



Split Body Trucks Keep Trash and Recyclables Separate

A hidden tool helps some haulers skip a second trip through neighborhoods

Brian Height, Recycling Operations Manager

If you pride yourself on recycling right, watching a hauler toss trash and recyclables into the same truck may be unsettling. Chances are your curbside materials are actually being collected in a split body truck. The name says it all: The body of the truck is split into two separate compartments. One section stores recyclables and the other side stores trash.

Not all split body trucks are built the same. Some are fully automated, meaning the driver can collect carts using a large arm on the truck and they never leave the vehicle's cab. Other trucks are semi-automated, requiring a worker to hook carts onto the back of the truck by hand, then a lever lifts and empties it into the vehicle.

The different body styles mean you may see trash and recyclables being emptied into the top, side or back of a vehicle. In all cases, it will look like everything is being dropped into the SAME opening. In reality, the materials are being sent to different compartments.

Scan the QR code on the right to watch a split body truck in action. You'll see an automated arm lift and empty a

load of trash into the top of the vehicle, then return the bin to the curb. Next, as the arm picks up the recycling bin, an operator flips a paddle that blocks access to the trash compartment inside the truck. The recyclables appear to go into the same opening, but the paddle now directs them to their own compartment.

Haulers that collect trash and recycling at the same time only need to take one trip around a neighborhood. That leads to fewer trucks on the road, which equals less traffic, less noise, reduced emissions and ultimately a reduced carbon footprint.

It can be difficult to differentiate between single load and split body trucks. OCRRA's enforcement division responds to and investigates complaints, including potential recycling violations. After taking a closer look at your hauler's vehicle, if you still suspect recyclables are being mixed with trash, contact OCRRA at info@ocrra.org or (315) 453-2866 and we will look into your concerns.

Brian Height can be reached at bheight@ocrra.org



Photo Credit: Recycle Right NY.



IMAGES BELOW: The operator of a split body truck remotely switches a paddle to open and close compartments on the right and left side of a collection truck in order to keep recycling and trash separate during curbside pickups.

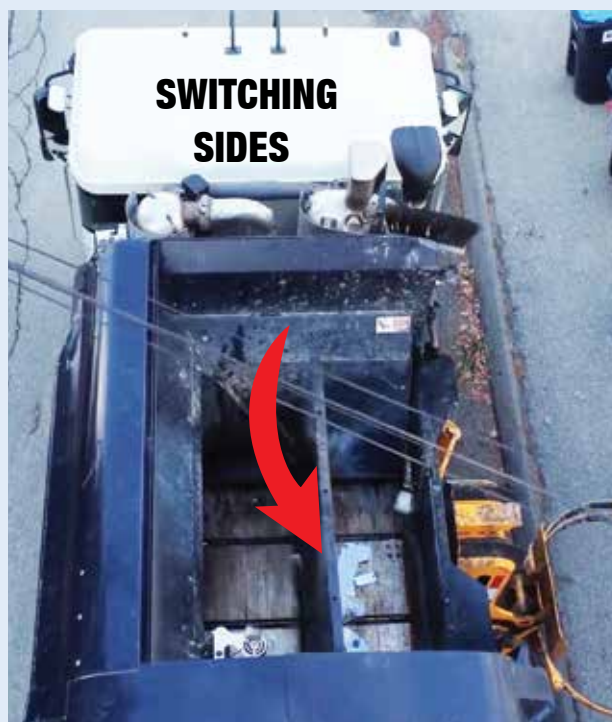


Photo Credit: YouTube.com/Casella, 2025.



Earth Day '25

APRIL 25 & 26, 2025

RECAP

Volunteers Tackle Tons of Litter at the Annual Earth

Way to go Onondaga County! More than 4,000 people from more than 300 groups signed up again this year to help spruce up parks, trails and neighborhoods across our community. The effort makes a big impact. Tens of thousands of tons of litter were collected and disposed of properly, instead of getting washed into local streets and waterways. YOU did it. Why stop now? We hope you are inspired to

clean up litter whenever you see it throughout the year. Want to form a neighborhood team? Go for it. Call your city, town or village hall to find out if they have litter cleanup programs. For example, Syracuse has an Adopt-a-Block program throughout the year for volunteers to help keep the city clean. Community pride is important. We can see it clearly on these smiling faces. Thank you.

ARC OF ONONDAGA



ONONDAGA EAST CHAMBER



MANLIUS LIBRARY



PINCKNEY HUGO GROUP



MORNING STAR LODGE NO. 524



SMURFIT WESTROCK



OCRRA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS




Photo Credit: OCPL, Syracuse, 2025

Two children prepare to race in a recycling relay at Betts Branch Library in Syracuse. OCRRA Recycling Specialist Lisa Piering uses the fun activity to teach kids what belongs in a recycling bin.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025

Bill DeLapp, North Syracuse, visited OCRRA's booth during the CNY Home and Garden Show at the New York State Fairgrounds. OCRRA's Emma Borys shares tips for reducing waste.



Recycling Rhoda

Curbside Pickup

Dear Rhoda,

Who do I contact when there is an issue with my trash or recycling pickup?

— Confused in Camillus

Dear Confused,

This is a question I get ALL the time! The short answer is, contact your municipality or hauler about your bill, a missed pickup or a damaged bin - not OCRRA. However, this topic deserves a longer explanation.

First, let me clear up a common misconception: OCRRA does not pick up trash or recycling from homes or businesses. We do manage or contract with facilities where trash and recyclables are delivered. OCRRA is a non-profit, public benefit corporation created more than 30 years ago by the New York State Legislature to address Onondaga County's solid waste management. That means OCRRA is not funded by taxpayer dollars. Rather, the bulk of

expenses are covered by fees charged when waste is dropped off at OCRRA's sites.

Municipalities throughout Onondaga County decide how trash and recyclables are collected and delivered to their end destination. Some municipalities, such as the city of Syracuse, have their Department of Public Works (DPW) collect curbside materials. Other towns and villages, after a bidding process, select a private hauler to collect materials. In some communities it is up to residents to hire a hauler or drop off their own waste at the OCRRA Transfer Station. Because these services are provided in various ways, general pickup questions should go to your municipality or hauler.

OCRRA figures out how to manage the waste that gets delivered to us. Common household trash goes to a Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility in Jamesville (operated by Reworld), where it is converted into enough electricity to power roughly 30,000 households annually. Recyclables go to a

Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Liverpool (operated by WM/Recycle America), where items are sorted and sold to end markets. Questions about what belongs in your trash or recycling bin (or neither) should be directed to OCRRA.

- Is your plastic container recyclable? OCRRA can help.
- What is considered hazardous waste? Check with OCRRA.
- Your broken recycling cart was left in the wrong driveway? Call your municipality/hauler.
- Recyclables never got picked up on your street? Contact your municipality/hauler.

I hope that clears up the confusion in Camillus and across Onondaga County. Feel free to send questions to info@OCRRA.org or give us a call at 315.453.2866. We're always happy to help.

Sincerely,
Recycling Rhoda

New Multilingual Resources Available on OCRRA.org

When residents of Onondaga County reduce waste and recycle right, our community saves money. Now OCRRA has another tool to help more families contribute to those savings. A new multilingual resources page on OCRRA.org features recycling, waste reduction and composting help in English, Spanish, Arabic, Somali, Swahili and Nepali.

New Americans may have a difficult time finding these resources from the home page at OCRRA.org. If you know someone who needs these tools, share the QR code below. It goes directly to the multilingual resources page, where visitors can instantly select their language from a menu at the top. Scroll down the page to find tips including:

- 1. A recycling rules & disposal guide
- 2. Ideas for reducing food waste through recipes, meal planning and understanding date labels on food (tip: “use by”, “sell by” and “best by” dates are suggestions by stores and manufacturers – they are not government regulated rules)
- 3. Short videos focusing on meal planning, food waste and composting at home

All of OCRRA’s multilingual resources are now in one place, making it easier than ever to share and use this important information. Every resident who composts is reducing the amount of waste that must be processed in Onondaga County. Every resident who recycles properly is reducing contamination and protecting the value of materials sold for recycling. Every resident willing to do their part can help us save the world a little each day.

Arabic - Disposal Reminders

التسليم لإعادة التدوير
لا تترك هذه المواد في سلة إعادة التدوير لديك

التفاريات المنزلية السامة
OCRRA.org/toxic

المخلفات الإلكترونية
OCRRA.org/electronic

البطاريات
OCRRA.org/battery

القواعد الأساسية لإعادة التدوير

لا تضع المواد القابلة لإعادة التدوير في أكياس

ضع المواد المخصصة لإعادة التدوير دون أكياس في سلة إعادة التدوير

أو بلاستيكية

Nepali - Recycling Rules

संयोजक रिसाइकल गर्ने चीजहरू

रद्दी

कागज

- बक्सहरू (खाली/प्याछो परिणको)
- समाचारपत्र र पत्रिकाहरू
- पिठ्टी र अधिकांश कागजहरू (खाली/प्याछो परिणको)

प्लास्टिक

- संयोजक बिसी/होमो, अकार अनुसार रिसाइकल गर्नुहोस्
- बोटलहरू, कागुन, बारहरू र रसहरू गर्ने मिले टेपरीका टबहरू मात्र

धातु

- खाना र पेयका कानहरू
- अलुमिनियमका प्यानहरू, कपौटहरू र फोदल (समय र पछाडको)

शिशा

- खानका कान्देनहरू
- पेय पदार्थका बोतलहरू (कुनै पनि रङको)

Somali - Understanding Date Labels

#EndFoodWaste

Kaydi \$\$\$ & Yaree Qashinka: FAHAN TAARIKHDA KU QORAN

Taariikhda ku qoran LAMA saadana badqabka cuntada, kaahim dal badan ayaa u dhacay inay hadhira way nika buraan, cuntadi ee wali ficay

- Dawladu MA maamusho sumadaha taariikhda
- Maqaan wax shuruud ah oo la xarira sida taariikhda looso qoro
- "Use By", "Sell By", "Best if Used By" iyo taariikhaha kale waxaa soo go'aamiya shirkada socaarta oo ka baxa
- *Caanaha foomulaha ee caruurta kaliya ayaa lagu soo qoraa taariikhda gobalka New York

Inta badan cuntayinka wali waxay leeyihin faayo sare waana amaan waqti kadib marka la dhaafo taariikhda. Tusaale:

- Yoogadka iyo jiska: Waxaa la isticmaali karaa 7+ maalmood oo kadib taariikhda ku qoran
- Ulkunta: Waxaa la isticmaali karaa 3+ asbuuc oo dheeraad ah
- Cuntayinka qasacadeysan/kujira bokska: Waxaa la isticmaali karaa 3+ bilood oo dheeraad ah

Ka baar "End Food Waste" barta OCRRA.org

Taariikhdu ma sheegto badqabka cuntada

NEWMOA

OCRRA.org

Spanish - Cooking with Food Scraps

ideas para usarlo Todo!

HAGA UN PESTO
Use lo que le guste: diferentes quesos, nueces y/o verduras. Combine en una licuadora.

- 1/2 taza de aceite de oliva
- 2-8 dientes de ajo
- 1/2 taza de queso (parmesan)
- 1/2 taza de nueces de árbol (piñones o nueces)
- 3 tazas de albahaca (compacta) - otras ideas:
 - Verdes: espinacas, perejil, hojas de zanahoria o remolacha
 - Tallos: brócoli, col rizada o remolacha (frescadas para abundarlas)

Mezcle hasta obtener una pasta espesa; agregue sal y pimienta al gusto. Almacene en el refrigerador hasta por 2 semanas. Mézclelo con pasta o sobre pan, pescado o pollo.

HAGA CHILE
Una receta básica es:

- 2 cebollas (cortadas en pedacitos)
- 3-6 dientes de ajo (cortados en pedacitos)
- Corte Verduras (1 o 2 pimientos verdes, más otras como zanahorias, apio o brócoli)
- Especias secas (2 cucharadas de comino molido y 2 cucharadas de chile en polvo)
- 6 tazas de frijoles (3 tazas de frijoles secos remojados en agua durante la noche o 2 latas grandes escurridas y enjuagadas)
- 6 tazas de tomates triturados pelados (o 2 latas grandes con el jugo)
- Opcional: agregue la carne sobrante picada

En una olla grande a fuego medio-alto, agregue 2 cucharadas de aceite de oliva y cebolla, ajo, especias y verduras. Revuelva hasta que esté suave. Agregue los tomates y frijoles. Agregue 1-2 tazas de agua, si es necesario. Llevar a ebullición. Reduzca el fuego y cocine a fuego lento 1-2 horas. Sal y pimienta al gusto. Puede probar la receta tal cual es o adaptarla a los ingredientes que tiene o le gustan.

Swahili - Composting Video

Jinsi ya Kuweka Mbolea

QR code

If you know someone who speaks Spanish, Nepali, Somali, Arabic or Swahili, help them find OCRRA’s multilingual resources page. Scan the QR code to go straight to the page, then copy and share the link!

Help Crowds Recycle Right at Large Public Events

Borrow ClearStream Containers from OCRRA

Emma Borys, Office Coordinator

With the arrival of warm weather, Onondaga County is gearing up for an exciting season of outdoor events. Whether you are enjoying a festival, race or large community gathering, it is important to recycle right.

Many temporary outdoor venues lack recycling bins, leading visitors to toss recyclable bottles and cans into the trash. Organizers of large public events can give guests a better choice by borrowing ClearStream recycling containers from OCRRA!

ClearStream’s portable, easy-to-set up containers are designed to collect bottles and cans. Best of all, OCRRA will lend them out to organizers of large community events for FREE! With a limited number of bins available, it is important to book far in advance.

If you are organizing an event and want to make it more sustainable, scan the QR code to fill out the free borrower’s form to find out if you are eligible. Send an email to eborys@ocrra.org if more information is needed. If you are attending a festival, race or large event this summer, look around to see if ClearStream containers are available so your bottles and cans get recycled.

While the cost to OCRRA prohibits us from providing ClearStream recycling containers for personal parties, we encourage hosts to provide trash AND recycling bins at backyard barbecues (placing them directly next to one another ensures guests don’t have to look far to find the right container for their items). Let’s work together to keep our community clean and green this summer!

Emma Borys can be reached at eborys@ocrra.org.



2024 OCRRA Recycling Highlights

- **411,543** tons of material were recycled by Onondaga County residents, businesses and schools.
- **5,740** pounds of rechargeable batteries, 140,000 pounds of alkaline batteries and 2,900 pounds of button and coin batteries were recycled.
- **1,790** residents made appointments to properly manage household hazardous waste.
- **12,680** fluorescent bulbs were collected and recycled, keeping 44,477 milligrams of mercury out of the waste stream.
- **119** mercury thermometers and 43 mercury thermostats were collected during the OCRRA/Reworld Mercury Collection Event, diverting 291,000 milligrams of mercury from the waste stream.
- **OCRRA’s outreach team** engaged with more than 70 classrooms, community organizations and tabling events, educating our community about recycling, reduction, and reuse.

2024 OCRRA Composting Highlights

- **9 million** pounds of food scraps were processed into compost by OCRRA.
- **29,000** yards of high-quality compost were produced, meeting all testing requirements by the U.S. Composting Council and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.
- **10,000** bags of compost were sold.
- **54,000** yards of trees, limbs, grass, leaves and other yard waste were accepted at our Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites and turned it into thousands of yards of compost and mulch for our community.





From the Executive Director's Desk...

Back to Basics – Home Composting

Reduce food waste and make a circular economy work in your backyard

Kevin Spillane, OCRRA Executive Director

I currently live in an apartment and must admit I don't miss house repairs, shoveling during the winter or all the grass mowing. However, I do miss being able to plant my own garden. Every year I would till up part of my backyard just before Memorial Day. Then, on that long week-end, I would plant neat rows of tomatoes, potatoes, corn and whatnot. When I turned the soil over for the first time each year, I would add a fine layer of compost from my own compost bin. It always made the soil look more rich and helped my plants jump from the ground.

With OCRRA, I have a much bigger compost program to work with now. We mix food scraps and yard waste, just like I did for my garden. Then, the final product is sold throughout Onondaga County and the region. However, OCRRA's compost program, recognized for years as the largest active municipal compost program in New York State (at least until New York City's program got underway), does have limits. Our Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites have very small footprints, limiting how much food and yard waste we can accept. Is there still food waste in our waste stream in Onondaga County? Unfortunately, yes. A study in 2019 showed about 21% of our waste is compostable food.

How do we address the community's needs and continue encouraging people to separate food from other waste? One of the solutions identified by the OCRRA Board of Directors and staff when we completed our 2026 Strategic Plan was to go back to basics; do what I had done for many years and encourage people that do have enough yard space to start composting at home.

WHAT IS COMPOST?

By mixing food and yard waste with the proper amount of water and air, we provide a ripe environment for microscopic organisms to break down organic material. That happens all the time in nature. Fruit falls from trees and mixes with leaves as it decomposes and returns nutrients to the soil, fueling more growth.

HOW DO YOU BEGIN COMPOSTING?

Don't get overwhelmed by the options. There are ways to compost indoors or outdoors. You can use a bin, tumbler or just make a pile in the backyard. Some people prefer vermicomposting – with worms. Scan this QR code to explore more options and advice beyond my personal preferences.



I'm a fan of starting with a simple compost pile in a dry and shady area of your backyard, near a water source. You don't need a lot of space and I discourage folks from getting too ambitious from the start. Aim for at least a 3' x 3' square or perhaps a 3' x 5' area. Surrounding it with scrap wood offers some structure. Consider keeping it within 3-5 feet tall, so it is more manageable.




WHAT GOES INTO A HOME COMPOST PILE?

It is important to manage the odor of waste as the pile of leaves and food break down in your yard. Compost needs a good balance of carbon and nitrogen, which comes from the organic materials you mix together. I like a mix of about four parts brown matter (carbon based materials, including leaves, dried grass, wood chips, even a little cardboard) to one part food waste (nitrogen rich materials, including coffee grounds, vegetables and fruit scraps).


WHAT DOESN'T BELONG IN A COMPOST PILE?

Don't go too heavy on food waste or it will create a stronger odor. Avoid meat and bones, which can attract critters to your pile. Also, do not include dairy products like milk or yogurt. Do not add any yard waste that has been treated with pesticides.


What To Compost




Vegetables




Houseplants




Yard trimmings




Coffee, tea




Fruits




Nut shells



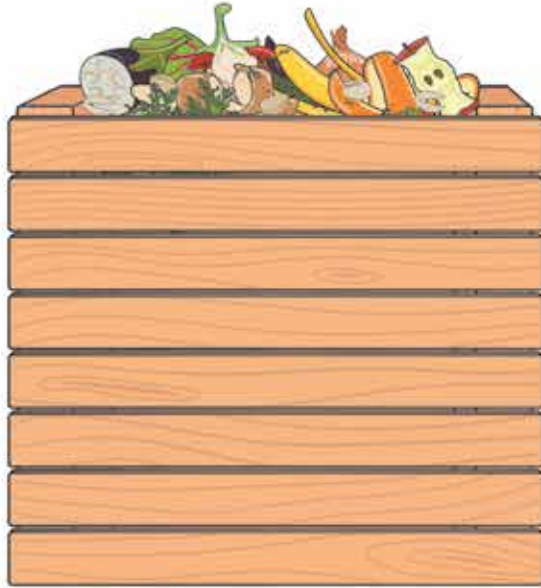
Eggshells



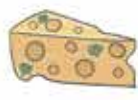
Paper napkins




Paper scraps and cardboard




What Not To Compost




Dairy products




Fats and oils




Eggs, meat or fish bones and scraps



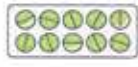
Pet waste




Diseased plants




Produce stickers



Medication



Cigarettes



Broken glass

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO BREAK DOWN?

Good aeration, achieved by turning your pile regularly, speeds up the composting process. However, I would occasionally take a foot off the top of the pile and flip it into the bin next to it. I used a pitchfork at the beginning of my piles in the late summer/early fall. Then, I switched to a shovel once it got closer to spring. Add a little water if you think your pile is drying out, but don't make it soggy. Account for the winter snow and subsequent melt.

In my experience, a pile started when I harvested my garden and raked my leaves would be ready by the next Memorial Day. It is an easy way to make a difference; separate more food waste from your own household and make the circular economy work right in your own backyard.

Kevin Spillance can be reached at kspillane@ocrra.org.

Spring 2025 | Volume 34 No. 2

This quarterly publication is brought to you by

100 Elwood Davis Road | North Syracuse, NY 13212-4312

TAMMY PALMER
Editor and Public Information Officer
(315) 453 - 2866 | info@OCRRA.org

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.

Printed on Recycled Paper

FACT: Roughly one-third of food loss happens at the retail and consumer level, including spoilage and over-ordering.

Clearing the Way for a Modern Transfer Station at Ley Creek

A lot has changed this year on Ley Creek Drive in the town of Salina. Piece by piece, a demolition crew dismantled the large transfer station that served Onondaga County residents for decades. The end of that era marks the beginning of another. The goal is to reimagine the site as a comprehensive solid waste management campus that gives OCRRA the capacity to further explore waste reduction, reuse and recycling opportunities.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025.

Ley Creek Transfer Station was dismantled in the spring. OCRRA is taking steps to replace it with a modern facility that meets Onondaga County’s growing needs.

WHY IS THE CURRENT FACILITY BEING REPLACED?

Most of the structure was built in the 1970’s with the intention of housing machinery to shred trash. As the community’s needs evolved, local leaders opted to use the site as a transfer station. After an expansion, upgrades and significant maintenance over the years, it became clear a new facility would be necessary to meet New York State’s revised regulations for waste management.

WHAT WILL REPLACE THE TRANSFER STATION?

OCRRA’s Board of Directors has a long-term strategic plan for the site, beginning with a modernized transfer station. The new building will include a 40,000 square foot tipping floor that can manage up to 1,200 tons of waste per day. As our community grows with upcoming economic developments, the Board has identified opportunities to address a growth in municipal solid waste as well.

In addition to a much larger transfer station, the goal is to build a separate facility where hard-to-manage materials, such as batteries, household hazardous waste, electronics and paint may be dropped off in a single location. Currently, residents must take those materials and many others to different drop-off points spread across Onondaga County. With additional room to collect and store items, OCRRA could have greater flexibility to cost-effectively manage more materials.

Buy OCRRA Premium Compost

If you can’t make your own compost at home, you can always give your garden a boost by purchasing the compost OCRRA produces. We recycle food scraps and yard waste to create an all-natural soil amendment, made locally. Buy in bulk or by the bag to add nutrients to soil, retain moisture and help plants grow better.



- **Trunk Load** (Car, van, and SUV owners hand load their trunk): \$10
- **Cubic Yard** (OCRRA loads your truck or trailer):
 - 1/2" Screened - \$16 / cu. yd. only at Jamesville Compost Site.
 - 1/4" Premium - \$20 / cu. yd. only at Amboy Compost Site
- **Bag** (1 cu. ft.) 1/4" Compost:
 - Visit either OCRRA Compost Site - \$5 each or 5 bags for \$20
 - Visit a local retailer that sells OCRRA’s bagged compost. Prices vary. Call to confirm availability.



ROCK CUT ROAD TRANSFER STATION 5808 Rock Cut Road | Jamesville, NY 13078

Monday – Friday: 3:30 – 6 p.m.	Residents must unload their own material.
Saturday: 8 a.m. – noon	Visit www.OCRRA.org/locations for fee information.

Mark Your Calendar

FREE CONFIDENTIAL PAPER SHREDDING

SEPT. 13

Save the Date

www.OCRRA.org/events

HOUSEHOLD TOXICS DROP-OFF APPTS.

MON., THURS., FRI.,
and first **SAT.** each month

www.OCRRA.org/toxics

FREE E-WASTE RECYCLING

JULY 12

Registration Required

www.OCRRA.org/events

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE NOTICE

JULY 4 & SEPT. 1

All OCRRA Sites Closed

www.OCRRA.org/locations