

# ONONDAGA COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY

ANNUAL REPORT ON RECYCLABLES RECOVERED: 2005



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, 2005 through December 31, 2005  
Date: March 1, 2006  
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 2005



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 the year, significant progress was made in several areas towards achieving that vision. Many of those achievements are addressed in this report.

A mountain of material was recycled through the residential curbside recycling program during 2005. The total: 44,688 tons. That set a record since the community began its blue bin curbside recycling collection 15 years ago. It's Onondaga County's greatest team effort, and it all adds up to a win for both the environment, and for controlling waste disposal costs.

This new record occurred during a year when OCRRA stepped up mightily to provide emergency stop-gap measures for a major recycling facility. A huge fire destroyed the Recycle America facility on April 23, 2005. OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Transfer Station was transformed into a drop off point for haulers that normally would deliver their blue bin materials to the Recycle America plant. These recyclables were then reloaded onto tractor-trailer rigs by OCRRA and trucked to Rochester, New York where they were recovered and shipped to markets. OCRRA workers put in 12 to 14 hour days over a two-month period to keep the recycling program intact. There was no change in the collection of recyclables. Only minor adjustment was made to the customer service routine at the Rock Cut Road Transfer Station. By early July, operations at Rock Cut Road returned to normal. It was a solution involving great public communication and community relations, teamwork with private MRF operators, and a dedicated team of OCRRA co-workers.

In 2005. Approximately **690,000 tons were recycled** through mandatory and voluntary recycling in the community, **for a recycling rate of 66%**. (Table 1) For the ninth consecutive year, OCRRA met the NYSDEC permit goal that calls for a least 40% processible 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 **225,000 tons**. (Table 2).

**Table 1 - OCRRA 2005 Recycling and Solid Waste**

	<b>Tons (000's)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Recycling:</b>		
Curbside Recycling ( Primarily Residential )	44.7	
Commercial Recycling ( Primarily Business )	643.0	
<b>Total Recycling</b>	<b>687.7</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Solid Waste:</b>		
Incoming Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)	309.4	
Less MSW Ferrous Recycling	(9.5)	
Incoming Construction & Debris (C&D)	57.1	
<b>Total Solid Waste</b>	<b>357.0</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Total Recycling and Solid Waste</b>	<b>1,044.7</b>	

**Table 2 - OCRRA 2005 Processible Recycling and Municipal Solid Waste**

*Processible materials could have been disposed of in the Waste-to-Energy Plant.*

*In 2005, 43% of processible materials were recycled.*

	<b>Tons (000's)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b><u>Processible Recycling:</u></b>		
Curbside Recycling ( Primarily Residential )	44.7	
Processible Commercial ( Primarily Business )	181.2	
<b>Total Processible Recycling</b>	<b>225.9</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b><u>Municipal Solid Waste:</u></b>		
Incoming Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)	309.4	
Less MSW Ferrous Recycling	(9.5)	
<b>Total MSW less MSW Ferrous</b>	<b>299.9</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Total Processible Recycling and Solid Waste</b>	<b>525.8</b>	

*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, 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 2005 are as follows:**

**Residential:**

Newspapers, Magazines, Catalogs  
Home Office Paper and discarded Mail  
Milk and Juice; 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 )



Students at Solace Elementary School in Syracuse hoist the Earth Day flag, presented to them by OCRRA, for receiving the 2005 Vonnell Matri Award for Outstanding Recycling. Outstanding paper recycling efforts are practiced everyday throughout the school to minimize waste. And all the students use reusable water bottles at their desks.



**ABOVE:** OCRRA team members joined thousands of other volunteers as part of the Agency's Earth Day Litter Clean Up. Over one million pounds of litter have been removed from our community since the program began over a decade ago, thanks to the volunteers from throughout the county.

**BELOW:** OCRRA distributes blue bins at special community events throughout the year.



**Table 4 - OCRRA 2005 RECYCLING, BY COMMODITY (Thousands of Tons)**

<b><u>COMMODITY</u></b>	<b><u>TONS (000's)</u></b>	<b><u>Pct of Total</u></b>
<b><u>Organic Wastes, except Papers</u></b>		
Food - Industrial and Commercial	150.4	21.9%
Yard Waste	40.6	5.9%
Wood	23.0	3.3%
Textiles	8.5	1.2%
Plastics	7.0	1.0%
<b><u>Total Organic</u></b>	<b><u>229.5</u></b>	<b><u>33.3%</u></b>
<b><u>Metals</u></b>		
Ferrous Metals, except MSW Ferrous	138.5	20.1%
MSW Ferrous	9.5	1.4%
NonFerrous Metals, except Aluminum	6.0	0.9%
Aluminum	8.4	1.2%
<b><u>Total Metals</u></b>	<b><u>162.4</u></b>	<b><u>23.6%</u></b>
<b><u>Paper</u></b>		
Corrugated Cardboard and Kraft Bags	75.5	11.0%
Newspapers and Magazines	35.9	5.2%
Office / Mixed Paper	33.4	4.9%
<b><u>Total Paper</u></b>	<b><u>144.8</u></b>	<b><u>21.1%</u></b>
<b><u>Sludge (D/S and Papermill)</u></b>	<b><u>114.7</u></b>	<b><u>16.7%</u></b>
<b><u>Other</u></b>		
Glass	8.8	1.3%
Special & Hazardous Wastes <sup>1</sup>	5.8	0.8%
Electronics and Batteries	2.7	0.4%
Appliances (Most counted in Metals)	> 0.1	0.0%
Miscellaneous	19.0	2.8%
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>687.7</u></b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>

1. Reporting this data to OCRRA is voluntary. 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 these wastes may likely be underreported.

## **2.0 2005 Recycling Programs Cost Approximately \$1,481,393**

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, and occasionally wins, 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 Operation Separation 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.

### ***During 2005, OCRRA's Operation Separation Program managed:***

- Two yard waste compost sites; open to the public six days per week, from April to November.
- Three "Household Hazardous Waste" (HHW) collection days;
- Quarterly "Household Computer and TV set" collection days;
- Reuse and recycling event for hard-cover and soft-cover books during two weeks in July;
- In conjunction with NYSERDA, our first no-charge collection day for air-conditioners, dehumidifiers and propane tanks in June;
- Our second, 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 2005 (*unaudited*), associated with the recycling services are as follows:

<b><i>Table 5 – Expenses by Program</i></b>	<b><i>Expense</i></b>
Recycling Personnel	\$329,117
Material Recovery Facility (MRF) Fees	74,727
Public Education - Outside Service	404,988
Composting	65,829
Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection	144,563
Blue Bin Expense	186,441
Computer and TV Collection	40,488
Other recycling programs	235,240
<b>Total Cost – 2005</b>	<b>\$1,481,393</b>

**“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”.

Another key accomplishment in 2005 involved the renewal of a 5-year contract agreement (for the period 2006 through 2010) between OCRRA and two local, private MRFs. The new contract reduces the Agency’s annual risk in connection with payments to the MRFs for material processing, generates income for the Agency under favorable market conditions, and provides certainty and stability for the community’s recycling system, even during 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's MRF payments for the period January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005 totaled \$74,727. OCRRA’s costs for processing and marketing recyclables were determined as follows:

In 2005, the Agency’s MRF charges were determined by recycling market prices. Recycling markets for paper and metals were a bit weaker in 2005 than in 2004. Pricing for old corrugated containers hit a high of \$100 per ton in February and then fell steadily throughout the year. The pricing for old newspapers also fell through the year, from \$80 per ton in February and March to \$55 in December. Scrap iron and steel prices dropped from their 2004 highs as did aluminum. Plastics increased over 2004. HDPE plastic prices, climbed throughout the year as petroleum prices increased. PET peaked in the Spring at just over \$500 per ton, then declined to finish the year at \$400. Please note: Approximately 70% of the blue bin material by weight is newspaper and other recyclable paper.

Prices for program commodities in December, 2005 compared to prior years are charted below.

<b><u>Table 6 – Market Values by Commodity</u></b>	<b>Year End Market Value</b>				
	<b>(Dollars per Ton)</b>				
	<b>(After sorting, processing, densification)</b>				
<b><u>Commodity</u></b>	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2004</u></b>	<b><u>2003</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2001</u></b>
Newspaper (ONP) & Magazines (OMG)	\$60	\$75	\$60	\$70	\$45
Mixed Paper/Paperboard	\$40	\$50	\$50	\$40	\$20
Clear Glass	(\$7)	\$15	\$16	\$21	\$15
Green Glass	(\$7)	(\$7)	(\$7)	(\$25)	(\$25)
Brown Glass	(\$7)	\$15	\$15	\$0	\$15
Mixed glass	(\$7)	(\$7)	(\$7)	(\$25)	(\$25)
“Tin Cans” – metal cans, except aluminum	\$125	\$166	\$94	\$40	\$5
HDPE Natural; e.g. clear bottles	\$800	\$500	\$430	\$140	\$140
HDPE Colored	\$660	\$440	\$330	\$140	\$140
Aluminum Cans	\$830	\$860	\$1,085	\$640	\$780
Corrugated Cardboard (OCC) & Kraft	\$55	\$75	\$55	\$60	\$40

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



OCRRA's 2005 MRF expense of \$74,727 was \$55,000 more than the previous year, as the 4 year trend of increasingly favorable market conditions for recyclable commodities reversed to a small degree. 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 (as noted in the table below). 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>	<u>Weighted Per Ton Revenue (WPTR)</u>
2001	\$432,000	\$37.62
2002	\$334,970	\$45.83
2003	\$173,347	\$54.81
2004	\$19,804	\$76.27
2005	\$74,727	\$73.74

### ***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's Operation Separation'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 2005, OCRRA continued to provide free, high visibility decals to be affixed, with the permission of the waste hauler, to recycling totes and dumpsters. The stickers use a combination of text and graphics to make it clear just where tenants are to place their recyclables. There are two types of signs suitable for interior and exterior containers.

OCRRA's Operation Separation's business recycling specialists follow through on inquiries and complaints about business recycling. They are on the road 5 days a week calling on institutional, industrial and commercial businesses. In 2005, OCRRA's business recycling specialists visited hundreds of local businesses and schools to offer assistance in designing recycling programs and our free recycling decals and containers (see photo, right).



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. The enforcement officers also inspect loads of waste at the waste to energy facility. In these daily inspections, they examine loads to be sure recyclables are not being trashed by waste generators or haulers.

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 2005, approximately \$404,988 was spent on direct public education through radio, TV, and print media campaigns. OCRRA also employs a six-person, professional recycling team engaged in spreading the recycling message and bringing all levels of technical assistance to the residents, schools and businesses in the OCRRA service area.

Our recycling educator, a New York State certified teacher, spoke to over 12,000 local students.

In addition to paid media advertising, OCRRA also publishes a newsletter, *Operation Separation Update*, that goes out to approximately 55,000 residents each quarter.

The Agency's website, [www.OCRRA.org](http://www.OCRRA.org), provides extensive recycling and waste reduction information, as well as recycling instructions in Spanish. Online registration for household hazardous waste collection and various other events such as Earth Day is also available on the OCRRA website.

## ***4.0 Highlights of the 2005 OCRRA Operation Separation Program***

### **➤ COMPOSTING**

Over 24,400 visitors were served at the Agency's two yardwaste compost sites located in Jamesville and Camillus. Approximately 5,100 cubic yards of compost and 8,000 cubic yards of mulch were produced at the sites. The program's direct costs were approximately \$65,829; excluding allocated salaries of permanent employees.

Annually, residents purchase a car-window sticker for \$10 which allows them to drop-off all their yard waste and take away compost during the year. In 2005, 3,065 stickers were sold for a total of \$30,650. Additionally, commercial users paid a total of \$9,270.

A lease with the City of Syracuse Dept. of Public Works allowed the DPW to use a tub grinder which OCRRA purchased with a 50% grant from NYSDEC, at no charge. In exchange, the City provided the necessary labor to operate and maintain the tub grinder and other equipment. It is a great partnership.

### **➤ HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DAYS**

Household Hazardous Waste Days continue to be one of the most popular services the Agency offers. Three HHW Days were held in 2005, serving some 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; Strathmore Paint's charges to reformulate and package the paint for the paint give-away to municipalities and human service agencies. Indirect costs included the OCRRA personnel to work on the day of the event as well as the countless hours beforehand; advertising the events, 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 has been 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 2005 for this valuable community program were approximately \$144,563.

➤ **HOUSEHOLD COMPUTER AND TELEVISION RECYCLING DAYS**

The EPA reports that electronics are the fastest growing portion of America's trash. EPA estimated that 250 million computers are destined to become 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 computers, OCRRA took the environmentally sound approach of removing computer equipment from the waste stream by implementing a household computer recycling program. In 2003, OCRRA expanded its computer recycling program to include TV sets. The program ensures that material, which cannot be recycled or reused, will be disposed safely at an approved site. In 2006, we expect to collect our millionth pound of “e-waste” since the program’s inception.



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 2005. The agency accepted 2 computer systems per household each day. Over 340,000 pounds of old computer equipment and TVs were collected, comprised of:

3,193 monitors	203 laptops
2,956 computer towers	680 mice
1,634 printers	258 scanners
1,973 keyboards	1,906 TVs

The direct program costs to OCRRA were over \$40,488. 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**

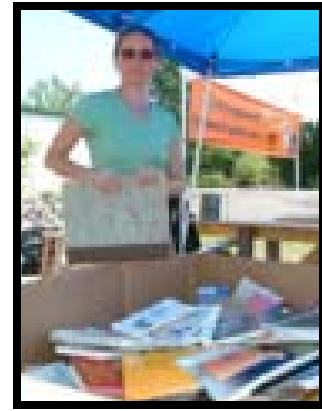
County residents can drop off their old batteries at area Wegmans grocery stores; the Kinney drug store in Tully and the Noble Ace Hardware store in Elbridge. In addition, OCRRA maintains two Drop-off centers at its transfer stations and there is an annual July curbside collection of batteries.

Almost 45,000 pounds of batteries were collected and recycled or safely disposed in 2005 at a cost of approximately \$17,495, 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.



➤ **BOOK RECYCLING**

In 2005, County residents, businesses, and schools could drop off their old hard-and soft-cover books at a rented warehouse in East Syracuse for two weeks in July. The program was a tremendous success, resulting in the collection of over 105,000 pounds of old books. Many community groups volunteered their time to examine and to retrieve discarded books in good condition that could be used by the groups they serve. OCRRA also encourages “grass-roots” opportunities for book recycling at community libraries, book swaps, school sales, etc., by promoting these events on our website, in press releases and in our quarterly newsletter.



➤ **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 650 gallons of recycled/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 July and November. Organizations receiving the recycled paint include: the Spanish Action League, McChesney Community Center, Cicero-North Syracuse School District High School, Rosamond Gifford Zoo, City of Syracuse Department of Parks and Recreation, Onondaga County Parks, Sacred Heart Basilica, Ray of Hope Church, Rescue Mission, SUNY ESF, Habitat for Humanity, Oxford Inn, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Camp Good Days and Special Times.



➤ **SECOND ANNUAL COMMUNITY SHRED-O-RAMA**

Over 500 households dropped off almost 70,000 pounds of paper at OCRRA’s Shred-o-Rama at Shoppingtown Mall in October. Paper was shredded on site by three, local, shredding companies, and then recycled. We thank the Syracuse Post Standard and local radio and TV stations for helping to make this event so successful.



### ➤ **AIR CONDITIONER AND PROPANE TANK COLLECTION DAY**

OCRRA held its first no-charge collection day for air-conditioners, dehumidifiers and propane tanks in June. Over 900 air conditioners were dropped off and the Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were safely removed (CFCs in the upper atmosphere contribute to ozone depletion and heighten the “green house gas effect.”). OCRRA partnered with NYSERDA, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, to stage this event and share the staging costs. A collection of old propane tanks the same day netted over 1,300 old propane tanks for recycling.

### ➤ **FREECYCLING and ReStore**

What if “E-Bay”™ was free? It would probably work a lot like the **Freecycle Network**. The goal of the Onondaga County Freecycle Network is to reduce waste by connecting individuals who are throwing away goods with others who are seeking them. Whether you're looking to discard or acquire an item, Onondaga County Freecycle is the place to do it. Clothing, credenzas, canoes, computers, and all the little things in between may be available on the Network. Visit often, availability changes by the minute!

In 2004, Syracuse Habitat for Humanity, Inc. began accepting donations of recycled building materials for the **ReStore**, a home improvement resale store. If you are remodeling your home, or just cleaning out your garage, consider donating your leftover home improvement and construction materials so that another person can improve their home. 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 and ReStore. Residents can link to the Freecycle Network and ReStore websites through our website, [www.ocrra.org](http://www.ocrra.org). OCRRA also promotes the Freecycle Network and ReStore at our community events and in our newsletter.

### ➤ **WASTE DISPOSAL COST RELIEF FOR LOCAL CHARITIES**

In 2005, OCRRA again provided a "recycling credit" to the Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, 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 2005, OCRRA provided these organizations with approximately \$81,300, effectively relieving them of almost all of their waste disposal costs.

### ➤ **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 5,000 signatures from residents who support the expansion of the bottle bill through petition signings at various local events, such as the New State Fair and the annual flower and garden show. OCRRA also encourages visitors to our web site, [www.ocrra.org](http://www.ocrra.org)., 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 in the Operation Separation recycling program. In 2005, OCRRA's recycling team were part of numerous area events and fairs, including the New York State Fair, the Flower and Garden Show, the Golden Harvest Festival at Beaver Lake Nature Center and the Sportsman's Days held at Carpenter's Brook Fish Hatchery. A variety of recycling information was distributed including blue bins, recycling instructions, battery bags, household hazardous waste sign-up, 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. (Pictured left).

OCRRA also purchased 12 recycling baskets and donated them to the City of Syracuse for placement downtown in Clinton Square.

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 30,000 of the bins were delivered and distributed to local towns and villages, and the City of Syracuse. Two bins are better than one!



### ■ *Earth Day*



OCRRA ran numerous print and radio ads promoting OCRRA's Earth Day litter clean up on Saturday, April 23rd. The event enjoyed excellent community support, with over 110,000 pounds of litter and 1,000 tires collected by thousands of volunteers in 230 community groups.

### ■ *America Recycles Day*

OCRRA participated with the NYS Steering Committee supporting the national America Recycles Day on November 15 that promotes the purchase of products made of recycled materials. OCRRA submitted over 5,000 pledge cards collected during the State Fair.



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.
- ✓ Coordinated a curbside collection of phone books during a six-week period that coincided with the distribution of the new Verizon phone book. Verizon Yellow Pages and Alltel provide free space to OCRRA to run its recycling instructions in the back pages of their phone books.
- ✓ Expanded its web site activity with emails to thousands of businesses and residents with handy recycling reminders and offers to contact the Agency for recycling assistance.
- ✓ 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 (NYSAR); the Agency's Recycling Operations Manager, Jeff Cooper, serves in a leadership capacity as a board member of NYSAR.
- ✓ Expanded our e-mail list to over 7,500 addresses;
- ✓ And proudly, the OCRRA recycling department completed 2005 with zero time lost due to work-related accidents.

**OCRRA's recycling team members are:**

- Andrew Radin, Director of Recycling & Waste Reduction,
- Jeff Cooper, Recycling & Waste Reduction Operations Manager,
- Douglas Grady, Kristen Lawton and Justin Rudgick; Recycling Specialists,
- Elaine Van Avery, Recycling Educator (Contracted Service Provider),
- Tom Monty, Compost Site Technician, and
- Our seasonal Compost Site gatekeepers.