



What the Global Recycling Crisis Means for Onondaga County

The global recycling crisis has hit home. Recycling markets are in an unprecedented free fall, especially for paper products, because China, the country processing the majority of the world's recyclables, closed its doors to most recyclables (they were getting too much contamination).

In Onondaga County and all over the world, communities are getting less money for their recycling commodities. This means everyone is paying more for recycling and in some places they actually stopped recycling because it was too expensive.

What Does the Crisis Mean for You?

For decades, OCRRA insulated the community from market fluctuations by absorbing costs during weak recycling markets. With today's crisis expected to last for two years or more, OCRRA cannot continue to support recycling without help.

OCRRA is exploring all funding options in an effort to continue to be leaders in recycling and cost-efficient at the same time. We've reached out to the County and the County Legislature to ask for financial assistance. We've considered raising the fees we charge to accept and process trash (tip fees). We've considered a mix of options. We're still working on a solution. **The one thing that is certain is the cost to recycle is going up and your wallet will be impacted in the future.**

So, what can you do?



1) Keep Recycling.

Recycling conserves natural resources, gives items a new life and supports jobs in our community. Now is not the time to give up on recycling. Residents like you have worked too hard and are too successful at recycling to stop. We must remain committed to the environmental benefits enabled by waste reduction and recycling. **It's time to double down, not throw in the towel.**

It's more important than ever to recycle "right." **The cleaner our recycling stream is, the more valuable it is.** So now's the time to revisit the recycling rules at www.OCRRA.org. Make sure you're putting the right things in, such as plastic bottles and jugs, and keeping the wrong things out, such as plastic bags and "crackable" plastic berry cartons.

2) Relish Your Success!

Each year, working together, schools, businesses, and residents recycle more than half of the waste we produce (56%); we have been recognized with state and national awards for these environmental efforts. Since 1990 **we've kept 10 billion pounds of material out of the trash - enough to fill the Carrier Dome 21 times!** Keep it up!

3) Know the Rules.

Review OCRRA's [list of recyclables](#) (things have changed over the years so refamiliarize yourself with it); learn what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in the blue bin. **And, when in doubt? Throw it out.**



YES:

- Cardboard and paper food boxes (pasta and cereal boxes)
- Office paper, junk mail
- Newspaper, magazines, catalogs, softcover books
- Plastic bottles and jugs
- Cans and jars
- Plastic dairy tubs

NO:

- **Plastic bags** (never bag your recyclables in plastic; they need to be loose).
- "Tanglers" or anything that can wrap around sorting equipment and cause downtime, which increases the cost to process recyclables (includes hoses, wires, cords, ropes, chains, belts, etc.)
- Plastics that might crack apart when you step on them including drinking cups and berry containers.
- Styrofoam

4) Pass It On

Please share this information with your friends and family (verbally or digitally); working together we can help find better and closer markets for our recycling. Thank you for helping save the world a little each day!



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