



TVS..... PG 3

Learn how to recycle them year-round.



BAGGED RECYCLING.. PG 2

These items end up as trash. Free your recycling! Put it in the bin loose.



OLD CLOTHING..... PG 4

Donate and give old clothes new life all yearlong.



FILM PLASTICS..... PG 5

Find out what they are and where they can be recycled.



RECYCLEABLES..... PG 8

Discover how clean they really need to be.

Think Green this Holiday Season – And Year-Round

Maria Bianchetti, Recycling Specialist

The holiday season is upon us. The joy and excitement of the season also comes with shipping boxes, vibrant wrapping paper and extra catalogs. As you are celebrating with your loved ones, make sure to remember the environment and ensure your party items are properly sorted into the trash and the recycling. Here are some tips to make your celebration as green and cheerful as possible. Happy holidays from OCRRA!

Reduce:

- Access your current stash of decorations before buying new. You might have enough wrapping paper left from last year and a perfect string of lights.
- Give an experience gift. A snowshoe hike, a homecooked meal, a fancy dinner, or a concert are a great way to show someone you appreciate their company, and reduce any packaging produced from wrapping a present.
- Opt for a digital gift card. Most stores can email a gift card to your recipient. This is less likely to get lost too.
- Shop local stores before looking online. Spend a day perusing your community's small businesses for gifts to avoid a shipping disaster, extra packaging and to support the local economy.
- Wrap gifts in waste free packaging: a reusable bag, a piece of cloth, or old newspapers and twine.



Recycle in your bin:

- Cardboard boxes (flatten).
- Magazines and holiday catalogs. 
- Wrapping paper and gift bags – except if they are metallic, foil or glittery (flatten).
- Paper greeting cards and envelopes that do not have metallic, foil or glitter decoration.
- Aluminum foil and foil baking trays (clean and ball up).
- Cardboard wrapping paper tubes.



Recycle elsewhere (or trash):

- 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!

Reuse:

- Gift bags. 
- Bows. 

Trash:

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



Maria Bianchetti can be reached at mbianchetti@ocrra.org.

Tips to Reduce Holiday Food Waste

- 1 Meal plan around what is already in your pantry and fridge.
- 2 Stick to your grocery list and buy only what you need.
- 3 Store leftovers properly and label them. Remove air from freezer bags and use clear containers so it is easy to see what is inside.
- 4 Eat the oldest food first. Put new food behind older food in the fridge or pantry.
- 5 Ignore manufacturer date labels. The printed dates tell you when the manufacturer thinks it will taste best, they do not indicate food safety.



Save Money and Reduce Food Waste

OCRRA partners with NEWMOA and brings food waste reduction tips to New Americans in Onondaga County

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

Staring at Thanksgiving leftovers in the refrigerator makes many people wonder how to eat it all before it goes bad. Food waste makes up approximately 20% of the trash in Onondaga County. (That is a lot of it, in case you are wondering.) Throwing out food not only increases the amount of trash we produce, but the energy, time, and resources that went into making and delivering the food are also wasted, to say nothing of the money spent...

OCRRA recently partnered with the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) to launch an outreach program to reduce food waste. The focus was to make information accessible to New Americans, by translating tips and recipes into Spanish, Swahili, Somali, Arabic, and Nepali.

Tips from planning meals ahead to what date labels really mean, are paired with recipe suggestions. They are available at www.tinyurl.com/EndFoodWasteNY. Or you can look for OCRRA at the Regional Market this spring to grab your very own printed recipe cards!

Reducing food waste benefits both your wallet and the planet. This holiday season and year-round, plan ahead to ensure everything will be eaten, and share your recipes for using up leftovers on social media with the hashtag **#EndFoodWaste!**

Lisa Piering can be reached at lpiering@ocrra.org.



OCRRA's Lisa Piering shares food waste reduction tips and recipes with a resident this fall at the Regional Farmer's Market in Syracuse.

OCRRA, Syracuse, 2021.

Free Your Recycling

**DO NOT BAG
RECYCLABLES**



OCRRA
org

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

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

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

FACT: Date labels don't indicate if you should throw food away. Manufacturers set them. They are related to food quality not safety.

Plastics Recycling: Are the Numbers Your Guide or the Shape?

MYTH: The numbers on the bottom tell you if a plastic item is recyclable.

FACT: Not all plastics are recyclable. Only plastics shaped like a bottle, jar, jug or wide-mouth dairy tub are recyclable. Use the SHAPE, instead of the NUMBERS to decide if a plastic item is recyclable. Ignore the numbers

(I know, I know for years OCRRA told you to look at them).

The numbers were created by the plastics industry to denote what TYPE of plastic an item is made from, not if it is recyclable. (Confusing, because they all have a recycle symbol around them, but trust us.) Some items are made from the same type of plastic, but are produced using dif-

ferent processes. Some processes change the chemical nature of the plastic, which means they can't be mixed together to make a new plastic item.

For example, both plastic bottles and plastic clamshell containers (the plastic boxes fresh berries, baked good and some salads come in) are made from #1 plastic. Plastic bottles go in the recy-

cle bin. Plastic clamshells go in the trash.

Tell your friends, family and neighbors. Clamshells should never go in the recycle bin. If too many of them go in the bin, they end up improperly sorted and contaminate other good recyclables.



Recycling Rhoda

TVs + Other E-Waste

Dear Recycling Rhoda,

I upgraded my television set and don't need the old one anymore. What can I do with it?

- Hallmark Movie Fan

Recycling electronics, like your old TV, is very important because they have heavy metals (think lead, cadmium, mercury – not Slipknot or Black Sabbath). Heavy metals can cause health problems for humans and wildlife, not to mention they can harm the environment, if not properly managed. You didn't spend all those hours watching Shark Week, just to dispose of your TV in an environmentally unfriendly manner, did you? In 2010, New York State passed legislation requiring manufacturers to take back electronics for recycling. Now, you can't take electronic or "e-waste" to OCRRA locations, but there are a ton of ways you can manage your old electronics, including TVs safely.

Visit www.tinyurl.com/2RecycleEwaste for details on what locations accept various items.

If that old television is not physically broken (cracked casing or screen), bring it to the

Salvation Army at 2433 Erie Boulevard East in Syracuse (right off the 690 exit for Midler Avenue). It doesn't have to work - it just can't have a damaged screen or casing. The fine folks at the Salvation Army will accept one TV for free, per visit. They cannot accept projection TVs, including rear projection TVs. Give them a jingle at (315) 445-0520 for more information.

Battery World on East Molloy Road in Mattydale will accept your TVs for a charge. Call (315) 437-1404 to make a required appointment and to get pricing.

The Best Buy on Erie Boulevard East in DeWitt will also accept TV s and other electronics at their customer service desk for a charge. Contact them for pricing.

If your TV's screen or casing is physically damaged, call OCRRA at (315) 453-2866 for disposal options.

Local politicians also often host electronic recycling events. Join OCRRA's email list to be made aware of events happening in our area. Sign up at OCRRA.org in the green "Join our Mailing List" section at the bottom of the website.

Once your TV has been recycled properly, you can focus on your Hallmark Movies. Save a spot for me on the couch, I'll bring the popcorn!

Donate Wearable Clothing and Reduce Waste

Charitable organizations are seeking wearable clothing for resale; help support their missions and reduce waste through donation

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

Changes in seasons are great times of the year to clean out the closets. With gift giving season fast approaching, many are also looking to make room for future gifts. The big question is, how to get rid of old clothes, blankets, and other textiles responsibly?

A good portion of donated textiles get resold within Onondaga County and abroad. While some charitable organizations like the Rescue Mission can accept ripped or stained items, the majority of donation locations cannot.

The Salvation Army, Rescue Mission, St. Paulie drop boxes and churches accept wearable / usable items. Only the Rescue Mission can also accept items that are unwearable. Please be sure to pack those in separate bags or boxes from the wearable items and label accordingly, to make sorting most efficient. Unless you are dropping off at the Rescue Mission, throwing out ripped or stained items and rags is the best course of action in today's markets.

Non-clothing items, like tablecloths, drapes, bags, belts, gloves, or shoes, are also accepted at donation centers, with the same restrictions on condition. Blankets, towels, and comforters that are gently used can be donated to animal rescues.

For health and safety reasons, pillows and mattress 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 to power all those holiday lights!

Lisa Piering can be reached at lpiering@ocrra.org.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- 1** First, reduce by only purchasing what you really need and will use. When gift shopping, think about how the person you are shopping for will use the item: is their winter coat only a year old? Maybe they would like a gift card instead!
- 2** Then, reuse by altering the size, repairing items, or gifting hand-me downs. Clothing that is in wearable and sellable condition can be washed and donated to places like the Rescue Mission or Salvation Army. Shopping for reused items at thrift stores is a great idea too!
- 3** Last, recycling textiles can take many forms. Textiles CANNOT go in the blue bin. But, recycling textiles could be turning some drapes into play costumes, an outgrown sweater into puppy clothing, or torn jeans into an apron. Textile recycling can also be an industrial process, where unwearable clothing is shredded and turned into insulation.

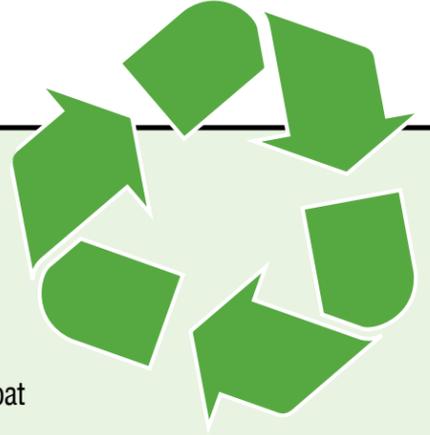


Photo Credit: iStock.com

Textiles such as wearable clothing and usable blankets and linens can be donated to local charities year-round. They will be resold and proceeds support the mission of these charitable organizations.

EMPTY Cardboard Boxes Before Recycling

Make sure cardboard boxes are EMPTY and flattened before recycling them in your bin. If bubble wrap or plastic air pillows are left inside, this contaminates the paper recycling at the sorting facility and can result in an entire load of paper being thrown away! Help keep your recycling pure: empty out your cardboard boxes.

Film plastics like bubble wrap and air pouches are a big problem for the machines at the sorting facility, they cannot go into the blue bin, but they can be recycled. Drop them off at big box retail stores and chain grocery stores or pharmacies for recycling. Visit www.tinyurl.com/FilmPlastics for a list of acceptable film plastics and drop off locations.



Recycle Film Plastics at Drop Offs – Not in Blue Bins

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

Winter holidays are a time for making wishes but be sure to avoid wish-cycling! This term describes putting something you wish was recyclable into the bin when it is not recyclable. Wish-cycling causes recycling contamination and damage at the recycling sorting facility. Film plastics are a major contributor to these problems. Film plastics get tangled around the machinery at the sorting facility, causing damage and shutting the whole operation down several times a day while they are removed.

Film plastics like stretchy plastic retail bags, packing pillows, and bubble wrap can be recycled at

big box retailers and chain grocery stores or pharmacies. They cannot go into the recycle bin.

The only plastic items that go in the recycle bin are plastic bottles, jars, jugs and stackable dairy/dairy substitute tubs. (Update: don't worry about the numbers on the bottom, they are not a good indicator of recyclability. Pay attention to the shape of plastic items instead.)

How to tell what types of film plastic can be recycled: try and pull it apart, if it stretches, it can be recycled at drop off locations. For example, plastic take out bags, bread bags, produce bags, plastic wrapped around paper towels and toilet paper or cases of water bot-

tlers, zip top bags, clingwrap, air pillows found in shipping boxes, bubble wrap, and mailing pouches that are entirely film plastic are all recyclable. These items must be clean, dry and have labels removed to be recycled.

Crinkly plastic, including chip bags, candy wrappers, salad bags, or granola bar wrappers cannot be recycled and belong in the trash.

When stretchy film plastics are recycled, they get turned into things like composite decking, park benches and lawn furniture. Visit www.tinyurl.com/filmplastics for a list of drop off locations near you.

Lisa Piering can be reached at lpiering@ocrra.org.



Film plastic such as shrink wrap on cases of water bottles and paper products, newspaper bags, bread bags, takeout bags, dry cleaning bags and other stretchy, thin film plastics can be recycled at hundreds of drop off locations in CNY, including big box retailers, large grocery stores and chain pharmacies. All film plastics must be clean, dry and have labels cut off. Visit www.tinyurl.com/filmplastics for more information.



Curbside Recycling



Cardboard, pizza, pasta, cereal boxes, etc.

Flatten.



Papers, mail, envelopes



Newspapers, magazines, catalogs and softcover books

Keep loose. Don't tie.



Plastic bottles and jugs



Plastic dairy tubs



Cans and jars

Empty and rinse. Labels are ok.



Milk and juice cartons

Empty and rinse.

Art Credit: Pinckney Hugo Group, Syracuse, 2018.



FILM PLASTICS VIDEO

Learn what film plastics can be recycled at drop off sites. Scan the QR code to the right with a smart phone for details, or visit the link below.

www.tinyurl.com/PlasticRecycling101



Video Credit: Matthew Johnson, Syracuse, 2021.

FACT: Film plastics (take out bags, produce bags, bubble wrap, etc.) can't be recycled in the blue bin. Return to big box stores.

Did You Know the Ley Creek Drop-Off is for Household Materials Only?

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

OCRRA's Ley Creek and Rock Cut Road Transfer Stations accept a wide variety of materials for recycling and disposal. Residents are to use the Ley Creek Transfer Station, while commercial entities must deliver materials to the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station. Both locations accept cash or check only and require trucks and trailers to be tarped to avoid additional fees due to NYSDOT regulations. Hours and locations can be found below.

LEY CREEK Residential Drop Off Only

Ley Creek accepts trash, construction and demolition debris, and recyclables **from residents**. No materials generated or transported by a business are accepted.

- Recycling including newspapers, magazines, cardboard, plastic bottles, and metal cans are charged \$2 per visit, regardless of amount.
- Bagged trash can be disposed of for \$3 per bag (trash bag stickers can be purchased in advance online or on-site at drop off). No entrance fee applies.

Residents delivering trash or construction debris in bulk pay an entrance fee for disposal based on vehicle size:

- \$15 per car or minivan
- \$30 for pickup trucks, SUVs, vans, and single axle trailers. *

The following materials have an additional service fee:

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

Residents do not pay the vehicle entrance fee if just dropping off bagged trash using stickers or if only delivering recyclables.

Other materials accepted from residents at **no charge** at Ley Creek include:

- Household batteries (no lead acid or ion batteries)
- Fluorescent lightbulbs
- Mercury thermometers and thermostats

** Oversized or overloaded vehicles may be assessed an additional charge.*

PLEASE NOTE:

- Neither Transfer Station accepts televisions, computers, large propane tanks, or hazardous waste. For information about where to take these items visit: www.tinyurl.com/HowToGetRidOfIt

ROCK CUT ROAD Commercial Drop Off Only

Businesses, including contractors, roofers, and clean-out companies disposing of trash or construction and demolition debris (C&D) must go to Rock Cut Road. Those with cardboard or other recyclables must make arrangements with their hauler to deliver these items to a local recycling facility. Rock Cut Road does not accept any commercial recyclables.

Wood and other C&D material must be 4 feet in length or less. More information about fees and acceptable materials is available at: www.tinyurl.com/RCRinformation

Transfer Station Hours

Ley Creek Transfer Station

Residents Only. No Commercial Customers.

5158 Ley Creek Drive, Liverpool
(Off 7th North St. exit off 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

Businesses 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.

Lisa Piering can be reached at lpiering@ocrra.org.

Mercury Therm Recycling Event is a Hit

At this fall's Mercury Therm Collection Event, almost 100 Onondaga County residents brought in 140 mercury thermometers and 110 mercury thermostats for recycling. This effort kept 580 grams of mercury out of the waste stream, the equivalent of the amount of mercury in 145,000 compact fluorescent lightbulbs!

Residents of Onondaga County can bring old mercury containing thermostats and thermometers to OCRRA's Ley Creek Drop Off Site, year-round and receive a \$5 Lowe's gift card and a new digital thermometer! See box above for hours.



OCRRA, Syracuse, 2021.

Christmas Tree Drop Off

Contact your highway department for pick up schedules or bring your tree to OCRRA's Amboy or Jamesville Compost Site:



Weekdays, Jan. 3 - 14
HOURS: 7:30 am - 3:30 pm.
(There are no weekend hours.)

Remove all decorations, lights, tinsel, stands, and plastic bags before dropping off. There is no cost to drop off a tree.



From the Executive Director's Desk...

Waste Not, Want Not

Reducing Food Waste to Fight Climate Change and Support Food Security

Dereth Glance, Executive Director, OCRRA

As much as 40% of the American food supply is never eaten (USEPA). Understanding that people go hungry while food and the resources used to produce it are wasted is a tragic but solvable problem.

According to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, 2.8 million New Yorkers are food insecure, meaning they do not have sufficient access to nutritious food. Food is the single most common material in the trash. In Onondaga County, food waste comprises 20% of our trash.

Reducing wasted food and ensuring the sustainable reuse of food scraps has a significant and immediate impact on the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Locally, we reduce potent methane emissions through food waste composting and managing our trash through waste-to-energy.

In most of our country trash is managed in landfills. Methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more dangerous than carbon dioxide, is released when food waste buried in landfills breaks down.

In New York State, beginning January 1, businesses producing more than two tons of food waste a week will be required to donate or recycle their food scraps. This new law

requires large generators of unsold food to donate food to people first and animals second, before delivering food waste to composters or digesters. Diverting food waste to an anaerobic digester or compost facility helps to break down organic waste and produce soil amendments and energy.

Diverting food scraps from the waste stream is important, but it is even more impactful to stop food from being wasted in the first place.

OCRRA is working to encourage food waste reduction through education and outreach on helpful strategies such as:

- shopping from your fridge first
- using more parts of meat and vegetables
- storing leftovers properly and eating them in a timely fashion
- understanding the truth behind 'best by' dates.

Get more tips here:

www.ocrra.org/end-food-waste



The OCRRA waste system was busting at the seams working to manage the influx of garbage resulting from the cleanup associated with the floodwaters from Tropical Storm Fred.

As extreme wet weather events create more trash, continuing to minimize waste reduces our overall greenhouse gas emissions, while also ensuring space in our waste system for storm debris that threatens public health—like

waterlogged boxes just waiting to grow mold.

With a robust recycling program, a local Waste-to-Energy Facility, and two food and yard waste composting facilities, the OCRRA system avoids 1.5 million tons of CO₂ equivalents each year. Help save the world a little each day by employing food waste reduction techniques mentioned in the aforementioned link and consider composting food scraps at home or at OCRRA's Compost Sites.

Pizza Box Recycling Demystified

Delivery / takeout boxes get recycled. It is okay if they have grease, even a lot, but they CANNOT have any food or trash in them when you put them in your recycle bin.



RECYCLE

Frozen pizza boxes must go in the trash. They have a plastic coating that renders them non-recyclable.



TRASH

FACT: All frozen food boxes should go in the trash. They can't be recycled as they have a plastic coating that is not recyclable.

OCRRA Recycling Director Retires After Three Decades of Service to Community

Andrew Radin shaped award-winning recycling program

Andrew Radin began his career at OCRRA in 1991 and retired this past October. Thirty years is a good run. Under his leadership as recycling director Onondaga County recycled more than twenty-five billion pounds of material!

Andrew worked tirelessly to build and fortify our community's curbside recycling program, while keeping his eye on the horizon for improvements, whether by offering specialty collection programs for hard to recycle items or advocating on the state-level for extended producer responsibility of batteries, beverage containers, electronic waste, paint and packaging.

Andrew's vision and commitment to organics food diversion helped realize OCRRA's Amboy Compost Site expansion, making it one of the largest food scrap recycling facilities in NYS. Andrew was recognized by his peers with the New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse, and Recycling Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018.

Andrew's exemplary service, commitment and passion grew OCRRA's recycling program into the state's gold standard for recycling. Thank you, Andrew!



Andrew Radin, OCRRA's director of recycling and reduction retired in October, after thirty years of service to OCRRA and the community.



QUESTION OF THE QUARTER

Q: I make sure to recycle my plastics based on the shape of the container (NOT the number). I only put in plastic bottles, jars, jugs and stackable dairy tubs, but how clean do they really have to be? I hate to waste more water cleaning them than their recyclable value...

A: Thanks for doing your part and recycling your plastic containers! You have it correct: only plastic bottles, jugs, cans, jars, and stackable dairy tubs go in your recycling bin.

All containers must be empty and rinsed. Recycling in Onondaga County is an automated process; the machinery at the sorting facility is programmed to recognize what is a recyclable and what is not. If a plastic water bottle is not empty, and has liquid in the bottom, the sorting machine will consider it trash, even though the bottle itself is recyclable. What about peanut butter jars? Just do your best. No need to run them through the dishwasher, just remove the majority of the peanut butter before recycling.

Bottom line: make sure there is no remaining food or liquid in your containers before you add them to your bin or you are really just sending them to be sorted out as trash. (Labels on the outside of jars are okay, and do not need to be removed.)

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



Medicine bottles

Over-the-counter or prescription medicine bottles bigger than 3" in their largest dimension are recyclable, providing they are not prescription VIALS (the cylindrical orange/brown medicine containers). **Vials must go in the trash.** They are not an acceptable type of plastic. Any item smaller than 3" in its largest dimension is too small to be captured in the recycling sorting process. Those tiny items should go in the trash where they will be converted into electricity at the Waste-to-Energy Facility.



Mark Your Calendar

ALL OCRRA SITES CLOSED

THURS., NOV. 25
SAT., DEC. 25
SAT., JAN. 1

Happy Holidays!

MAIN OFFICE & JAMESVILLE COMPOST SITE CLOSED

FRI., DEC. 24
FRI., DEC. 31

ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

Recycle TVs, computers, printers and more.

See Page 3 for details.

HOUSEHOLD TOXICS DROP-OFF

Year-round by appointment

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

FACT: Sort plastics based on shape, not the numbers: only bottles, jars, jugs & stackable dairy tubs go in the recycle bin.