



LITTER CLEANUP..... PG 2

Find out how much litter was collected for Earth Day.



GARDEN PLANTERS:.... PG 3

How do you get rid of flowerpots and seed starting trays?



RECYCLING METAL..... PG 4

The surprising way some discarded metal is recovered for recycling.



FOOD WASTE..... PG 7

A better way to get rid of the scraps left on your dinner plate.



LANDLORD SUPPORT.... PG 8

FREE help for landlords to improve recycling.

Summer Supplies: Recycle, Drop Off or Trash?

With the beautiful summer weather comes gardening, barbecues and time outside. These fun summertime activities also require materials that need to be properly managed when you are done using them. Use this handy chart as a guide when you are finished with summer fun.

Recycling Bin:

Plastic Jugs, Jars, Bottles and Stackable Dairy Tubs

Pay attention to the shape of an item, not the number on the bottom. Rinse and dry containers, and reattach lids, before placing them in a curbside recycling bin.



Glass and Metal Containers (food and beverage only)

Rinse and dry items. Refer to OCRRA's Recycling Rules to find out what else belongs in your curbside recycling bin. Find recycling rules: OCRRA.org/services/recycle.

Trash:

Garden Hoses

Garden hoses should go in the trash, never in the recycling bin. Hoses, ropes, cords, chains and similar items get tangled up in machinery.



Plastic Plates, Cups, Utensils, Napkins and Styrofoam Coolers

These materials make for easy cleanup at our parties and barbecues, but should be placed in the trash when you are done with them. To reduce your party waste, use washable utensils or offer cloth napkins!

Drop Off by Appointment:

Propane Tanks

Never put propane tanks in a recycling bin. Empty one-pound tanks can go in the trash. Find locations to drop off 20 pound and larger tanks at OCRRA.org/propane-tanks. Call ahead.

Pool Chemicals, Lighter Fluid and Pesticides

Never put household toxics in your recycling bin. OCRRA offers a free Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Program. Appointments required at tinyurl.com/HouseholdToxics



Bring to Rock Cut Road Transfer Station:

Lawn Mowers

Remove gas and oil from the machine to prevent combustion or accidents during transportation and disposal.

Grills

After propane tanks are removed, grills can be brought to OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Transfer Station. Review disposal fees: tinyurl.com/RockCutRoad.



Earth Day Cleanup Nets Nearly 100,000 Pounds of Litter

Something special happened in late April. For two days, thousands of people in Onondaga County made plans to clean up their community in recognition of Earth Day. Many residents grabbed a bag and got to work on their own. Others joined one of the nearly 300 groups that registered for OCRRA's Earth Day Litter Cleanup. Some companies, neighbors and friends ended a long day of hard work with pizza and pats on the back. The pride on display at those gatherings is well-deserved.

The bags of litter collected during OCRRA's annual cleanup event add up to nearly 100,000 pounds of trash that will not end up in our waterways and creeks. That's a lot of trash we don't have to look at during a walk in the park. Congratulations to every person who did their part during those two days. May that sense of accomplishment inspire you to be mindful of litter throughout the year. Litter is ugly. Coming together in the spirit of public service is a beautiful sight.



Seneca Gardens Cleanup Crew.



Bayberry Pickers.



Baldwinsville Garden Club.

Photo Credit: OCRRA, 2023.

OCRRA Honored for Decades of Earth Day Litter Cleanups

New York State Senator Rachel May began Earth Day by reading a proclamation in recognition of OCRRA for organizing more than three decades of Earth Day Litter Cleanups. The senator presented the proclamation to OCRRA Executive Director Kevin Spillane and Board of Directors Chairman Blair Page. The trio spent part of the morning cleaning up litter at Kirk Park in Syracuse, alongside OCRRA's Deputy Executive Director Mike Mokrzycki and members of Senator May's Youth Advisory Council.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, 2023.

OCRRA 2022 Recycling Highlights

- **374,260+** tons of material were recycled for a 50% recycling rate.
- **7,978** pounds of rechargeable batteries were collected through special services.
- **35,000+** pounds of non-deposit glass were separated through a pilot program that ended due to lack of space to store the large volume of material turned in (proof positive expanding the NYS Bottle Bill to include wine and liquor bottles is a good idea!).
- **1,620** appointments were made to properly dispose of household hazardous waste.
- **12,000+** fluorescent bulbs were collected, keeping more than **43,850** mg of mercury out of the environment.

FACT: Nearly 3 million pounds of litter has been collected since the start of OCRRA's annual Earth Day Litter Cleanup event.

OCRRA Compost and Recycling Tips Featured at CNY Home and Garden Show

Maria Bianchetti, Recycling Specialist

OCRRA's booth is always a popular stop at the CNY Home and Garden Show. More than a thousand free samples of compost were shared during the three-day event in March at the NYS Fairgrounds Expo Center. Visitors are encouraged to put those compost samples back into the community's soil and gardens.

In addition to ¼" premium compost, guests were invited to grab a handful of OCRRA's mulch to feel the difference between the double-ground and triple-ground options available at OCRRA's Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites.

OCRRA employees were available to chat about local recycling rules and special programs that help Onondaga County residents properly manage household toxics and recycle electronics, batteries and paint. A typical question includes, "How do I get rid of egg cartons?" Unless you find a way to reuse them, whole egg cartons of any kind belong in the trash, even the paper ones. Visitors with questions were invited to take home brochures and magnets to review anytime. Get a more detailed look at OCRRA's recycling rules on page 5.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, 2023.

OCRRA employee Rusty Hunt gets ready to answer questions from visitors at the agency's booth during the CNY Home and Garden Show.

Maria Bianchetti can be reached at mbianchetti@ocrra.org



Recycling Rhoda

Garden Planters

Dear Rhoda,

I get a little carried away with my gardening every year and end up with extra planters, containers and garden pots – mostly plastic.

Can I recycle them? If not, what is the best way to get rid of them?

— Proud Planter in Pompey

Dear Planter,

Nothing makes me happier than watching a garden grow. There are a variety of containers, including clay pots, paper pulp, plastic trays for seed starting, decorative plastic and ceramic flowerpots and even fabric planters.

Let's start with plastic. Remember, the types of plastic that are recycled in Onondaga County are bottles, jars, jugs and stackable dairy tubs (and dairy alternatives). Flowerpots you buy at the store don't fall into those categories. If they cannot be reused, throw your plastic planters in the trash. They NEVER belong in a recycling bin. Ceramic and clay are not the same as the glass used to make food jars and bottles. If your ceramic or clay flowerpots cannot be donated, they belong in the trash. If the pot is broken with sharp edges, be sure to contain it properly so your garbage hauler doesn't get hurt.

Fabric planters would fall under the category of textiles. Clothing, sheets, towels and fabric planters NEVER belong in your recycling bin. Textiles wrap around the machines that sort recyclables, forcing workers to stop and clear the lines. Put fabric planters in the trash, where they will be converted into electricity at our Waste-to-Energy Facility.

Now, let's backup. Exploring ways to reuse our waste is always the first goal. Call ahead to find out if your local thrift store would like decorative flowerpots that are not broken. Biodegradable paper pulp is designed for planting without waste, but if you find yourself with extra material – throw it in the compost pile. Consider reusing your newspaper to make pots for seed starting instead of buying plastic trays. There are plenty of tutorials online. Proper planning prevents waste for planters in Pompey and around the planet.

Yours truly,

Recycling Rhoda

Metal: A Surprising Way to Recycle

Cristina Alburnio, PE Agency Engineer

Unfortunately, you cannot place everything that is metal in your curbside recycling container. The list includes dull gardening shears, broken watches, unusable toasters and old frying pans because their shape, size and composited materials (like the plastics parts of the toaster) can't be efficiently managed through the curbside recycling system. You might be surprised to know that these items are still recycled in Onondaga County, even when you put them in the trash.

All solid waste collected from Onondaga County's households and businesses is processed at the Waste-to-Energy Facility on Rock Cut Road in Jamesville. The Facility combusts all waste, converts waste to energy and recovers metal. Since metal can't be combusted, it moves through the Facility's processing lines mostly unscathed, although it does get covered in residue.

The metal in our waste is recovered at three different points in the Facility's process - as

oversized metal, ferrous metal and non-ferrous metal. This is an incredibly effective process. Last year, 25,763,840 pounds of metal from Onondaga County's trash were recovered at the Facility, enough to build 10,000 cars.

The Facility's recovery process keeps valuable metals out of landfills. Once the metal is recovered, it is sent to local metal processors, cleaned off and then sold to be turned into new metal products. This reduces the need to mine for new metals and also minimizes transportation needs for raw materials. Recycling metals, instead of producing new ones, offsets carbon emissions and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

You might not realize that metals you throw in your trash get recycled. This is just another benefit in OCRRA's solid waste system that works to maximize recovery of important resources.

Cristina Alburnio can be reached at calburnio@ocrra.org



Photo Credit: OCRRA, 2023.

1-Oversized metals collected from the waste stream following combustion. 2- Ferrous metals recovered for recycling at the Waste-to-Energy Facility.

OCRRA 2022 Energy Recovery Highlights

- **362,786** tons of non-hazardous, non-recyclable waste (enough to overfill Syracuse University's JMA Wireless Dome) were processed at the Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility.
- **262,100** megawatt hours of electricity were produced by processing trash, enough to power roughly 30,000 homes (about 16% of Onondaga County households) and the Facility itself.
- **261,200** tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions were avoided by processing non-recyclable waste at the WTE Facility.
- **12,882** tons of ferrous and non-ferrous metal were recovered for recycling, from trash delivered by haulers.

Aluminum Foil - Rinse and Wad It Up

Tammy Palmer, Public Information Officer

It's time to fire up the grill, pack the picnic basket and host family reunions. Aunt Norma bakes her popular pie in an aluminum plate. Cousin Jimmy's famous mac-n-cheese is always delivered to reunions in an aluminum pan. The leftovers that everybody wants to take home may get covered with a sheet of foil. Fortunately, all of that aluminum is recyclable - assuming it is clean.

Aluminum containers must be empty and rinsed. Food scraps don't belong in your recycling bin. Machines that sort recyclables have sensors that recognize liquid and food as waste. Materials that are covered in barbecue sauce and crumbs will get diverted to the trash pile. So, determine if the aluminum is clean enough to be recycled. If it is not, put it in the trash to avoid contaminating good recyclables. Rest easy knowing aluminum that goes in the trash still gets recycled! (See: A Surprising Way to Recycle).

One more note on the recycling machinery: A flat sheet of foil may be mistaken for a sheet of paper. Wad up your aluminum foil to ensure proper sorting. Better yet, ask family and friends if they'd consider bringing reusable containers to serve meals and pack up leftovers.

Tammy Palmer can be reached at tpalmer@ocrra.org



Photo Credit: OCRRA, 2023.

FACT: Textiles don't belong in recycling bins. Fabric wraps around machines and slows down the sorting process.

Recycling Rules in Onondaga County



CURBSIDE RECYCLING

PAPER

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

Papers and mail (including window envelopes)

Boxes: Cardboard, takeout pizza, pasta, cereal, etc.
Empty and flatten.

Cartons: Milk, juice, soup, etc. (plastic spouts = OK)
Empty, rinse & reattach cap.

PLASTIC

Bottles: Drinks, soap, shampoo, squeeze, and spray. (no bottles that held toxics)

Jars: Mayonnaise, sauce, nuts, jelly, etc.

Jugs (items with a handle): Milk, orange juice, water, detergent, windshield fluid

Stackable tubs (dairy/dairy alternatives only): Butter, yogurt, cottage cheese, etc.
Empty, rinse & reattach lids.

METAL

Food and beverage cans
Empty, rinse and put lid inside can.

Aluminum foil and disposable aluminum pans and plates
Must be cleaned and wadded up.

GLASS

Food containers: Salsa, jam, sauce, and salad dressing, etc.

Beverage bottles (any color)
Empty, rinse, reattach cap.



Do NOT put any recyclables in plastic or paper bags. Every item should be loose in the bin.



DROP OFF TO RECYCLE

Shredded paper
Details at OCRRRA.org or put in the trash.

Plastic bags (clean and dry)
Recycle at large grocery and retail stores or put in the trash.

Electronics
Details: OCRRRA.org/ewaste

Propane tanks
Details: OCRRRA.org/propane-tanks

Batteries
Details: tinyurl.com/BatteryDrops

Light bulbs
Details: OCRRRA.org/fluorescent-bulbs

Place LED & incandescent bulbs in the trash.



TRASH

Frozen food, takeout, soda and beer boxes

Egg cartons (any type)

Tissue paper and items with glitter or foil

Plates and cups

Tanglers (cords, hoses, ropes, chains, etc.)

Clamshells (berry, salad and bakery containers, etc.)

Disposable cups, plates and utensils

Containers that held toxics

Small appliances (toasters, vacuums, etc.)

Mixed material canisters (oatmeal, cocoa, peanuts, coffee, etc.)

Empty metal paint cans

Metals not listed above

Broken glass - properly secure to protect haulers

Drinking glasses and ceramic mugs

Ovenware and dishes

Windows, picture glass and mirrors

Buy OCRRA's Compost

Treat your soil and plants with nutrient-rich compost. You can buy one bag, fill your trunk or get a full truckload at the Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites.

- **Trunk Loads:** (1/2" General Compost only) Car, van and SUV owners can load their trunk for \$10.
- **Bulk General Compost:** (1/2" Compost) OCRRA loads a truck or trailer for \$16/cubic yard.
- **Bulk Premium Compost:** (1/4" Compost only available at Amboy) OCRRA loads a truck or trailer for \$20/cubic yard.
- **Bags:** (1/4" Compost only) Purchase at OCRRA Compost Sites for \$5/bag or five bags for \$20. More than 30 local retailers set their own prices. Find local retailers at www.tinyurl.com/BuyCompostBags



Certified Compost
STA | Seal of Testing Assurance

OCRRA Composting Program Showcased at NYS Organics Summit

Tammy Palmer, Public Information Officer

Onondaga County's award-winning composting operation was featured during a statewide effort to connect dozens of professionals interested in emerging issues and solutions for organics management. The 2023 New York State Organics Summit focused on wasted food and food scraps.

Visitors at OCRRA's Amboy Compost Site included farmers, environmental consultants, haulers, solid waste agency directors, researchers and educators. There was so much interest in touring the site that summit organizers had to mark the opportunity as fully booked.

In addition to seeing how OCRRA collects residential food scraps and removes packaging from food waste, guests learned about the agency's compost processing and bagging operations. Ecoverse, which specializes in environmental processing equipment, offered a live demonstration of machinery that screens challenging organic materials.

The three-day summit was held in downtown Syracuse, where guests heard from industry experts, networked and shared ideas. The event is presented by NYSAR3, the New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling.



We're on YouTube! Watch clips from the NYS Organics Summit tour of OCRRA's Amboy Compost Site, find ideas for reducing food waste and get tips for home composting at www.youtube.com/@OCRRA.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, 2023.

Compost Site Hours

Through November 18

Amboy Compost Site

6296 Airport Road
Camillus

Monday – Saturday
7:30 am – 3:30 pm

Jamesville Compost Site

4370 Route 91
Jamesville

Thursday – Saturday
7:30 am – 3:30 pm

OCRRA 2022 Composting Highlights

- **4 million pounds** of food scraps were processed into compost at OCRRA facilities.
- **48,000+ yards of trees, limbs, grass, leaves and other yard waste** were accepted at the Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites and turned into compost for our community.
- **21,000+ yards of compost** were produced by OCRRA.



From the Executive Director's Desk...

A Walk in the Woods

Kevin Spillane, Executive Director, OCRRA

I love camping every summer and often take long walks in the Adirondacks. Every leaf, tree and berry that falls there decomposes and is digested by microorganisms and fungi living in the soil. With every step on the spongy forest floor during my walks, I can feel and see how organic material provides rich nutrients for new plants. Too often, that message is lost in modern society. Many of us toss an apple core in the trash instead of returning its nutrients to the soil. That decision leads to a dead-end street. A much better solution is to mirror nature with community composting.

Food and yard waste make up more than 30% of municipal solid waste (MSW or trash) in the United States. Paper and wood, some of which may be compostable, add another 30% to the waste stream (see the EPA's chart for perspective).

In 2018, about 146.1 million tons of MSW were land-filled across the country. Food was the largest component, at about 24 percent. More towns and cities, like ours here in Onondaga County, are exploring common-sense ways of cutting waste disposal costs. But there's another reason to pay attention.

The nutrient-rich layer of soil that is vital for growing crops is eroding and degrading at an alarming rate, threatening our future ability to grow food. One-third of the world's soil has already degraded, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Soil erosion could lead up to a 50% loss in crop yields.

Compost can help replace nutrients in the soil, resetting fertility on land that was once depleted, as demonstrated by the



Photo Credit: iStock/Thomas Zsebok

Onondaga Lake Cleanup. Look no further than Nine Mile Creek to see how OCRRA's compost helped 150,000 native plants thrive along 18 acres of restored in-lake and shoreline wetlands. Within one year of restoration, more than 60 species of fish and wildlife were identified.

Compost can also help us combat global warming. Landfills are surrounded with protective liners that entomb organics, cutting off light and oxygen and preventing proper decomposition. As a result, the slow degradation in these landfills produces methane, a greenhouse gas that has roughly 85 times the global warming power of carbon dioxide over a twenty-year period. Composting prevents methane emissions and promotes the growth of plants and microorganisms that pull carbon

out of the atmosphere, a process called sequestration.

Throughout this newsletter, we've shared information about the benefits of composting. The real value of OCRRA's program is not rooted in the science of enriching soil with yard and food waste, but rather the chemistry needed for a community to build a more sustainable future together.

If every neighborhood in this country followed OCRRA's lead, and composted its organic waste, we could eliminate vast amounts of waste sent to landfills or energy recovery facilities, replenish vital topsoil, reduce methane emissions and sequester carbon to reduce the impacts of global warming. All of us can take steps to help this modern society mirror the world I encounter on my walks in the woods.

Total MSW Generated by Material, 2018

292.4 million tons

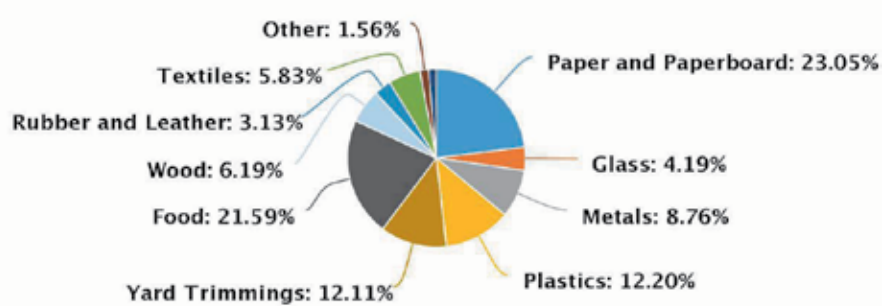


Photo Credit: EPA Website, 2023.

A Better Way to Get Rid of Organic Materials

Onondaga County residents with a Compost Site Pass can bring unlimited amounts of food and yard waste to OCRRA's Amboy or Jamesville Compost Sites. **Buy a \$25 pass at [OCRRA.org/shop](https://www.ocrra.org/shop).**

Prohibited Items:

Blacktop, concrete, diapers, dirt, garbage, glass, landscape fabric, lumber, metal, paper, pet waste, plastic items (including bags), rocks, rubber, soil, Styrofoam and tree trunks over 12 feet long.

Accepted Items:

Fruit, beans, bones, bread, brush, coffee grounds, coffee filters, eggs, dairy, fish, garden waste, grains, grass, hay, hedge trimmings, leaves, meat, paper cups, paper napkins, paper towels, pine cones, pine needles, plants, sticks, straw, tea bags, tree limbs, tree trunks, vegetables, vines, stumps* and tree trunks less than 12 feet in length.

*Stumps accepted at Amboy Compost Site only.

Landlords Get FREE Supplies and Services for Better Recycling

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

OCRRA provides many free supplies, consultation and training. Did you know an Onondaga County law requires businesses, including apartment complexes and tenants, to recycle? Check it out here: tinyurl.com/OCRecyclingLaw

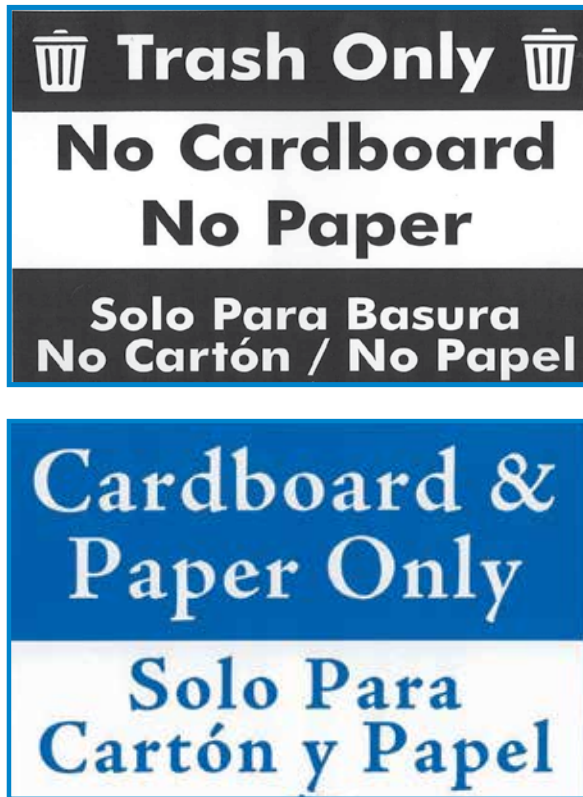
Property managers, or landlords, must provide a sufficient number of well-labeled recycling receptacles that are just as accessible as trash receptacles. Put them next to each other in the same area to encourage good recycling. Both landlords and haulers can be fined for violations, so complying with the law can save money!

Tenants can email info@ocrra.org if there is no place to put recyclables or receptacles are always full. We can reach out to landlords to offer support. Your name will not be revealed to management. OCRRA can also be reached for questions at (315) 453-2866. Thanks for helping save the world a little each day!

Landlords

- Ask your hauler to help evaluate disposal areas for trash and recycling to ensure you have the proper number of receptacles.
- Visit apartments.OCRRA.org to order:
 - Free educational materials, including magnets, for every unit.
 - Posters and decals (see below) to clearly indicate where trash and recyclables belong.
- Email info@ocrra.org to invite an OCRRA recycling specialist to train staff and tenants.

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





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QUESTION OF THE QUARTER

Q: I recently had to take home injections for a medical condition. Now, I have a whole box of needles. How do I get rid of them safely?

A: NEVER place containers of sharps (needles, syringes, and lancets) in the recycling bin. They create a safety risk for workers in waste management. Here are safer alternatives:

1. Several health centers and hospitals will accept sharps from residents. This encourages the safe disposal of sharps for people with medical conditions that require at-home, self-injections. Find locations at tinyurl.com/SharpsRules. Be sure to call ahead.
2. Sharps can also be placed in clean, biohazard-labeled sharps containers or in a clean, heavy plastic bleach or laundry detergent bottle with a screw-on cap. Containers must be leak-proof, labeled as "Sharps" and the tops should be taped shut. Then, they can go in the trash.

Mark Your Calendar

<p>ALL OCRRA SITES CLOSED</p> <p>TUESDAY, JULY 4 MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4</p> <p>Happy Holidays</p>	<p>JAMESVILLE COMPOST SITE OPEN</p> <p>NOW – NOVEMBER 18</p> <p>Thursday - Saturday 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.</p>	<p>HOUSEHOLD TOXICS DROP-OFF</p> <p>MONDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY & FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH</p> <p>Make appointment at OCRRA.org</p>	<p>LEY CREEK TRANSFER STATION</p> <p>CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE</p> <p>Use Rock Cut Road Transfer Station in Jamesville</p>
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FACT: Recyclables should NEVER be placed in plastic or paper bags. All items in your recycling bin should be loose.