

MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 8, 2020

**Covanta Offers \$10 Lowe's Gift Card to Residents who Turn
in Mercury Thermometers and Thermostats at Sept.
12 OCRRA Drop-Off Event in Syracuse**

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (September 8, 2020) — Mercury can be harmful to humans and wildlife if improperly handled. Keeping mercury thermometers and thermostats out of the trash benefits the environment and the community.

To prevent the potential hazards of mercury, OCRRA and [Covanta](#), the operator of the local Waste-to-Energy Facility, are sponsoring a special mercury thermostat and thermometer take back day on Sat., Sept. 12, 2020.

Onondaga County residents are invited to bring mercury thermometers and thermostats to Miller Environmental Group, Inc., formerly known as Environmental Products and Services ([532 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse](#)) from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Sat., Sept. 12.

This event is open to residents in Onondaga County only. Attendees must complete a short drop-off form beforehand and place it on their dash the day of the event. The form is available at www.OCRRA.org. All attendees must wear masks and remain in their vehicles.

Does your item contain mercury?

- **Thermometers** that contain mercury have a **silver, metallic grey** or **black filling** in their tubes. If the filling is red, blue, purple, green or any other color, it is not a mercury thermometer and is not eligible for drop off at this event. Unlike mercury thermometers, these can be thrown in the trash.
- **Thermostats** that contain mercury have levers or dials that you must physically move to change the temperature. If you remove the faceplate of your thermostat and see one or more glass capsules containing a silver substance, it is a mercury thermostat. Do not remove or break the capsules. If your thermostat is digital / programmable, it is not eligible for drop off; it can go in the trash.

As an added bonus for keeping harmful mercury objects from the waste stream, attendees will receive a \$10 gift card to Lowe's*. Residents bringing in mercury thermometers will also receive a replacement thermometer (mercury-free and digital). Both rewards are courtesy of Covanta.

“According to EnergyStar.gov, older thermometers contain about 500 milligrams of mercury, which is an amount equal to the mercury in 125 compact fluorescent bulbs,” said Theresa Evans, OCRRA recycling specialist. “The volume of mercury in these thermometers and thermostats underscores why proper disposal through this program is so important.”

“We are excited to partner with OCRRA to recognize the outstanding efforts of Onondaga County residents to remove mercury from the waste stream, said Ben Gassaway, Covanta asset manager. “It is our hope that the reward program will encourage more residents to participate.”

If you cannot make the drop-off event, mercury thermometers and thermostats are collected year-round at OCRRA’s [Ley Creek Transfer Station](#) in Liverpool. Residents dropping these items off will be mailed a \$5 gift card as a reward.

*One gift card per household, regardless of the number of mercury containing items that are dropped off.

About OCRRA: *OCRRA is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation created by the New York State Legislature in 1990 to deliver a comprehensive solid waste management and resource recovery system to Onondaga County residents.*

OCRRA’s system includes: a strong recycling and composting program, a foundation for local waste disposal at the Waste-to-Energy Facility, convenient trash and recycling drop off sites, a robust education component and programs for hard to manage materials, such as household hazardous waste, batteries, fluorescent bulbs and other mercury-containing devices. OCRRA’s award-winning programs are funded by trash drop-off fees and the sale of electricity generated at the Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville, NY. Learn more and get involved at www.OCRRA.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#).

About Covanta Onondaga: *Covanta Onondaga operates the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Facility, which serves Onondaga County and the greater Syracuse region with sustainable waste disposal, processing approximately 990 tons of municipal solid waste per day into more than 39 megawatts of clean, renewable electricity. The facility also recycles approximately 12,000 tons of metal annually – enough to build 10,000 automobiles. For more information, visit covanta.com.*

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