

ONONDAGA COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY

ANNUAL REPORT ON RECYCLABLES RECOVERED: 2007



This report submitted pursuant to NYSDEC Permit Number 7- 3142-00028/00002-0, Certificate to Operate the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Facility; NYSDEC Permit Number 7-3156-00047/00001-0 Permit to Construct and Operate the OCRRA Landfill; NYSDEC Permit Number 7-3148-00048/00001-0 Solid Waste Transfer Station-Ley Creek and NYSDEC Permit Number 7-3142-00036/00001-0 Solid Waste Transfer Station-Rock Cut Road.

Period reported: January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007
Date: March 1, 2008
Planning Unit: County of Onondaga including the City of Syracuse, excluding the Town and Village of Skaneateles
Contact Person: A.T. Rhoads, Executive Director, OCRRA
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1.0 Mandatory and Voluntary Recycling in 2007

In 2005, OCRRA's volunteer board of directors established the following vision for the Agency: **By 2010, OCRRA will be recognized as a world leader in local waste disposal and recycling solutions, making our community one of the best places to live and work.** Throughout 2007, significant progress was made towards achieving that vision in several areas. Many of those achievements are addressed in this report.

Residential recycling in 2007 was impressive once again. A total of approximately 42,000 tons of material was collected from households through the Blue Bin curbside recycling. This is the community's greatest team effort and creates a sense of pride for Onondaga County residents.



In 2007, approximately **665,000 tons** were recycled through mandatory and voluntary recycling (both residential and commercial) in the community, **for a recycling rate of 65%** (Table 1). For the eleventh consecutive year, OCRRA met the NYSDEC permit goal that calls for a least 40% processible¹ recycling with a **43% reduction** in the processible Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) within the service area. In this category, mandatory curbside and commercial recycling totaled **224,000 tons** (Table 2).

ABOVE: An Onondaga County resident receives her free blue bins from OCRRA employee Jeff Singer at one of our frequent blue bin giveaways at Nojaims Supermarket, in Syracuse's Westside neighborhood.

¹Processible materials are those which could have been disposed of in the Waste-to-Energy Plant

	Tons (000's)	Percent
Recycling:		
Curbside Recycling (Primarily Residential)	41.9	
Commercial Recycling (Primarily Business)	622.8	
Total Recycling	664.7	65%
Solid Waste:		
Incoming Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)	304.1	
Less MSW Ferrous Recycling	(9.8)	
Incoming Construction & Debris (C&D)	62.2	
Total Solid Waste	356.5	35%
Total Recycling and Solid Waste	1021.2	

	Tons (000's)	Percent
<u>Processible Recycling:</u>		
Curbside Recycling (Primarily Residential)	41.9	
Processible Commercial (Primarily Business)	181.6	
Total Processible Recycling	223.5	43%
<u>Municipal Solid Waste:</u>		
Incoming Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)	304.1	
Less MSW Ferrous Recycling	(9.8)	
Total MSW less MSW Ferrous	294.3	57%
Total Processible Recycling and Solid Waste	517.8	

*Notes: 1. When calculating recycling rates, ferrous recovered from MSW is subtracted to avoid double counting.
2. Sources for this data include recycling companies, retail and commercial firms and governmental organizations which voluntarily report to OCRRA. Reported data has been adjusted to eliminate known double-counting. For example: If Generator A ships 500 tons of scrap metal to Recycler B and both organizations report 500 tons to OCRRA; OCRRA credits the system-wide total with 500; not 1,000, tons.*

OCRRA inventories and records recycling tonnages of all material, mandated and non-mandated, which is diverted for recycling through the efforts of the curbside program, private sector commercial and industrial entities, and public and private institutions. Material items include, but are not limited to: bulky metals (scrap autos are not counted), food waste (composted), textiles, unique plastics, sludge, oils and wood. Deposit beverage containers are also reported in the recycling tonnage above.

Table 3 - Mandated Recyclables in 2007 are as follows:

Residential:

Newspapers, Magazines, Catalogs
Home Office Paper and Discarded Mail
Milk and Juice Cartons; Gable-top Cartons, Aseptic Cartons
Glass; Food and Beverage Containers
Metal; Food and Beverage Containers including foil
Plastic Bottles; #1 and #2
Aerosol Cans
Corrugated Cardboard, brown Paper Bags, Paperboard, Pizza Boxes

Commercial:

All Office Paper
Corrugated Cardboard
Paperboard
Blue bin items (if economically justified)



ABOVE: OCRRA educator Elaine Van Avery demonstrates recycled paper making to students of Grant Middle School at the annual Environmental Field Days at Green Lakes State Park.



ABOVE: Anette Waterman and Mattie Voorheis of Petit Branch Library sort through books for a library sale at OCRRA's Community Collection Center. We invite non-profits to harvest books before they are sent for recycling.



ABOVE: OCRRA team members, like thousands of other community volunteers, joined in the Agency's annual Earth Day Litter Clean Up in April. A total of over 117,000 pounds of litter was collected in 2007!

Table 4 - OCRRA 2007 RECYCLING, BY COMMODITY (Thousands of Tons)

<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>TONS (000's)</u>	<u>Pct of Total</u>
<u>Organic Wastes, except Papers</u>		
Food - Industrial and Commercial	132.9	19.99%
Yard Waste	37.8	5.69%
Wood	22.5	3.38%
Textiles	4.7	0.71%
Plastics	8.6	1.29%
<u>Total Organic</u>	<u>206.5</u>	<u>31.07%</u>
<u>Metals</u>		
Ferrous Metals, except MSW Ferrous	130.4	19.62%
MSW Ferrous	9.8	1.47%
NonFerrous Metals, except Aluminum	8.6	1.29%
Aluminum	11.8	1.78%
<u>Total Metals</u>	<u>160.6</u>	<u>24.16%</u>
<u>Paper</u>		
Corrugated Cardboard and Kraft Bags	68	10.23%
Newspapers and Magazines	37	5.57%
Office / Mixed Paper	35	5.27%
<u>Total Paper</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>21.06%</u>
<u>Sludge (D/S and Papermill)</u>	<u>114.4</u>	<u>17.21%</u>
<u>Other</u>		
Glass	12.1	1.82%
Special & Hazardous Wastes ¹	5.8	0.87%
Electronics and Batteries	5.9	0.89%
Appliances (Most counted in Metals)	0.1	0.02%
Miscellaneous	19.3	2.90%
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>664.7</u>	<u>100%</u>

1. The reporting of this data to OCRRA is voluntary. In particular, in the category "Special and Hazardous Wastes" many businesses consider the tonnage and disposal of their special processes wastes, whether or not it is "hazardous", to be proprietary information. Therefore, OCRRA believes the data we receive concerning the recapture and recycling of waste, especially in this category, may likely be underreported.

In 2006, approximately 690,000 tons were recycled, with a recycling rate of 66%. In 2007, 665,000 tons were recycled with a rate of 65%. There are numerous factors that could cause this slight decrease. Particularly, the current trend in many industries is the reduction of packaging. This not only includes fewer materials used, but thinner and lighter packaging as well. The decrease of corrugated cardboard recycling from 76 tons in 2006 to 68 tons in 2007 could be partially attributed to this trend. This means that there is not necessarily less cardboard boxes being used, but what is being used is thinner and therefore weighs less. This is also apparent in aluminum cans, where "thinwalling", or making the material thinner, is common. Aluminum cans are now 28% lighter than they were in 1994. This could

partly explain the decreasing trend of aluminum recycled in Onondaga County from 2006 to 2007 (12.6 tons in 2006 to 11.8 tons in 2007). Reduction of packaging is a positive trend for waste reduction; however it does result in less material to be recycled.

Uncertainty also plays a role in the reported numbers. Since we rely on data reported voluntarily from the commercial business sector, there may be recycling occurring that is not being captured in the current numbers. This may be the case for some major generators that backhaul OCC to various sites that are out of the county or those that are undergoing major renovations and not necessarily keeping record of the recyclables generated from the construction.

While the current reported recycling rate is slightly lower than 2006, trash levels are also down. As with recycling, there are many factors that may be contributing to this trend. One may be economic in nature, as some major generators in Onondaga County may have seen significant production decreases in 2007. This slowdown not only decreases recycling, but trash as well.

2.0 2007 Recycling Programs Cost Approximately \$1,666,700

OCRRA manages the solid waste and recycling program for 33 municipalities in Onondaga County. Each municipality is unique in its solid waste collection. Some provide waste and recyclables collection through their own public employees, some contract with private waste hauling firms to provide services for their residents and still others require residents to arrange for disposal and recycling by contracting with a private hauler or bringing their MSW and recyclables to one of the two OCRRA transfer stations. OCRRA maintains two drop-off centers for waste and recyclables; each accepts recyclables at no cost.

OCRRA's trash tipping fee revenue provides the financing for critical recycling program components essential to achieving the mandated recycling rate. OCRRA is not funded by taxation. OCRRA does apply for government and private grants through competitive application. Waste and recyclable hauling costs are not part of OCRRA's service costs.

Program costs include OCRRA's comprehensive public education program. The program consists of: radio, TV, billboard, and print media campaigns; on-site visits to waste generators by a staff of recycling professionals offering technical assistance; classroom presentations by a New York State certified school teacher; and numerous brochures and teaching materials.

The OCRRA recycling program arranges for the collection, processing and marketing of residential recyclables and covers costs necessary to assure waste haulers a zero tip fee for residential recyclables. OCRRA also provides two drop-off centers for the collection of blue bin recyclables for those without curbside service. The drop-off stations are also collection points for additional materials such as: paper from small offices/home offices; scrap metal; small appliances and household batteries. In addition, OCRRA now operates a Community Collection Center, where residents can drop off electronics, including computer components, old VCRs and stereos, fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, books, cell phones and smoke detectors for recycling.

During 2007, OCRRA's Recycling Program managed:

- Two yard waste compost sites; open to the public six days per week, from April to November;
- A Community Collection Center (C3), where electronics, including computer components, old VCRs and stereos, fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, books, cell phones and smoke detectors are collected for recycling year-round;
- Three "Household Hazardous Waste" (HHW) collection days;
- Four "Household Computer and TV set" collection days;
- A collection and recycling event for hard-cover and soft-cover books during two weeks in July;
- A no-charge collection day for air-conditioners, dehumidifiers and propane tanks in June;
- Our fourth annual "Shred-O-Rama". Three companies stationed their mobile shredding trucks at Shoppingtown Mall and shredded household and small business confidential papers in October;
- The year-long collection of batteries through a network of local drop-off points, including curbside collection of household batteries in July;
- A mercury thermometer and thermostat exchange program;
- OCRRA also administered special services and programs for businesses, schools, and apartment building managers and owners, each at a cost to OCRRA.

Direct program costs in 2007 (*unaudited*), associated with the recycling services are as follows:

<i>Table 5 – Expenses by Program</i>	<i>Expense</i>
Recycling Personnel	\$392,000
Material Recovery Facility (MRF) Fees	(66,800)
Public Education - Outside Service	445,600
Composting	60,375
Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection	187,500
Blue Bin Expense	232,700
Computer and TV Collection	20,300
Other recycling programs	395,00
Total Cost – 2007	\$1,666,700

“**Blue Bin**” recyclables are collected at the curbside by private haulers, municipal haulers, and municipalities with private hauling contracts. The recyclables are taken for processing and marketing to a material recovery facility, or “MRF”.

In 2005 OCRRA secured the renewal of a 5-year contract agreement, 2006 through 2010, between OCRRA and two local private MRFs. This contract reduces the Agency’s annual risk in connection with payments to the MRFs for material processing, potentially generates income for the Agency under favorable market conditions, and provides certainty and stability for the community’s recycling system, even during commodity market lows.

As a result of OCRRA’s contract, the MRFs accept the recyclables at no charge to the waste haulers. The MRFs then sort, bale and market the residential recyclables.

The MRF contract is a valuable tool which allows OCRRA to formulate and maintain a reasonably uniform definition of “Blue Bin” recyclables. The contract also encourages stability in the local market for recyclable commodities, thus attenuating the variation in global market demand and pricing. This uniformity of definition and marketplace stability significantly facilitates the successful education and enthusiastic cooperation of the public.

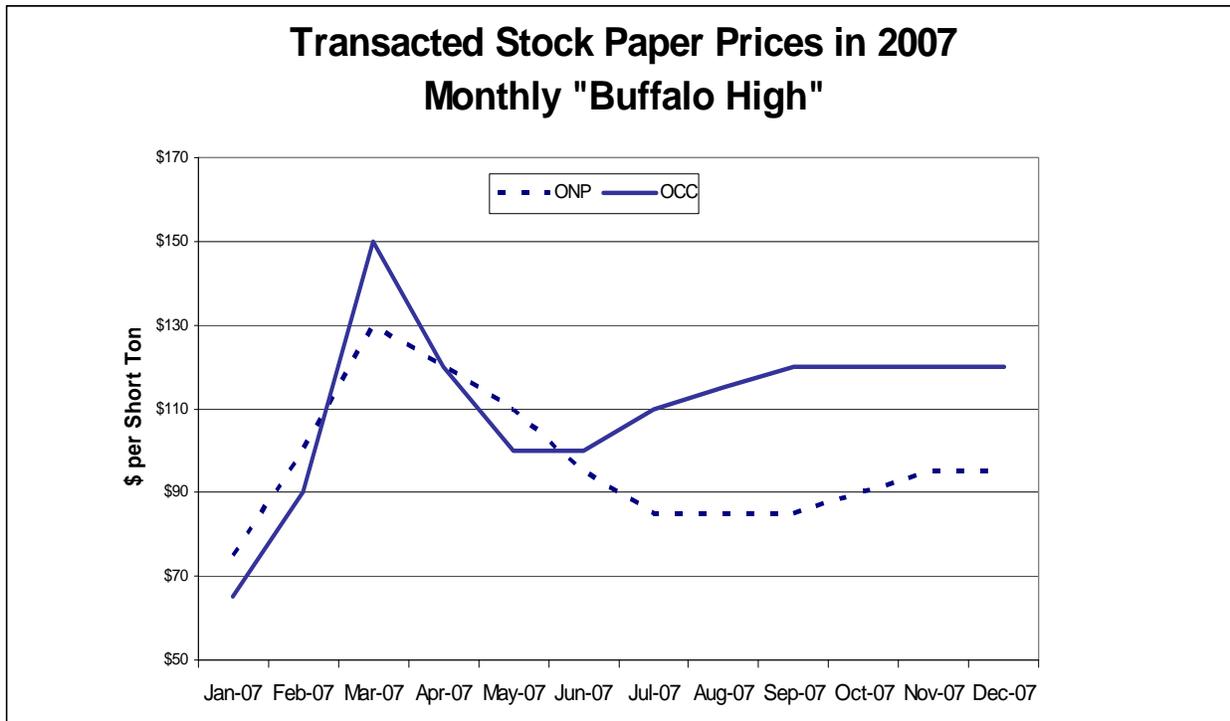
OCRRA received a net revenue share for the period January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007 from the MRFs in the amount of \$66,820. MRF payments under the new contract depend on the market prices of old cardboard (OCC) and newspaper (ONP). In prior years, the Agency’s payments were conditioned on market prices for a basket of recyclable materials; OCC and ONP plus “tin cans”, aluminum cans, glass and HDPE and PETE plastics.

Prices for contractual commodities in December 2007 and prior years are charted below. Prices for OCC and ONP were strong for 2007, and therefore OCRRA’s MRF payments were low.

<i>Table 6 – Market Values by Commodity</i>	Year End Market Value (Dollars per Ton)					
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Newspaper (ONP) & Magazines (OMG)	\$95	\$75	\$60	\$75	\$60	\$70
Corrugated Cardboard (OCC) & Kraft Paper	\$110	\$65	\$55	\$75	\$55	\$60

Prices for ONP and OCC are based on the Official Board Markets (Buffalo high)

Taking into consideration the value of the commodities in the blue bin, OCRRA pays the MRF for processing and marketing residential recyclables using a formula adopted with the new contracts beginning in 2007. Each month, OCRRA pays the MRFs an administrative fee of \$1.50 per ton for the processing and marketing of the residential recyclables collected under the mandatory program (Per Board action, the administrative fee for much of 2007 was \$3.00 per ton). Additional payments may be made from/to OCRRA depending on the market prices of Corrugated Cardboard (OCC) and Newspapers (ONP): consistent prices below \$40/ton may require an additional payment from OCRRA to the MRFs; market prices above \$80/ton may require a payment to OCRRA from the MRFs. Market prices for OCC and ONP were strong for most of 2007, and, therefore, OCRRA received a net revenue share from the MRFs in the amount of \$66,820.



As can be seen in Table 7, the last several years of favorable market conditions for recyclable commodities required significantly lower MRF expenses than in 2001 to 2003. Fluctuations in the commodity markets are difficult to predict from year to year. Consequently, recycling program costs are vulnerable to rapid and unforeseen changes in MRF costs. With the new MRF contract, effective in 2006, OCRRA has achieved its objective of reducing its potential financial risk in connection with annual MRF costs; with the previous contract, the financial risk was essentially limitless.

TABLE 7

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>Total MRF Payments</u>
2001	\$432,000
2002	\$334,970
2003	\$173,347
2004	\$19,804
2005	\$74,727
2006	\$68,668
2007	(\$66,820)

3.0 Public Education, Program Outreach and Enforcement

OCRRA continues to enforce the local law mandating source separation for recycling through a system of public education, outreach and surveillance.



OCRRA employs a six-person, professional recycling team engaged in spreading the recycling message and bringing technical assistance to the residents, schools and businesses in Onondaga County. OCRRA's three Recycling Specialists follow through on inquiries and complaints about business recycling. In 2007, the Recycling Specialists visited hundreds of local businesses and schools to offer assistance in designing recycling programs and free recycling containers and decals. In addition, OCRRA employs a New York State certified teacher, who spoke to over 12,000 local students in 500 classes in 2007.

When needed, an enforcement officer supplements the efforts of the business and apartment recycling specialists. An enforcement officer calls on businesses and apartment buildings when it is determined that other approaches have not resulted in cooperation. Each enforcement officer spends a significant portion of the week inspecting loads of solid waste at the waste-to-energy plant looking for loads containing recyclables and issuing warnings and/or violations. Pictures are taken of the loads and the waste hauler must identify the origin of the waste. Then the business or apartment recycling specialist calls on the waste generator to determine the source of the problem and assist in designing a recycling program which will capture the mandated recyclables.

Every year a significant percentage of the population needs to hear the recycling message for the first time. Every year we wish to reinforce our recycling message among those who have heard it before. And, every year, we need to inform the public of our special events.

In 2007, approximately \$328,300 was spent on direct public education through radio, TV, and print media campaigns.



In addition to paid media advertising, OCRRA also publishes a newsletter, *OCRRA Update*. Instead of direct mailing, which reached approximately 55,000 people on a quarterly basis, in 2007 OCRRA began distributing the newsletter as an insert in the Pennysaver. This is a more cost-effective approach, and now reaches over 100,000 people on a quarterly basis.

To better serve the community, OCRRA launched a redesigned website in 2007. It boasts increased navigation and enhanced search features to allow users to quickly find recycling options for their unwanted items. It also allows users to make online reservations for household hazardous waste days.

In addition, OCRRA increased the frequency of communication with residents by stepping up the email blast system. Emails covering various recycling topics and highlighting upcoming events are sent twice a month to over 12,000 people.



LEFT: OCRRA's Recycling Team prepares to drop off blue bins in the Westcott Street neighborhood. The Team made several drop-offs in urban neighborhoods to encourage participation in the curbside collection program.

In an effort to reach out to urban neighborhoods, six blue bin drop-off events were conducted in 2007. Blue bins were distributed to residents in areas where a low set-out rate was observed in order to encourage participation. Approximately 2,150 blue bins were distributed through this program in 2007.

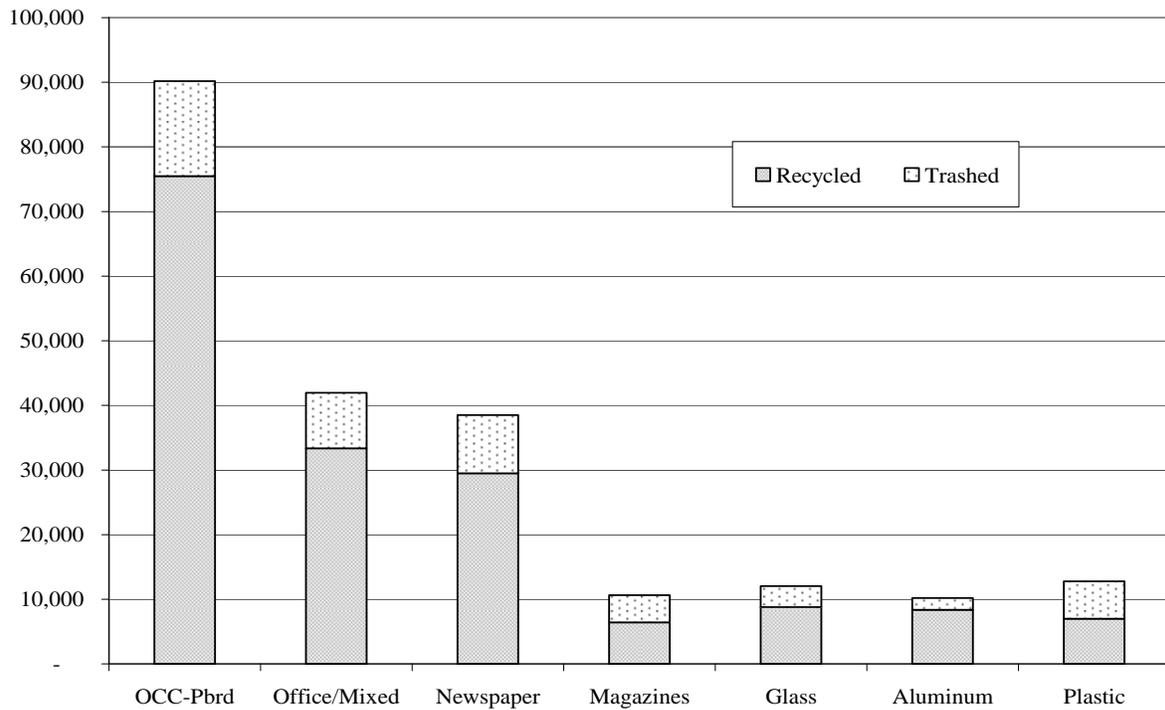
OCRRA also gave away blue bins during special events at Nojaim's Supermarket Huntington Family Center, both on west side of the City of Syracuse. Hundreds of blue bins were given away to residents at these events.

OCRRA's Recycling Specialists call on apartment buildings having more than 5 units to ensure compliance with the recycling law and to assist in designing effective collection systems for recyclables. During 2007, OCRRA continued to provide free, high visibility decals to be affixed, with the permission of the waste hauler, to recycling totes and dumpsters. We also delivered hundreds of mini-blue bins for apartment renters.



In September 2005, OCRRA conducted a Waste Quantification & Classification study to measure the composition of curbside recyclables and municipal solid waste (MSW), brought to the Waste-to-Energy plant operated by Covanta Energy. Samples from these streams were sorted, as delivered, into 50+ categories. Similar studies in 1993 and 1998 have been used to inform decisions such as the expansion of the list of mandatory recyclables and public communications. The 2005 study allowed us to explore trends such as an increase/decrease in PETE/Glass beverage containers in the waste stream and to baseline the Agency's initiatives to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. The main finding of the study was that among mandatory recyclable materials, the lion's share (78%) of the tonnage is indeed being recycled. However, there is still almost 37,000 tons of fiber (cardboard, office paper, newspaper and magazines) and 11,000 tons of containers (glass, plastic and aluminum) being trashed.

**Total Tons Recycled or Trashed, Residential & Commercial
Onondaga County, 2005**



At our Board’s request, in 2006 the Agency conducted extensive market research at the State Fair and via focus groups and telephone surveys with RMS Research to explore the behavioral issues behind this opportunity to do better. The research found two major issues which need to be addressed: First, recycling has become a bit passé. Secondly, there is a high correlation between the rate at which a material is being recycled and the awareness among the community that this material is indeed recyclable. Based on this research and customer feedback, we refined the educational message we need to deliver to our constituents.

In 2007, the Board hired ABC Creative to create a new public education campaign. The new campaign, BlueBinIt®, is a public education program designed to refresh the enthusiasm and commitment to recycling in our community. It focuses on reinforcement of the “recyclability” of specific materials such as magazines, junk mail, and plastic bottles, while at the same time making sure recycling is simple and fun.



4.0 Highlights of the 2007 OCRRA Recycling Program

➤ COMMUNITY COLLECTION CENTER

In September of 2007, OCRRA officially opened the new Community Collection Center (C3), a 9,000 ft² commercial warehouse-type space that allows for year-round collection of certain materials. In 2007, residents were offered the opportunity to drop-off electronics, including computer components, old VCRs and stereos, books, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, cell phones and smoke detectors at no charge. OCRRA ships the materials out to various facilities for processing and recycling.



Over 212,000 pounds of books were dropped off by County residents in 2007. In an effort to encourage reuse, groups from libraries, schools and non-profits are invited to sort through old books at C3 and harvest volumes for their own enrichment and literacy missions in the community before they are shipped out and recycled.

➤ COMPOSTING

Over 30,000 visitors were served at the Agency's yard waste compost sites located in Jamesville and Amboy. Approximately 6,100 cubic yards of compost and 10,000 cubic yards of mulch were produced at the sites. The program's direct costs were approximately \$60,375; excluding allocated salaries of permanent employees.



Residents purchase a car-window sticker for \$10 which allows them to drop off yard waste and take away compost during the year. In 2007, over 3,100 stickers were sold. Additionally, commercial users paid approximately \$23,300.

A lease with the City of Syracuse Department of Public Works allowed the DPW to use a grinder which OCRRA purchased with a 50% grant from NYSDEC, at no charge. In exchange, the City provided the necessary labor to maintain the grinder.

This year, long-term leases were established between OCRRA and Onondaga County for the Agency's compost sites. Beginning in November, dilapidated structures were removed from the Amboy compost site and asbestos was safely abated as part of the plan to redevelop the site as an institutional food waste compost operation.

In 2007, a food waste pilot program was established through partnership with the New York State Fair. Pre-consumer food waste was collected from certain vendors to be used as a test of food waste compost viability at the Amboy site. Over 2,000 pounds of vegetable peelings were recycled.



➤ HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DAYS

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Days continue to be one of the most popular services the Agency offers. Three HHW Days were held in 2007, serving approximately 3,000 households. Direct costs included: the fee charged by the vendor to conduct the event; battery and propane cylinder handling; lab fees for testing the paint collected; and Strathmore Paint's charges to reformulate and package the paint for the paint give-away to municipalities and human service agencies. Indirect costs included OCRRA personnel for the day of the event as well as the countless hours beforehand; advertising, taking reservations, recording and sending out information/confirmation packets to each of the more than 1,000 households who made appointments for each event.



OCRRA was awarded a \$321,000 NYSDEC grant to cover nearly 50% of certain direct costs of the HHW events for 2006 and 2007. Total direct costs in 2007 for this valuable community program were approximately \$187,500.

➤ BOOK COLLECTION

In addition to ongoing book collection at C3, OCRRA partnered with many non-profits, libraries, and schools to hold a 2-week book collection in the month of July. Participating groups included HW Smith Elementary School, Hazard Branch Library, PEACE Inc., Operation Paperback, and the American Filipino Association. Thousands of books were harvested and reused by these groups, with the remaining being recycled.

➤ HOUSEHOLD COMPUTER AND TELEVISION RECYCLING DAYS

The EPA reports that electronics are the fastest growing portion of America's trash. The EPA estimated that 250 million computers became obsolete by the year 2005, and that more than 3.2 million tons of electronic waste will find their way into thousands of landfills across the country.



To encourage the safe management of old electronics, OCRRA takes the environmentally sound approach of removing computer equipment from the waste stream by implementing a household computer recycling program. In 2003, OCRRA expanded the program to include TV sets. The program ensures that material which cannot be recycled or reused will be disposed safely at an approved site. Since the program's inception, OCRRA has collected almost 1.7 million pounds of e-waste.

Onondaga County residents were able to drop off old computer equipment and TVs at the Ley Creek Transfer station at 4 events, once each quarter, in 2007. The agency accepted 2 computer systems per household each day. Over 475,000 pounds of old computer equipment and TVs were collected in 2007, comprised of:

3,915 monitors	275 laptops
3,376 computer towers	1,254 mice
2,062 printers	362 scanners
2,285 keyboards	2,840 TVs

The direct program costs to OCRRA were over \$20,300. Indirect costs included the OCRRA personnel to work on the day of the event as well as the behind the scenes activities such as: advertising the events and answering telephone inquiries requesting information.

➤ **BATTERY COLLECTION**

County residents can drop off their old batteries at area Wegmans grocery stores, Kinney drug store in Tully and the Noble Ace Hardware store in Elbridge. In addition, OCRRA maintains two Drop-off centers at its transfer stations and an annual July curbside collection of batteries. Batteries are also accepted at C3 year-round.

Almost 109,000 pounds of batteries were collected and recycled or safely disposed in 2007 at a cost of approximately \$41,660, excluding allocated salaries of permanent employees and support activities such as advertising and transportation costs incurred on our weekly pick-ups from the battery bins at our partner's stores.



➤ **FLUORESCENT LIGHTBULB COLLECTON**



In response to increased use of compact fluorescent light bulbs, OCRRA partnered with local ACE and TruValue hardware stores in 2007 to provide residents with convenient locations to drop off their old bulbs. By providing drop-off points at 14 stores throughout the county, the community recycled over 4,000 light bulbs and kept over 300 pounds of mercury out of the trash.

➤ **MERCURY THERMOMETER EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

OCRRA continued a mercury thermometer exchange program at the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station. The Agency teamed up with Bristol Myers Squibb and Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection to provide residents with non-mercury thermometers in exchange for mercury thermometers. The mercury thermometers that were collected were then properly disposed as part of the Agency's household hazardous waste collection program. The mercury thermometer exchange program helps prevent mercury contained in household thermometers from escaping into the environment when the thermometers are broken or thrown away. In 2004, mercury thermostat collection was added to this program.

➤ RECYCLED PAINT GIVE-AWAY

The Agency continued our direct mail campaign to reach out to hundreds of community organizations, inviting them to use recycled paint from OCRRA's Household Hazardous Waste Collection. As a result, over 1,500 gallons of recycled and reprocessed paint were provided to dozens of non-profit agencies, municipal entities, park systems, and other human service organizations. OCRRA conducted the paint give away in August and November. Organizations that received the recycled paint included: Interfaith Works of CNY, Faith Heritage School, Boy Scouts of America, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the Village of Fayetteville.



➤ FOURTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY SHRED-O-RAMA



In response to an increasing public concern over identity theft, OCRRA held its Fourth Annual Shred-O-Rama at Shoppingtown Mall. At this October event, County residents dropped off over 35 tons of confidential documents to be shredded. Paper was shredded on site and then recycled by three local shredding companies: ProShred, Confidata and Certified Document Destruction and Recycling. OCRRA also continues to operate a commercial shredding machine for use by residents at the Rock Cut Road facility.

➤ AIR CONDITIONER AND PROPANE TANK COLLECTION DAY

OCRRA held its fourth no-charge collection day for air-conditioners, dehumidifiers and propane tanks in June. A total of 763 air conditioners and dehumidifiers were collected for safe removal of the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Over 770 propane tanks and 377 dehumidifiers were collected as well. OCRRA partnered with NYSERDA, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, to stage this event and share the costs.

➤ FREE ONLINE MATERIAL EXCHANGES AND RESTORE

What if "E-Bay"™ was free? It would probably work a lot like the **Onondaga County Freecycle Network, ReUseIt, or Around Again**. The goal of these online material exchanges is to reduce waste by connecting individuals who are throwing away goods with others who are seeking them, all at no cost. These sites are set up to be easy to use whether someone is looking to discard or acquire an item. A wide variety of items are listed and their availability changes frequently.

In 2004, Syracuse Habitat for Humanity, Inc. began accepting donations of recycled building materials for the Restore, a home improvement resale store. Leftover home improvement and construction materials are donated by people remodeling their homes or just cleaning out their garages. The idea is to help others improve their standard of living while keeping usable materials out of the trash.

OCRRA strongly supports the goals and programs of the Freecycle Network, ReUseIt, Around Again and ReStore. Residents are able to link to these sites through our website, www.ocrra.org. OCRRA also promotes ReStore and the online exchanges at our community events and in our newsletter.

➤ WASTE DISPOSAL COST RELIEF FOR LOCAL CHARITIES

In 2007, OCRRA again provided a "recycling credit" to the Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, Restore, and Catholic Charities for each documented ton of material (clothing, furniture, etc.) recycled through these human service organizations. These recycling credits, in the amount of \$10.00 per ton, were credited towards these organizations' monthly waste disposal fees through the OCRRA system, with certain limitations. In 2007, OCRRA provided these organizations with approximately \$88,600; effectively relieving them of most of their waste disposal costs. OCRRA's Board also approved a mini-grant program of up to \$300 per year for the purchase of commercial recyclables collection services by small charities and non-profits. The Spanish Action League, PEACE Inc, Hiawatha Seaway Boy Scouts, and the Girl Scouts were among the groups that benefited from this program.

➤ BOTTLE BILL LAW EXPANSION

The return rates for deposit cans and bottles in Onondaga County ranged from 77 percent to a whopping 95 percent in a 1998 study. But the *discard* rates for non-returnable containers in Onondaga County, a national recycling leader, ranged from 68 percent to 87 percent.



OCRRA is taking a proactive role to change the discard statistics by supporting an expanded New York State bottle bill deposit law to include non-carbonated products such as water, juices, teas and sports drinks. OCRRA has obtained over 12,000 signatures from residents who support the expansion of the bottle bill through petition signings at various local events, such as the New York State Fair and the Annual Home and Garden Show. OCRRA also encourages visitors to visit our web site to show their support of an expanded bottle bill by completing an online petition and writing their State Assembly member and Senator.

The Agency's Board resolution to expand the "bottle bill" underscores the Agency's commitment to the New York State solid waste management hierarchy, which emphasizes waste reduction, reuse, and recycling first, and then waste to energy, followed by landfilling. By creating a deposit for the additional bottles, we hope to see more of them recycled and fewer littering our neighborhoods and roadways.

➤ OCRRA'S COMMUNITY EVENTS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH



OCRRA is committed to maintaining high levels of community participation through the BlueBinIt® recycling program. In 2007, OCRRA's recycling team participated in numerous area events and fairs, including the New York State Fair, the Home and Garden Show, Taste of Westcott Street (over 150 blue bins to college students) and the Golden Harvest Festival at Beaver Lake Nature Center. A variety of recycling information was distributed including blue bins, recycling

instructions, battery bags, household hazardous waste sign-ups, and compost-site sticker sales. Over 25,000 people were contacted through these events.

■ *Recycling Containers*



Recycling containers were distributed to hundreds of schools, businesses, restaurants and parks to encourage separation and recycling of paper and beverage containers. In 2007, OCRRA updated the deskside containers for offices to be more colorful and easier to use (pictured at left).

In late 2005, OCRRA selected a vendor to provide 180,000 new blue bins to the community over the next two years. By the end of the year, approximately 110,000 of the bins were delivered and a third had been distributed to local towns and villages, and the City of Syracuse. OCRRA encourages residents to have two bins instead of one.

■ *Earth Day*

Due to increased participation, OCRRA expanded its Annual Earth Day litter clean up to a 2-day event. The clean up took place on Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28. OCRRA ran numerous print and radio ads promoting the clean up. The event enjoyed excellent community support, with over 117,000 pounds of litter and 628 tires collected by over 400 community groups.

Beyond these noteworthy activities, a host of other services continued to be provided through the recycling program, including the following:

- ✓ Provided a recycling drop off six days/week, year round for mandatory recyclables at the Agency transfer stations. This service includes a no-charge drop-off for household scrap metal and office paper from small businesses.
- ✓ Operated an automated hotline answering common recycling questions; twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- ✓ Submitted grants to support a variety of Agency programs, including advertising and public education, household hazardous waste collection, computer recycling and recycling personnel costs.
- ✓ Participated in solid waste associations; All members of the Agency's recycling team are members of the New York State Association of Recycling, Reduction and Reuse (NYSAR³); the Agency's Recycling Operations Manager, Jeff Cooper, is the President of the NYSAR³ Board;
- ✓ Expanded our e-mail list to over 12,000 addresses.

OCRRA's recycling team members are:

- Andrew Radin, Director of Recycling & Waste Reduction;
- Jeff Cooper, Recycling & Waste Reduction Operations Manager;
- Kristen Lawton, David Nettle and Sarah Stewart; Recycling Specialists;

- Jeff Singer and Amy Berger; Recycling Aides;
- Elaine Van Avery, Recycling Educator (Contracted Service Provider);
- Tom Furgeson, Compost Site Technician; and
- Our seasonal Compost Site gatekeepers.