



Recycle Right - Paper



Curbside Recycling

- Boxes for cereal, rice or pasta. No boxes from the fridge or freezer section of the grocery store.
- Cardboard - reduce oversized pieces to 3-feet on each side.
- Newspapers, magazines, catalogs, softcover books.
- Office papers and mail (window envelopes are okay to recycle).



DO NOT put paper inside plastic or paper bags; keep all items loose in the bin.



Drop Off to Recycle

- Shredded paper does not belong in your recycling bin - loose or bagged. You can add it to trash or consider these alternatives:
 - Assemblyman Magnarelli is hosting free confidential document shredding on September 13, 2025. Registration is required. Visit www.OCRRA.org/events for details.
 - Call your financial institution to find out if they host a free shredding event.
 - For a nominal fee, take shredded paper to Bodow Recycling in Syracuse.
 - Need shredding services? See the back cover for a coupon.



Trash

- Egg cartons (any type)
- Frozen or refrigerated food boxes
- Hardcover books
- Items with glitter or foil
- Paper plates and cups
- Receipts
- Soda/beer boxes
- Takeout boxes.
- Tissue paper



Eco-Friendly Alternatives to Common Household Waste

Lisa Piering, Recycling Specialist

You’ve likely heard the phrase “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!” At OCRRA, we do a lot to help you recycle right, but those first two Rs are even more important. Reducing waste can mean you produce less trash or use fewer of Earth’s natural resources - ideally both. Swapping a few everyday items with more sustainable alternatives can make reducing and reusing a habit around the house. If you enjoy experimenting with new things, here are a few ideas:

1. DO THE PLANET A SOLID WITH SOLID SHAMPOO. You’ve probably used bars of soap before, but did you know shampoo and conditioner also come in bars? They have less packaging waste and use less fuel for shipping, since bars skip the water weight. If your salon doesn’t have supplies, cosmetic stores such as Ulta Beauty and Lush in Destiny USA offer options. A quick search online will yield plenty of results. A new local shop, the Eastwood

Refillery also sells solid shampoo and conditioner. The store, located at 113 S. Midler Ave. in Syracuse, offers options to refill and reuse the same containers for all sorts of household supplies.

2. KEEP LEFTOVERS FRESH BY SWAPPING PLASTIC WRAP FOR WAXED FABRIC “BEE’S WRAPS.” Just rinse with cool water to reuse them. America’s Test Kitchen compared them to plastic bags, and they kept an avocado equally as fresh, in their tests. You may need to secure the wrap with a large rubber band or string, especially for transportation. They are even available pre-sewn into sandwich pouches and bread bags. Although clean and dry stretchy film plastics can be dropped off at large grocery stores for recycling (they don’t belong in your curbside recycling container), beeswax wraps cut out plastic entirely and are reusable!

3. REUSABLE ZIP TOP BAGS ARE GREAT FOR LUNCHES AND SNACKS IF BEE’S WRAPS AREN’T YOUR THING. Unlike disposable plastic zip top bags, these are usually made of durable silicone, are less prone to tears at the seam and can usually go through the dishwasher so they have a longer lifespan. Visit OCRRA at a fair or festival and you might even win one!

Reuse can also mean sharing. Donate old clothes, shop thrift stores and get a library card! These days lots of libraries will let you check out more than books. Supplies for crafting, camping, baking and more may be available.

If you’d like to explore other ideas, try keeping track of any disposables you use during the next week or two. Then, do a little research to find out if reusable options exist. You might be surprised!

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



OCRRA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



OCRRA intern Gabby Singer had a busy summer creating flash cards and other educational materials to help summer camp kids learn about Onondaga County’s recycling rules, waste reduction and reuse. Singer is entering her junior year at SUNY ESF, where she is studying environmental science.

Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025.



You can find all sorts of things at OCRRA’s Rock Cut Road Transfer Station, maybe even lunch. Food trucks occasionally swing by to give workers and customers a chance to buy a bite to eat. When Salt City Smokehouse visited recently, OCRRA’s Dorsey Williams ordered the garbage boat. Of course!

Photo Credit: OCRRA, Jamesville, 2025.

FACT: On OCRRA.org, click the recycling tab and look for “reducing waste” for tips at home, work and school.

Onondaga County Libraries Aim to Reduce Halloween Waste

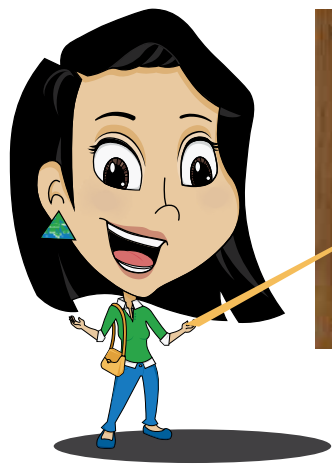
Clothing and other textiles NEVER belong in your recycling bin. However, a fun costume can be reused! Before Halloween, the Betts Branch and White Branch Libraries in Syracuse will give away gently-used costumes until supplies are gone. Once the Costume Closet schedule is finalized, details will be shared on www.OCRRA.org/events.

After Halloween, the same library branches will collect clean and gently-used costumes during the entire month of November. Those donations will be given away next year.

If you can't make it to the library's drop-off locations, look for a costume swap online or consider organizing one in your neighborhood.



iStock.com/kirin_photo.2025



Recycling Rhoda

5 OCRRA Facts

Dear Rhoda,

I recently put a copy of Onondaga County's recycling rules on my refrigerator. Thanks for the help! Since then, I've started to wonder how OCRRA is funded and how operations are managed. Can you fill me in?

— Curious in Clay

Dear Curious,

I could write about OCRRA for hours! Pull up a seat and grab a coffee (in a reusable mug, of course)! Nothing makes me happier than answering questions and clearing up misconceptions about the fascinating world of municipal solid waste management. Here are five facts about the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency – OCRRA.

- 1. OCRRA is governed by a Board of Directors.** Fifteen respected community leaders are appointed to serve three-year terms, including educators, business owners, financial planners, community advocates, public servants and more. Appointments are made by the Onondaga County Legislature, Onondaga County Executive, city of Syracuse and towns of Onondaga and Van Buren. The Board has designed a strategic plan for OCRRA and meets regularly with staff to review implementation, under the leadership of Chair Corey Driscoll Dunham and Vice Chair Doug Daley.
- 2. OCRRA does not pick up curbside waste.** Elected leaders have the authority to

decide if curbside pickup is available to their constituents. Some municipalities have a DPW crew for pickups, many take bids from private haulers to service an entire town, and others leave it to residents to hire their own hauler or bring waste to OCRRA's transfer station. OCRRA does oversee Onondaga County's solid waste management system, making sure different types of waste ultimately end up in the right place. Trash goes to a Waste-to-Energy Facility and recyclables go to a facility where they are sorted to sell. That's why OCRRA helps residents learn what they need to separate at home for recycling. Visit OCRRA.org/recycling for more information.

- 3. OCRRA does not operate an active landfill.** Municipal solid waste (MSW) in Onondaga County goes to the Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility on Rock Cut Road in Jamesville where it is converted into enough electricity to power roughly 30,000 homes each year. Equipment at the WTE Facility captures roughly 12,000 tons of the metal for recycling annually. The WTE process, reduces the volume of material that must be hauled to out-of-county landfills by 90%.
- 4. OCRRA is not taxpayer funded.** The New York State Legislature created OCRRA as a non-profit public benefit corporation to manage our community's municipal solid waste. OCRRA is funded by waste tipping

fees, waste-to-energy electricity revenues, metal recovery and grants. Tipping fees are what customers pay to dump municipal solid waste at the WTE Facility or other OCRRA sites.

Waste-related tax payments go directly to your municipality, not OCRRA (this is how your town, village or city can pay a hauler or DPW staff for weekly curbside pickup services).

- 5. OCRRA does much more than manage trash and recyclables.** OCRRA operates the Jamesville and Amboy Compost Sites, promoting a circular economy. Customers in Onondaga County drop off food scraps and yard waste, which are recycled into nutrient-rich compost (see page 4 for food waste drop-off instructions) or mulch. These products are sold for use in landscaping and gardens, making our community more beautiful and helping families grow new food. OCRRA also provides educational outreach to schools, businesses and community groups, emphasizing waste reduction, reuse, recycling and sustainability.

Still curious? Keep reading! You'll learn much more in this newsletter – straight from the dedicated team of people who keep OCRRA moving forward.

Sincerely,

Recycling Rhoda

OCRRA's 3-Step Guide to Dropping Off Food Scraps

Brian Cole, Organics Program Supervisor

Do most of your food scraps end up in the garbage after a meal? While food waste never belongs in a curbside recycling bin, it can be recycled – into compost! Roughly 20% of Onondaga County's trash is compostable food. If you're passionate about reducing waste but can't compost at home, OCRRA offers an alternative to throwing away leftovers. Here's how it works in three steps:

1. ORDER A COMPOST SITE PASS. ONONDAGA COUNTY RESIDENTS CAN DROP OFF FOOD AND YARD WASTE AT OCRRA'S COMPOST SITES WITH A \$25 ANNUAL PASS.

As a bonus, two free bags of OCRRA premium compost are included! Buy a pass at our compost sites or visit www.OCRRA.org/shop to order one online.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025

2. SAVE YOUR SCRAPS. MANY PEOPLE FREEZE COMPOSTABLE KITCHEN WASTE UNTIL THEY ARE READY TO MAKE A TRIP TO ONE OF OUR SITES.

OCRRA will accept fruit, beans, bones, bread, coffee grounds, coffee filters, eggs, dairy, fish, garden waste, grains, meat, paper cups, paper napkins, paper towels, tea bags and vegetables.

3. DROP OFF FOOD WASTE. COLLECTION BINS ARE LOCATED AT OCRRA'S JAMESVILLE AND AMBOY COMPOST SITES AS WELL AS ROCK CUT ROAD TRANSFER STATION. Food waste can be dumped into OCRRA's collection bins loose or inside BPI certified (compostable) bags, which can be purchased at many big box stores or online.

OCRRA processed 9 million pounds of food scraps into compost last year, meeting all testing requirements by the U.S. Composting Council and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. More than 10,000 bags of high-quality OCRRA Premium Compost were sold at our sites and through local retailers. Composting not only reduces waste, it transforms food scraps (and yard waste) into a nutrient-rich material. When applied to vegetable or flower gardens, compost can improve soil structure and promote healthier roots for plants. In turn, those plants provide us with our next meal or add a touch of beauty to our community.

Brian Cole can be reached at bcole@OCRRA.org.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Jamesville, 2025

Food scrap drop-off container located near the entrance to Jamesville Compost Site



Photo Credit: iStock.com/Ulilu

Food scraps may be dropped off loose or inside bags that are labeled as BPI certified.

Skip the Trip with DIY Composting

There's no need to bring food scraps to OCRRA if you can compost right in your own back yard. Find resources to get started on our new DIY composting page on OCRRA.org. Learn about options for composting at home, important ingredients and how you can improve the odds of success in the spring. Scan the QR code to take the first step.



Photo Credit: iStock.com/Marina Lohrbach



OCRRA Drop-off Locations & Hours

AMBOY COMPOST SITE*

6296 Airport Road | Camillus, NY 13209
Monday – Saturday: 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

JAMESVILLE COMPOST SITE*

4370 Route 91 | Jamesville, NY 13078
Thursday – Saturday: 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

*Scheduling note: Beginning Nov. 23, 2025, Jamesville Compost Site will close for the season and Amboy Compost Site returns to M-F hours of operation (no Saturday hours) until April 2026.

ROCK CUT ROAD TRANSFER STATION

5808 Rock Cut Road | Jamesville, NY 13078
Monday – Friday: 3:30 – 6:00 p.m.
Saturday: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

FACT: OCRRA produced 29,000 yards of compost last year, using a combination of food scraps and yard waste.

Amboy Pollinator Garden: Seeds of a New Habitat

Emma Borys, Office Coordinator

This spring, OCRRA began working on the Amboy Pollinator Garden project with the goal of transforming a patch of lawn at the Amboy Compost Facility into a thriving habitat for native pollinators. While it may not look like much yet, the ground-work has been laid. The existing sod has been removed and a carefully selected native seed mix has been spread.

OCRRA employees Brian Cole and Jeremy Millson collaboratively designed the garden with me, along with SUNY ESF intern Gabby Singer. Dedicated Amboy crew members including Ziggy Czerwiak, Michael Guilfoil, and Charles Tomlin supported the early stages of the project.

Of course, the garden also features beautiful OCRRA mulch to help the soil retain moisture and protect the seeds from predators.

WHAT IS A POLLINATOR?

Pollinators are animals that help plants reproduce by transferring pollen from one flower to another. Common pollinators include bees, butterflies, flies, and hummingbirds.

COLLABORATION IS KEY!

This project would not have been possible without the guidance of the SUNY ESF Restoration Science Center. Conservation on Private Lands Initiative researcher Sam Quinn, pollinator ecologist Molly Jacobson and lawn to meadow coordinator Elise Calahan provided essential input on site preparation, seed selection and more, ensuring the garden is designed with long-term ecological success in mind.

Although the garden is just beginning to take shape, we're excited to watch it grow into a vibrant space for local pollinators and a model for conservation in action.

Are you a private landowner interested in creating your own pollinator garden? Visit the Restoration Science Center Website at www.esf.edu/research/restorationscience/ to learn more about how to get started.

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



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025

After clearing a patch of land at the Amboy Compost Site with a sod cutter, intern Gabby Singer spreads OCRRA mulch around the perimeter. Office Coordinator Emma Borys sprinkles a mix of seeds that support local pollinators, including bees and butterflies.

Drop Off Pumpkins After Halloween

Onondaga County residents can drop off whole or carved pumpkins at OCRRA's Amboy or Jamesville Compost Sites from November 1 - November 22, 2025, during normal hours of operation. Remove all decorations in advance, including candles, stickers or other embellishments. No painted pumpkins please.



This free service is only for Onondaga County residents, not municipal or commercial operations. A compost site pass is not required for pumpkins dropped off by November 22. Pumpkins never belong in a recycling bin and would be wasted in the trash. Instead, OCRRA has a great trick to turn them into a treat – nutrient-rich compost that will help gardeners across our community grow new pumpkins next year.



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025



Photo Credit: OCRRA, Syracuse, 2025

FACT: EPA: They play a key role in agriculture, but the pollinator population has been dwindling for several years.

Employee Spotlight: The Faces of Public Service

Tammy Palmer, Public Information Officer

When you put your trash and recyclables out to the curb or drop off items at Rock Cut Road Transfer Station, your waste doesn't just disappear. Many hard-working employees make sure those materials are managed properly. Over the summer, OCRRA recognized several dedicated employees on social media during Waste and Recycling Workers Week. We believe their names, faces and contributions are worth sharing with the community they serve.

JACK CONNERY

OCRRA Assistant Engineer Jack Connery is very busy monitoring construction work at the Ley Creek Transfer Station this year, which is closed while the site is being redesigned. That won't stop him from greeting visitors at our mercury collection event, compost site tours or during the Home & Garden Show. Jack always volunteers to help with an infectious smile. "In my work as an assistant engineer, I find a good mix of routine tasks and new challenges to face," Connery says. "It's invigorating to balance day-to-day work activities and whatever curveballs solid waste and construction projects have to offer."

RENEE CZERWIAK

If you've called or emailed OCRRA's main office recently, there's a good chance Executive Secretary Renee Czerwiak answered. "She works tirelessly to find answers to the many questions that cross her desk each day," says OCRRA Recycling and Reduction Manager Kristen Lawton. "She is also always willing to lend a hand and help keep our office operating smoothly. Renee does all of this while also deftly handling her duties for the Board of Directors, ensuring attention to detail to make all the meetings run well."

RASHEED MANSOUR

We hate to brag, but we will do it for Rasheed Mansour. A driver for OCRRA, Rasheed is often on the road transporting materials from the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station to their final disposal sites. During those trips, he's always thinking of ways to help. Rasheed's supervisor says his exceptional commitment and innovative thinking make him one of our most dedicated drivers. "I have a good crew of co-workers and I enjoy working with them," Mansour says. "I also like knowing I'm helping the community with a service they need."

JAKE SCHRAM

You may see Jake Schram at the Jamesville Compost Site working hard to screen OCRRA's mulch and compost. He's a relatively new member of the team who hit the ground running. Jake quickly established himself as a motivated and reliable member of the team, even coming in on his days off to help when needed. "Between handling recyclables and trash or compost and mulch, it is a multifaceted agency," Schram says. "I like knowing I'm supporting the environment and my community."

ANDY SEMABIA

Anyone who crosses paths with Andy Semabia knows he is always positive, friendly and thoughtful. Supervising operations at Rock Cut Road Transfer Station takes vision, patience and a can-do spirit. Andy fits the mold. "Every day is different. I'm learning new skills all the time. The work tests me and I have sharpened my ability to think on my feet," Semabia says. "It gives me satisfaction to know we're taking good care of recyclables in our community and sending trash to the proper place, keeping it out of our waterways and parks."



Jack Connery



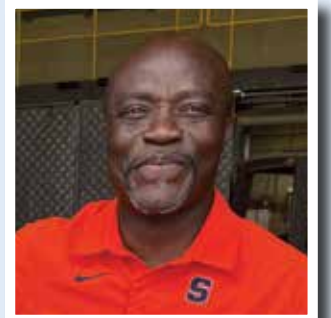
Renee Czerwiak



Rasheed Mansour



Jake Schram



Andy Semabia

Interested in Working for OCRRA?

Help OCRRA save the world a little each day with a career in public service.

Overseeing Onondaga County's solid waste management system requires a wide range of skills, from engineers to drivers and laborers. OCRRA offers competitive pay, a NYS pension and Agency-supported health benefits for full-time employees. Visit [OCRRA.org/jobs](https://www.ocrra.org/jobs) to explore current opportunities.



From the Executive Director's Desk...

Environmental Stewardship Leads the Way

Building a better community begins with good policies and great people

Kevin Spillane, OCRRA Executive Director

As you may have seen on the previous page, we celebrated National Waste & Recycling Workers Week during the summer and recognized a few of the hard-working folks in our Agency that provide waste disposal and recycling services to our community. Reflecting on the occasion reminds me how difficult it is to explain what we all do at OCRRA. I know it sounds like it would be simple – we take care of the garbage or we manage the recycling program or we educate folks about how to manage resources better. It is all those things and more, which I wrap into environmental stewardship. But, what does that actually mean?

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) PROVIDES A LONGSTANDING DESCRIPTION:

We define environmental stewardship as the responsibility for environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment. This sense of responsibility is a value that can be reflected through the choices of individuals, companies, communities, and government organizations, and shaped by unique environmental, social, and economic interests. It is also a behavior, one demonstrated through continuous improvement of environmental performance, and a commitment to efficient use of natural resources, protection of ecosystems, and, where applicable, ensuring a baseline of compliance with environmental requirements.

Environmental stewardship is not a new phenomenon. In fact, it has deep and diverse roots in our country. From farming to hunting, from conservation practices to spiritual beliefs, one can find an appreciation for natural resources and the valuable services they provide in many diverse settings. As we explore how to become a more sustainable society, it is clear that environmental stewardship can help preserve natural resources and achieve sustainable outcomes.

That's useful, but a mouthful. I have dedicated four decades of my career to protecting the environment as a steward through sound waste disposal practices. Fortunately, I work with many like-minded people at OCRRA. Whether using waste-to-energy technology or burying waste in a landfill, we've worked to manage and reduce greenhouse gases in support of cleaner air. OCRRA generates enough energy from waste to power roughly 30,000 households each year.



Photo Credit: iStock.com/wildpixel

We also strive to help our community consume less through waste reduction, reuse and recycling. OCRRA actively encourages the producers of our goods and services to shift to more sustainable materials and we support the development of solid waste disposal facilities that are sensitive to the community and environment in which we live.

Why do we do all this? Our work at OCRRA not only affects the folks who live in Onondaga County, but good sound environmental stewardship also affects our families. I don't want my son to breathe polluted air and I don't want your child to either. I want all of them to grow up in a clean community, free of litter and waste, where waste disposal and taking care of the world around us are not mutually exclusive. That is what makes me proud every day when I see how hard all of the people at OCRRA work and how dedicated they are to making our community a better place to live, raise a family and work toward a more sustainable future.

So please join me in recognizing all of our dedicated waste and recycling workers in Onondaga County and beyond who strive to save the world a little each day.

Kevin Spillane can be reached at kspillane@OCRRA.org.

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TAMMY PALMER

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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: Reattach caps and lids to empty plastic bottles, jugs and jars. Do not put loose lids in a recycling bin.

Free Mercury Thermostat and Thermometer Drop-off Event

Brian Height, Recycling Program Supervisor

OCRRA is teaming up with our partners at Reworld to make sure families in Onondaga County have an easy way to properly dispose of old mercury thermostats and thermometers.

Mark your calendar! This year's Mercury Thermostat and Thermometer Collection is coming up on Saturday, September 13. These household items are best managed through drop-off programs to prevent mercury from escaping into the environment and harming humans and wildlife.

Reworld, which operates the local Waste-to-Energy Facility, is donating a \$10 Lowe's gift card to every resident who brings in a thermometer or thermostat that contains mercury. One gift card will be offered, per resident drop-off, regardless of the number of mercury items turned in. If a thermometer is dropped off, Reworld will provide a mercury-free digital thermometer replacement.

THERMOMETERS AND THERMOSTATS THAT DO NOT CONTAIN MERCURY CAN BE PLACED IN THE TRASH. NOT SURE WHICH TYPE OF ITEM YOU HAVE?

- Mercury thermometers have SILVER, METALLIC GREY, or BLACK filling in their bulbs. Any other color filling indicates it is a non-mercury thermometer, and it should be thrown in the trash.
- Mercury thermostats have dials or levers that you need to manually adjust. If you take off the faceplate and see one or more glass vials containing a silver substance, you have a mercury thermostat.

Scan the QR code to watch a video with examples. Residents who need to drop off a mercury-containing thermostat or thermometer must register in advance. Visit www.OCRRA.org/events for details about the location and available drop-off times. Call 315-453-2866 if you cannot register online. This free opportunity is for household items from Onondaga County only. Business items are not accepted.



Brian Height can be reached at bheight@ocrra.org.



Confidential Document Shredding Special

50¢ per pound

**Year-round, Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Cash or check only. NO credit cards.

Items will not be shredded instantly, but will be destroyed in 24 hours or less following drop-off.

- No appointment necessary. Unlimited drop-off.
- No business docs. Onondaga County household materials only.
- Prohibited items: Cardboard, 3-ring binders, hanging file folders, plastic folder holder envelopes, large metal binder clips (staples, paper clips and rubber bands are okay).

1925 Park St., Syracuse (Bodow Recycling Building)

COUPON EXPIRES: December 31, 2025

Mark Your Calendar

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE NOTICE

MON., SEPT. 1

All OCRRA Sites Closed
Happy Labor Day!

www.OCRRA.org/locations

MERCURY THERMS COLLECTION EVENT

SAT., SEPT. 13

See Rules Above
Registration Required

www.OCRRA.org/events

FREE CONFIDENTIAL PAPER SHREDDING

SAT., SEPT. 13

Destiny USA
Registration Required

OCRRA.org/events

FREE E-RECYCLING DROP-OFF

SAT., OCT 4 / NOV. 1

TVs, Computers & More
Registration Required

OCRRA.org/events

FACT: Follow OCRRA on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube for alerts, tips and disposal reminders.