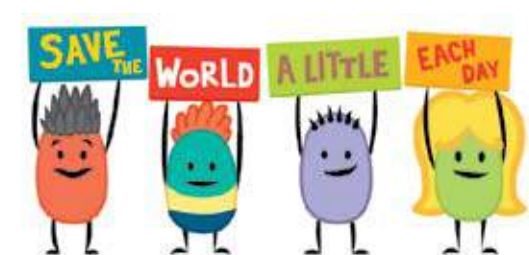
METAL CAPS go in the trash. They will be recovered at the Waste-to-Energy Facility and recycled. Each year 10,000 tons of metal are recycled this way! Watch a video about the Waste-to-Energy process here: www.tinyurl.com/trashWTE

† PLASTIC LIDS on dairy tubs should go in the trash (they are typically a different type of plastic than the container).

Sign up for emails at OCRRA.org (green section at the bottom of the page) or follow us on Facebook and stay up-to-date on all things recycling. Kristen can be reached at klawton@ocrra.org.

Blue Bin Recycling Tips:

- ✓ Only plastics shaped like **bottles, jugs, jars** or wide-mouth, **stackable DAIRY** tubs go in the blue bin.
- ✓ **Cardboard** and paper items such as **junk mail, office paper, envelopes, catalogs** and **soft cover books** are all recyclable.
- ✓ Paperboard boxes such as cereal, pasta and tissue boxes can also be recycled; however, **all frozen food boxes should go in the trash.**
- ✓ **Cartons**, even those with the plastic spouts - think milk, juice cartons or aseptic cartons that soup or alternative milks come in can be recycled.
- ✗ All "**crackable**" plastics, such as the containers that berries, baked goods, salads or takeout come in should go in the trash.
- ✗ **Plastic bags and other stretchy film plastics** that are clean, dry can be at large retail stores, grocery stores and chain pharmacies as long as they do not have any labels.
- ✗ When in doubt, if you can't check it out (at OCRRA.org, on Facebook, or by calling us at 315-453-2866), throw it out. Avoid wish-cycling. This reduces contamination and keeps our community's recycling program sustainable in the long-term.



Curbside Recycling



Milk and juice cartons
Empty and rinse.



Newspapers, magazines, catalogs and softcover books
Keep loose. Don't tie.



Plastic bottles and jugs
Empty and replace cap.



Cardboard, pizza, pasta, cereal boxes, etc.
Flatten.



Cans and jars
Empty and rinse. Labels are ok.



Papers, mail, envelopes



Plastic dairy tubs
Empty and rinse; no lids.

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year...to Recycle!

Theresa Evans, Recycling Specialist

Each year the holidays bring a lot of excitement, as well as a lot of items to dispose of. Between the extra catalogs, shipping boxes, wrapping paper, holiday cards and more, a reminder on what should be recycled versus what should be thrown away is always helpful. The following guidelines will help you keep the environment in mind this holiday season and all year.

Recycle in Blue Bin:

- Gift wrap – except if it is metallic, foil or glittery (flatten).
- Paper greeting cards and envelopes that do not have metallic, foil or glitter decoration.
- Cardboard boxes (flatten).
- Cardboard wrapping paper tubes.
- Aluminum foil and foil baking trays (clean and ball up).
- Holiday catalogs and all magazines.

Holiday Reminder: All recyclables must go in the blue bin LOOSE. They cannot be in plastic bags. Any items in plastic bags will end up as trash.

Trash:

- Tissue paper.
- Styrofoam.
- Metallic, foil and / or glitter gift wrap, bags and cards.
- Bows and ribbons.
- Plastic cutlery, straws and cups.

Recycle other Places:

- **Batteries:** drop off at OCRRA's battery kiosks at Wegmans stores, at Green Hills Market, at Wrightway Hardware in Baldwinsville or at the Nightingale True Value stores in Tully or Marcellus.
- **Bubble wrap / air shipping pouches:** take back to retail stores to recycle with other film plastics.
- **Christmas lights:** bring strings of holiday lights to Lowe's stores for recycling in December – do not put Christmas lights in your recycling bin!

The holidays provide a chance to do right by each other, as well as the planet.

Consider donating your good quality items that get replaced by new gifts, and/or holiday decorations that



Cara Skinner (14 months) of the Town of Onondaga knows that non-metallic gift bags, non-metallic wrapping paper, non-foil/non-glitter cards and envelopes, catalogs, plastic bottles and cardboard boxes belong in the blue bin this holiday season. Be savvy like Cara and keep tissue paper, ribbons, bows and plastic bags out of the blue bin!

no longer suit your style. Clothes, coats, shoes, boots, stuffed animals, linens and all kinds of household textiles can be donated as well.

Presents can be gifted in reusable bags, or the wrapping can become part of the gift itself, such as a tea towel or basket.

If you are ever unsure of

how to get rid of something, remember “when in doubt, throw it out.” It is preferable to put an item in the trash, where it will be turned into electricity (our trash generates enough power for 30,000 homes each year), than to risk contaminating the recycling stream with items that cannot be recycled.

For more information about recycling at the holidays or any time of year, visit **OCRRA.org**. Happy Holidays to you and yours!

Theresa can be reached at tevens@ocrra.org.



New Recycling Fee on the Way: What Does that Mean to You?

When will the new recycling fee begin?

The new recycling fee will take effect January 1, 2021.

How much is the new recycling fee?

Haulers who drop off residential recycling will be charged \$34 per ton of material delivered. This fee covers half the cost of recycling (OCRRA covers the other half) and allows our county's award-winning recycling program to continue despite sustained and severely depressed recycling markets.

How much more will this cost me?

OCRRA estimates the recycling charge will cost households, on average, about \$12 more a year or \$1 extra a month.

However, all residents don't pay for recycling in the same way. Some residents pay a hauler directly while others pay for this service in their taxes. Regardless, OCRRA anticipates the cost will amount to about \$12 per year per household.

Will there be a charge for residents dropping off recycling at the OCRRA Ley Creek Transfer Station in 2021?

Yes. Residents who do not have curbside recycling collection and bring their recyclables to OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station in

Liverpool will pay \$2 per recycling drop off, regardless of how many recyclables they bring in each time. It is a \$2 fee per visit.

Why is there a new recycling fee?

There is a cost to sort and market recycling. There has always been a cost, but in the past the sale of the recyclables generally covered this cost. For the past three years, this has not been the case.

Recycling markets dropped so much that the cost to recycle has skyrocketed. In 2018, China stopped taking materials in for recycling from around the world because they were too contaminated and had too many non-recyclable items mixed in. This caused a glut of material in the market and drove prices down. Recycling became more expensive than managing the materials as trash.

Some communities across the nation have removed items from their recycling programs or stopped their programs altogether, because they are too costly to continue.

Since 2018, OCRRA has spent close to \$5 million to keep recycling going in Onondaga County. OCRRA is not a tax funded

continued on page 8



From the Executive Director's Desk...

Recycling Realities

Recycling is important to the environment and the economy; it also has a cost

Dereth Glance, Executive Director, OCRRA

Recycling is very important; it conserves natural resources, reduces pollution and supports local jobs. Recycling, just like everything else, is a service that costs money.

Recycling has always cost money. Beyond the capital and labor needed for collection, processing recyclables requires expensive equipment and labor to sort and prepare materials for market.

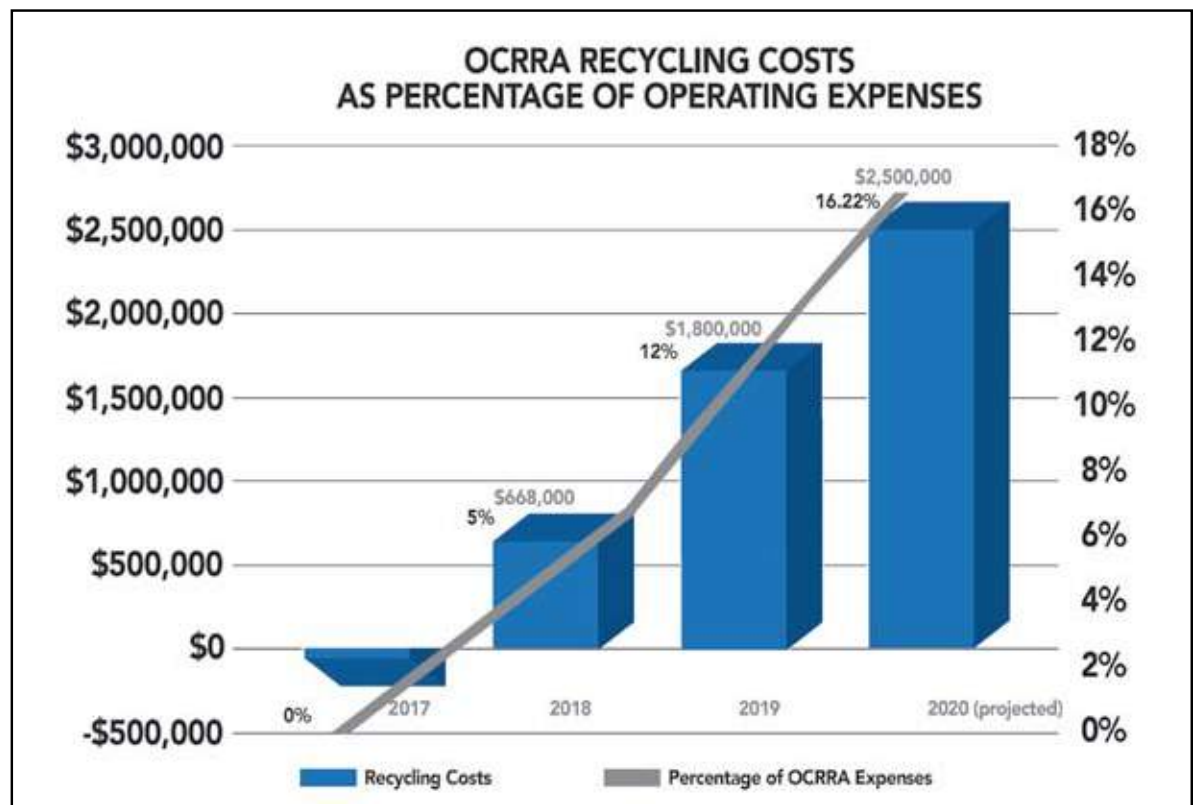
When viewed over time, the costs to process recyclables are roughly equal to the value of their sale. However, that reality shifted when the export market constricted in 2018. The market decline has been persistent for three years and has gotten progressively worse each year. This is not a blip.

To help address the exponential rise of residential recycling costs, effective January 2021, OCRRA will charge haulers who collect your recycling \$34 per ton for the materials they deliver to the sorting facility in Liverpool. This type of recycling fee is and has been commonplace in neighboring and

similar-sized communities. But, it is the first time since our program began in the 1990's that Onondaga County residents will feel the costs of recycling directly.

Previously, all Onondaga County residential recycling was subsidized through the fees OCRRA charged haulers to dispose of the trash they collected from residents. This system worked well until recycling-as-we-knew-it changed in 2018, when China – the largest global player in the recycling marketplace – adopted strict quality standards that effectively stopped the importation of recycling to their country, which was the destination for roughly half of the world's recycled paper.

Please note, **Onondaga County blue bin materials are currently being recycled and have been throughout - despite this market downturn.** The cardboard and much of the paper placed in the recycle bin is processed in Onondaga County. All plastic bottles and jugs, as well



A look at how recycling costs have skyrocketed in recent years. This unprecedented long-term increase was spurred by China closing its doors to contaminated recyclables, which flooded the market and drove processing and shipping costs to all-time highs. Despite this, recycling has continued in Onondaga County.

as metal cans are sent to domestic markets. Glass is used to for engineering purposes at landfills. Please keep recycling and recycling right, your efforts are important!

How did the recycled paper market drag the whole recycle bin down? Paper is the largest component in the recycle bin, comprising more than 50% of the material. The

price for recovered paper was strong for more than a decade, allowing it to buoy the more volatile and less valuable commodities like glass. Milk jugs and laundry bottles made out of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) have value, but not a lot of tonnage, so the end value of these materials does not offset the loss in the paper market. Most recyclable items have value and when combined, that **blended value helps** offset the fixed costs for equipment and labor needed to sort and process recycled material for market.

How will I feel the new recycling fee?

OCRRA anticipates that the \$34 per ton recycling tip fee will cost households an extra dollar per month or \$12 per year. However, recycling and trash services are paid for with different models including:

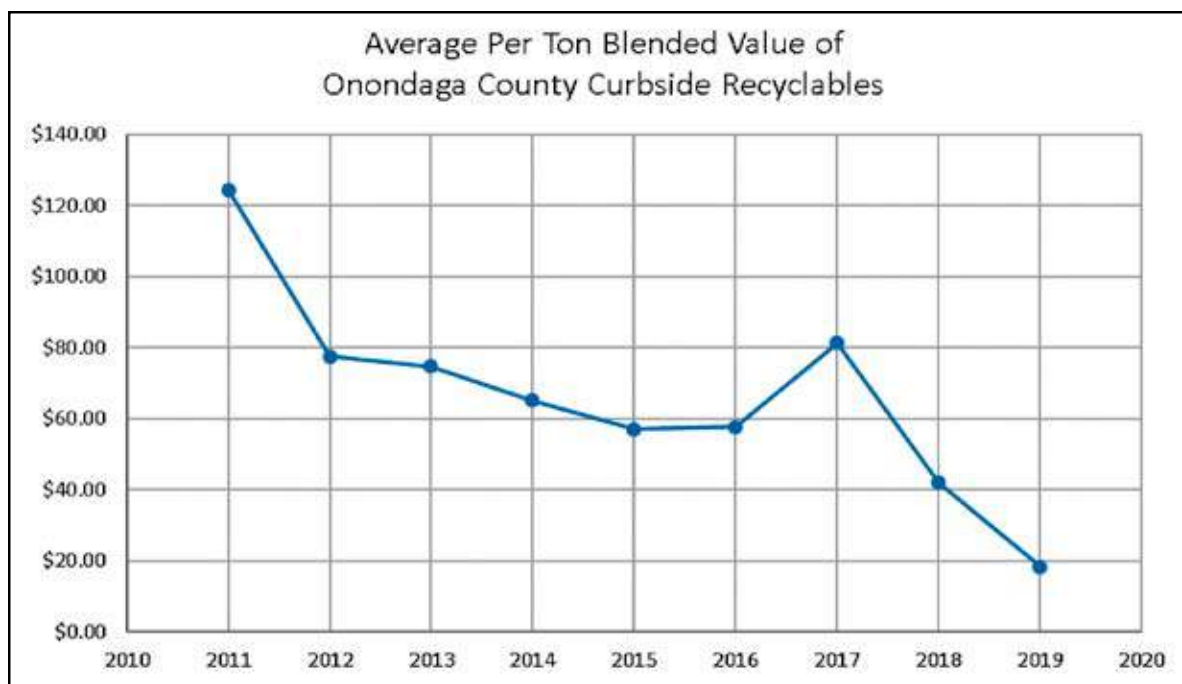
- 1) **Subscription service:** Households that choose their own hauler, such as

residents in the Towns of Van Buren or Onondaga, will see this increase as part of their regular trash and recycling bill.

- 2) **Line item on tax bill:** Many communities, like the Village of North Syracuse or the Town of Manlius provide a line item on the tax bill for sanitation services; they will likely see an increase in this fee.

- 3) **Integrated in taxes:** Residents of the City of Syracuse do not see a line item for sanitation services on their taxes, but they have trash and recycling service costs integrated into their overall property taxes.

- 4) **Drop off at OCRRA:** Residents dropping off recyclables at OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station in Liverpool, will be charged \$2 per drop off beginning in January.



Most recyclable items have value, their combined or average blended value (ABV) helps offset the fixed costs to sort and process recyclables. Over time, the ABV has gone down drastically.

continued on page 8

Recycling Realities

continued from page 7

How can we make recycling cost less?

Recovering materials and recirculating them into the supply chain reduces pollution and makes our consumer-driven lifestyles more sustainable. Responsibility for recovering and recycling materials must be incorporated further up the product manufacturing process. Manufacturers must take responsibility for the end-of-life of their products and product packaging.

This concept is called Extended Producer Responsibility or EPR. New York State has already adopted EPR programs,

including ones for electronics, mercury thermostats, rechargeable batteries and soon for paint and unwanted pharmaceuticals. EPR works and OCRRA is working with locally-elected state leaders to have NYS adopt an EPR program for packaging and printed paper, basically the majority of the items in our blue bins.

For too long, municipalities (and by extension residents) have been responsible for the costs to recycle and dispose of product packaging; this responsibility should lie with the manufacturers. This inefficient and inequi-

table system will not help us achieve maximum recycling rates. The system needs to be circular and ensure product designers, manufacturers, and brand owners have responsibility for their products' full life-cycle.

Keep recycling and help improve the value of your blue bin materials by making sure you are putting the right items in and keeping the wrong items out.

Visit OCRRA.org for a refresher on what is and is not recyclable and thank you for helping to save the world a little each day!

Dereth can be reached at dglance@ocrra.org.

Recycling Fee

continued from page 6

organization. For three years, OCRRA has been covering the growing cost of recycling through use of our revenues and reserve funds, because we are committed to environmental stewardship. However, this is not a sustainable plan.

OCRRA knows that even if there is a cost to recycle, it still has benefits. Recycling conserves natural resources, reduces waste, saves energy and creates local jobs. That is why we studied the markets and this issue carefully for several years and implemented this recycling fee. Check out OCRRA's Recycling 2020 Report to learn more about the recycling market issues and possible solutions: www.tinyurl.com/recycle2020report.

OCRRA recently polled more than 2,100 residents and found that the majority of our community supports recycling and would be willing to pay a fee to ensure it continues in our area.

The community contributing \$1 per month per household (or \$12 per year per household) is matched by OCRRA and helps sustain our community's nationally-recognized recycling program, which preserves our environment.

Is OCRRA changing what is recyclable in the blue bin?

There are no immediate changes to what OCRRA will accept as recycling. The best thing you can do is continue to recycle and only recycle items that are accepted in the program. Avoid "wish-

cycling" or throwing things in that you aren't sure are on the recyclable list.

Get up-to-date information on what is recyclable in Onondaga County here: www.tinyurl.com/OCRRA101

Remember, when it comes to plastics, **ignore the numbers. Only recycle plastic items that are shaped like a bottle, jug, jar or are wide-mouth, stackable dairy tubs. All "crackable" plastics, such as containers that fruit, baked goods, salads or takeout come in, are trash.**

Stretchy film plastics including plastic bags, produce bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper bags, and the plastic overwrap found on cases of water bottles or paper towels can be recycled at large retail stores, grocery stores and chain pharmacies.

Cardboard and all other paper items such as junk mail, office paper, envelopes catalogs and soft cover books are all recyclable. All frozen food boxes should go in the trash.

When in doubt, check it out at OCRRA.org / (315) 453-2866 / www.facebook.com/OCRRA, or if you don't have time for that, throw it out to reduce contamination.

Sign up for OCRRA's emails at OCRRA.org (green section at the bottom of the page) and stay up-to-date on all things recycling.



QUESTION OF THE QUARTER

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

Q: How can I get rid of a mattress from my house?

A: Household mattresses and box springs can be delivered to the Ley Creek Transfer Station (5158 Ley Creek Drive, Liverpool). No appointment is needed, simply stop by during our operating hours, which are Thursdays and Fridays from 6:30 am to 1:30 pm and Saturdays from 8:00 am to 11:30 am.

There is a \$15 handling fee for each mattress you bring in. This is a great deal as area landfills charge

\$100 per mattress. This is also a great environmental deal because OCRRA shreds mattresses and recycles all metal components, while turning the "fluff" into electricity at the Waste-to-Energy Facility. Mattresses brought to OCRRA do not go to a landfill, they are recycled.



Art Credit: Metro Creative Connection, 2020.

If you are bringing other household garbage or a box spring, as well as a mattress to the Ley Creek Transfer Station, you will be charged a vehicle entrance fee, in addition to the \$15 mattress handling fee.

If you have a car or minivan, the vehicle entrance fee is \$15. Pickup trucks, SUVs, vans and single-axle trailers, have a \$30 entrance fee. If you are only bringing a mattress in to OCRRA, then you will only pay the \$15 mattress disposal fee.

So, if you are only bringing in a mattress in a car, you will pay \$15. If you have a car with other trash AND a mattress, you will pay \$30 (\$15 / mattress + \$15 vehicle entrance fee). An SUV that comes in with a mattress only will pay \$15; an SUV that comes in with a mattress and other trash will pay \$45 (\$15 / mattress + \$30 vehicle entrance fee).

Box springs are not subject to the mattress fee, they are considered household garbage as they do not require special handling, so if you bring a box spring to dispose of, that will be charged the vehicle entrance fee only.

In summary, you can get rid of a household mattress by bringing it to the Ley Creek Transfer Station in Liverpool. Thanks for following us on Facebook and doing your part to help save the world a little each day!



Art Credit: Pinckney Hugo Group, Syracuse, 2019.