

THE OKRA NEWS

OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

Welcome to the OKRA online newsletter. Please feel free to share our newsletter with anyone who might enjoy reading it. To receive electronic notification of newsletter availability and general recycling announcements, sign-up for the OKRA listserv on our website www.recycleok.org/get-involved



RETHINKING RECYCLING
2022 OKRA CONFERENCE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23



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1,260 LBS. RECYCLED AT THE 2022 OKLAHOMA CITY MEMORIAL MARATHON

By Amanda Scofield

Recycling at the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon (OKCMM) was a success again this year! The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recruited over 40 volunteers from DEQ, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC), Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF), YMCA, Oklahoma City Public Schools, and other entities. These volunteers worked together as the OKCMM Green Team to collect 1,260 pounds of plastic bottles, aluminum cans, and cardboard. Heatsheet blankets were also collected and recycled separately with Sprouts Farmers Market. Special thanks to the OKCMM staff and volunteer coordinators, DEQ, Scissortail Park, Oklahoma Environmental Management Authority (OEMA), Batliner Recycling, and Sprouts Farmers Market.

Interested in volunteering for the OKCMM Green Team next April? Email Amanda.Scofield@deq.ok.gov or visit <https://okcmmarathon.com/> for more information.



OKCMM Green Team



OKLAHOMA COMPOST FESTIVAL 2022

The Oklahoma Compost and Sustainability Association (OCASA) hosted the 2nd annual Compost Festival during International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) on May 7th at Scissortail Park in Oklahoma City. ICAW (compostfoundation.org), occurs every year during the first full week of May and aims to raise awareness of why we should all be composting our organic waste and using compost. This year's theme was Recipe for Regeneration: Compost.

The festival consisted of 13 vendors and two free sessions on the Basics of Composting at Home and Incorporating Compost into the Landscape, which had over 300 registrants! It also kicked off Scissortail Park's new "leave some, take some" compost program where folks can bring their home-generated food scraps to the Park for composting, then receive finished compost in exchange (contact the Park for specifics at ScissortailPark.org). Let's keep up this compost momentum in Oklahoma! The theme of this event is aligned with OCASA's mission.

Visit okcompostconference.org for resources or to contact OCASA with your composting questions. Save the date for OCASA's Compost Conference on October 6th and look out for next year's Compost Festival in early May!



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR PAINT OKLAHOMA BEAUTIFUL, A KEEP OKLAHOMA BEAUTIFUL PROGRAM

Paint Oklahoma Beautiful encourages volunteers to seek out unsightly community structures and renovate them with the creative use of resources. Volunteers make use of paint donated by HIS Paints and a stipend for supplies provided by the Public Service Company of Oklahoma to transform that forgotten community structure with the application of fresh paint and a lot of elbow grease! The paint donated for this program is surplus paint that our sponsor will recycle into 5 to 8 colors - those then are the colors registrants get to choose from.

To apply:

<https://www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com/what-we-do/paint-oklahoma-beautiful-application.html>



CDR GLOBAL EARTH DAY 2022

By Shana Castle

CDR Global, Inc., is a national IT asset reuse and recovery company headquartered in Oklahoma City and has been in business since 2003. Employees at CDR are not new to recycling since it is part of daily practices. During the first quarter of 2022, CDR processed 388.4 TONS (776,792 lbs) of electronic assets for reuse and/or material recovery. Not only is CDR Global a computer recycling company, but the company also participates in company-wide recycling programs and events.

Each year on Earth Day, CDR Global employees participate in an Earth Day activity that will better the community and the Earth. This year the theme for Earth Day was "Invest in Our Planet", so for Earth Day 2022 CDR Global employees invested in the planet by partnering with OKC Beautiful and volunteering within the local community to clean up Dolese Youth Park, located in Oklahoma City. Over the span of just a couple hours the twelve volunteer employees were able to remove ten 55-gallon sized bags of trash, junk, & debris from the park.

"We celebrate every day as if it were Earth Day. We've taken the initiative to educate and instill our core values of integrity and sustainability practices within our employees, so hopefully they will continue to give back to the community," said Dalton Brown, CDR Global's Business Development Manager.





BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

TRACY HORST, CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

Tracy Horst is the Director of Environmental Compliance for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Chemistry from Southwestern College, Winfield, KS. She has been very active with the Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA) since 2011 and has played an important role within the organization.

Tracy has an avid interest in recycling and the environment. She has helped to create recycling infrastructure across the Choctaw Nation's 11 counties and throughout Oklahoma.



Tracy has a reputation of always being a source of information about recycling and being willing to share her knowledge to help communities recycle. She has served the Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA) for over seven years as a Board Member, Vice President, President, and is now serving as Past President. She was one of the first members of the OKRA Communications Work Group and was responsible for OKRA's Facebook content.

Tracy is chair of the OKRA Nominations Committee and serves on the Conference Committee. She also belongs to a host of other state and national groups, such as the Tribal Waste & Response Steering Committee (TWAR SC). In her free time she enjoys cooking, traveling and working on her flower beds, garden and yard.





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OKIE RECYCLING TOUR

By Kiema Kona Borsuah

Are you curious to learn more about recycling happenings in your local community or state? Do you want to know how recycling works in your city? How about what happens to your recycling once it leaves your curb? Or, how recyclables are made into new products and available for you to purchase? If your answer to these questions is "YES" then head on to the OKRA YouTube channel for the Okie Recycling Tour.

The Okie Recycling Tour is a new recycling documentary program brought to you by OKRA. It covers recycling happenings in Oklahoma, featuring organizations, businesses, cities, companies, schools, institutions and individuals working to improve recycling in their communities.

The first Okie Recycling Tour featured Mr. Robert Pickens, vice president of recycling at American Waste Control who operates the Tulsa Recycle & Transfer.

Robert talked about their business and the amazing job they are doing to promote recycling in the Tulsa area. Want to learn more about the tour?

Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4EskEhKXzc> to watch the full interview.

While you are there, don't forget to subscribe to our channel. Also, remember to hit the notification button for new tour videos updates.

OKRA LUNCH & LEARN: PROCESSING RECYCLABLES, GATHERING VALUABLE INFORMATION THROUGH WASTE AUDITS

By Shavara Johnson

On April 13th, 2022 Crystal Bennett from Republic Services walked viewers through a waste audit at Batliner with their manager Scott Stonebraker. They explained how audits improve recycling programs. The main goal of waste audits is to see what is being thrown away and to make sure programs remain in place.

When a waste audit is underway, the trucks are first isolated and the material for the audit is run through the sorting system. The sorting machines are human operated and workers pull large items from belt before they go on to be sorted further.

Microwaves, fans, helium tanks are some of the frequently seen items that contaminate clean recycling. The materials are screened in a few ways all of which require a keen eye by workers to spot materials that are not only contaminates, but can cause damage to the machines being used to sort.

Crystal Bennett noted that contamination is anything not in your curbside program, which is why education is such an important component in clean recycling.

One of the biggest contaminants unintentionally included in curbside recycling is plastic bags, in a previous audit Bennett recalls having to sticker 100,000 carts with "no bags." She emphasized the urge many residents have to recycle without fully understanding what their program accepts, which turns them into "wishcyclers," when you recycle without knowing with certainty that what you're placing in a bin can be recycled.

The tour allowed viewers to see the very tedious process of waste audits and the importance of educating residents to minimize contaminants, which can affect the success of curbside programs. Bennett concluded the tour by re-emphasizing the importance of purchasing easy to recycle materials, "pre-cycling."





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OKRA ADVOCACY WORK GROUP VISITS CAPITOL

On May 5, 2022 members of the OKRA Advocacy Work Group visited members of the Oklahoma State Senate and Oklahoma House of Representatives. A team of 4, led by Advocacy Work Group Chair Michael Barton stopped by each office to introduce OKRA and to leave OKRA's contact information.

“Our goal was to spread the word that OKRA is a fixed resource for recycling to all Oklahomans,” said Barton. “Everyone at the capital was very hospitable. We look forward to building upon those initial meetings.”

The message was short and sweet. If you or your constituents have a question about recycling contact OKRA. OKRA is designed to serve as a central communication point for exchange among business, industries, governmental entities, public and private organization, schools, and citizens about recycling.

One of the positive things that all of the OKRA members noted was the interest in recycling at the Capitol. Several people who worked at the Capitol said that they took their recyclables home to their curbside bin. They were interested in the reviving the recycling program at the State Capitol so that everyone in the building would have the opportunity to recycle.



OKRA Members from left to right: Eric Pollard, Ellen Bussert, Keima Borsuah and Michael Barton

PLASTIC FREE JULY

Join millions of people reducing their plastic waste. Plastic Free July® is a global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution – so we can have cleaner streets, oceans, and beautiful communities. Will you be part of Plastic Free July by choosing to refuse single-use plastics?

Easy Ways to go Plastic Free

1. Use reusable cups & bottles
2. Ditch the plastic bag when you shop
3. Reduce plastic in your beauty routine
4. Wrap your food in fabric
5. Brush better
6. Say no to single use take away cutlery
7. Be prepared



WE NEED TO REBUILD THE RECYCLING BRAND

By Alec Cooley

Recycling has taken a big hit as media stories about market disruptions, cut backs to local programs and revelations about contaminated recyclables going to the landfill have reinforced an impression that recycling is “broken” or even a fraud. Despite the very-real problems that exist, recycling remains a resilient and critical element to building a circular economy. But even as markets bounce back, there is a long-term risk that negative perceptions of recycling will cause many to question why they should bother. In this blog, I argue that we need to focus public messaging on rebuilding the public’s faith in recycling. That it is, in fact, worth the effort.

To view the entire article please visit the link:

<https://www.buschsystems.com/blog/advancing-recycling/rebuild-recycling-brand/>

GET INVOLVED WITH OKRA IN 2022 JOIN A WORK GROUP OR COMMITTEE

Would you like improved accessibility to recycling in Oklahoma? Would you like to help strengthen Oklahoma's recycling network? If so, please consider joining one of OKRA's work groups or committees in 2022. Your term of commitment is one year, with the option to continue. Select the work group you wish to join when you renew your membership in 2022 or contact Ellen Bussert at okra.secretary@gmail.com.

Committees

Conference Planning Committee (Chair: Ellen Bussert) This committee handles the program, logistics and fundraising for the annual Oklahoma Recycling Association Conference.

Communications Committee (Chair: Jon Barton) This committee updates OKRA website content, manages and posts updates to the listserv, maintains engagement via social media.

Membership Committee (Chair: Ellen Bussert) This committee facilitates membership renewals, solicits new members, updates the membership structure and brochure, and recognizes OKRA members.

Work Groups

Advocacy Work Group (Chair: Michael Barton) The Advocacy Work Group works to make OKRA better known among Oklahoma legislators and decision makers. The ultimate goal is to make OKRA the "go to" organization for recycling, waste reduction and resource recovery issues in our state.

Education and Outreach Work Group (Chair: Sara Ivy) The Education Work Group organizes Lunch and Learn workshops to provide information on recycling topics and issues.

Glass Work Group (Chair: Chris Knight) The Glass Work Group is working on developing initiatives to develop programs for the communities in Oklahoma to reduce the amount of glass entering the landfills in Oklahoma.

Composting (Chair: Natalie Mallory) OKRA promotes composting as a resource recovery strategy and relays updates from the Oklahoma Compost and Sustainability Association, U.S. Composting Council, Biocycle and other compost organizations.

Materials Exchange (Chair: Zach Benedict) OKRA promotes the online RENEW Materials Exchange, a free matching service for businesses and industries that want to find takers for the by-products they generate or acquire the by-products of other businesses. This work group looks for other opportunities to facilitate and promote materials exchange programs.

Product Stewardship (Chair: Amanda Scofield) OKRA collaborates with the national Product Stewardship Institute to solve waste management problems by encouraging product design changes that lead to sustainable end-of-life management.

For more information on OKRA's Committee go to www.recycleok.org - "Get Involved"

DATES FOR 2022 OKRA BOARD MEETINGS

Third Friday of the
month Meeting from
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

July 15

September 16

Nov 18



Passionate about Oklahoma Recycling,
but not yet an OKRA Member?

Join our network of Oklahomans working to improve recycling across the state! As an OKRA member, you have contact with Oklahoma businesses and governments that are recycling in Oklahoma. Sharing information and resources helps grow Oklahoma's recycling programs and industries.

OKRA members receive a discount to the annual conference, recognition on the OKRA webpage (for corporate, government and nonprofit members) and newsletter, and an annual membership directory.

To join, or for more info, go to:
www.recycleok.org, or contact
Ellen Bussert at okra.secretary@gmail.com



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REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR OKRA'S 2022 ANNUAL RECYCLING CONFERENCE "RETHINKING RECYCLING"



Registration is open for OKRA's 2022 Annual Recycling Conference "Rethinking Recycling" This in person conference will be held on Friday, September 23, 2022 at the Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center in beautiful Southeast, Oklahoma.

To register go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-oklahoma-recycling-conference-registration-360655268617>.

The topic of this year's conference was inspired by the discussion we all have of improving our recycling programs. At the conference, experts will discuss ways to "rethink" behaviors, education, and collection methods in order to improve recycling programs.

Conference registration is \$60 for OKRA Members and \$85 for non-members. For Seniors or Teachers/classrooms the rate is \$20. There will be a free networking time on Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. It will be held outdoors at the Pavilion at the Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center. In addition to great conversations, there will light snacks, beverages and a corn hole tournament.

This event is sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, The Chickasaw Nation and the Indian Nations Chapter of SWANA. Additional support is welcomed! If you are interested in supporting this conference, please contact info@recycleok.org for support benefits and costs.

More detail to come. Check the 2022 Conference Page on the OKRA website to keep up to date!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR OKRA'S 2022 RECYCLING CONFERENCE

Sponsorship opportunities are available for OKRA's 2022 Annual Recycling Conference "Rethinking Recycling." This year's conference will be in person on September 23, 2022 at the Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center in southeast Oklahoma.

"In these challenging times" said OKRA Board Member Bret Scovill, "It is increasingly important that the proponents of recycling network to find solutions. OKRA is offering us a venue for that purpose. This opportunity to learn, both from the guest speakers, and from each other is our best tool to encourage recycling in our State and surrounding areas. Please join us in this endeavor." There are several levels of sponsorship.

Sponsor Spotlight	\$1,000
Metals	\$ 800
Fibers	\$ 600
Glass	\$ 400
Plastics	\$ 200

Some of the sponsorship benefits include conference registrations, recognition (during the conference), publicity (before and afterward), plus your logo displayed during the 5-min. conference break or breaks depending on your level of support. For a detailed look at benefits go to: <https://www.recycleok.org/oklahoma-events-activities/2022-oklahoma-recycling-conference/>

Those who support the conference on the Sponsor Spotlight level will receive 5 minutes of conference time to promote their business in addition to the benefits listed above. Your sponsorship will help cover conference expenses and OKRA's ongoing work to promote recycling in Oklahoma.

For more information about sponsorship, please contact Bret Scovill at (405) 434-3373.



DID YOU KNOW GLASS RECYCLING FACTS

DID YOU KNOW

Glass is something we handle every single day. When we open a window, touch our smartphone screen, or drink our favorite beverage — we interact with glass directly on a constant basis. Even so, it's funny that we never really stop to think much about this versatile material and all the interesting facts about it, especially when we use it as often as we do. Let's end our ignorance today with some very fascinating facts about it! Check them out below.

GLASS IS ALSO NATURALLY MADE

Glass is a material that's both man-made and natural as well. In fact, our ancestors once used glass called obsidian to create knives, jewelry, and weapons. This type of glass is naturally created by the intense heat given off from volcanic eruptions that works to fuse rocks and sand into glass. And yes, it looks as cool as it sounds!

MASON GLASS HAS BEEN AROUND SINCE THE 1800S

Those mason glass jars you love to ferment foods in, fill with plants and herbs, and bottle your tomato sauce in have been around a lot longer than you may suspect. Canning jars with screw tops were first made back in 1858 and have changed very little over the years in design and function.

GLASS CAN BE RECYCLED FOREVER

Did you know that glass can be recycled again and again without wearing out or losing its quality over time? The fact that it won't deteriorate with use and age makes it one of the easiest materials to recycle.

BROWN GLASS REFLECTS UV LIGHT

There's a reason why your beer glass is brown and not clear. The amber tint is designed to reflect any UV light that would otherwise spoil the contents. You'll find brown glass commonly used for food and drink bottles and even windows to prevent fade and deterioration of upholstery.

GLASS IS ALWAYS MOVING

Glass may look solid, but it's actually called an amorphous solid, which is a state between solid and liquid. If you were to look at the molecules that make up the glass, you would see that they are in fact moving but at a very, very slow rate.

MOST NEW GLASS CONTAINS RECYCLED GLASS

At this current age, most glass bottles and jars today contain at least 25 percent recycled glass. That's just another reason why it's important to keep recycling your bottles — every little bit helps to reduce waste in our landfills that harm our environment.

REGULAR GLASS IS GREENISH, NOT CLEAR

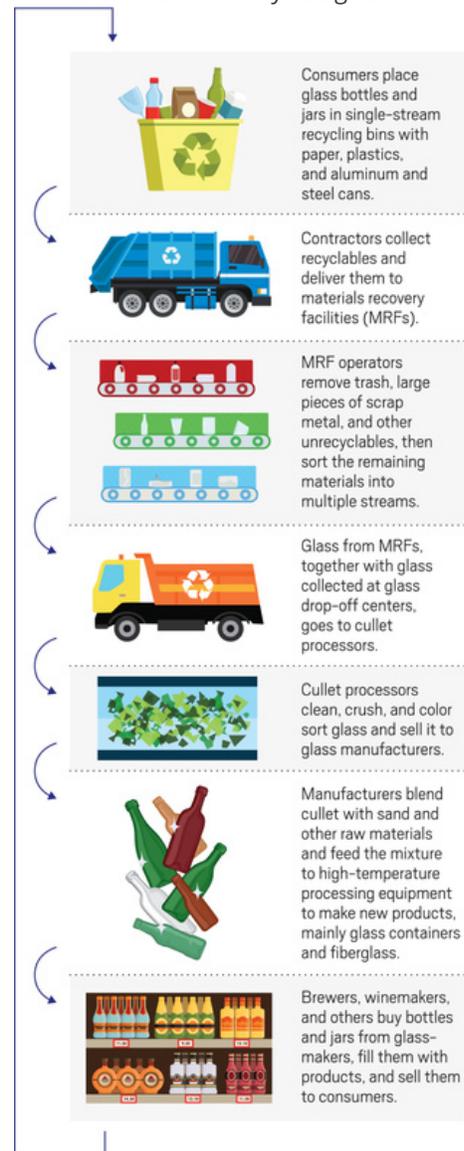
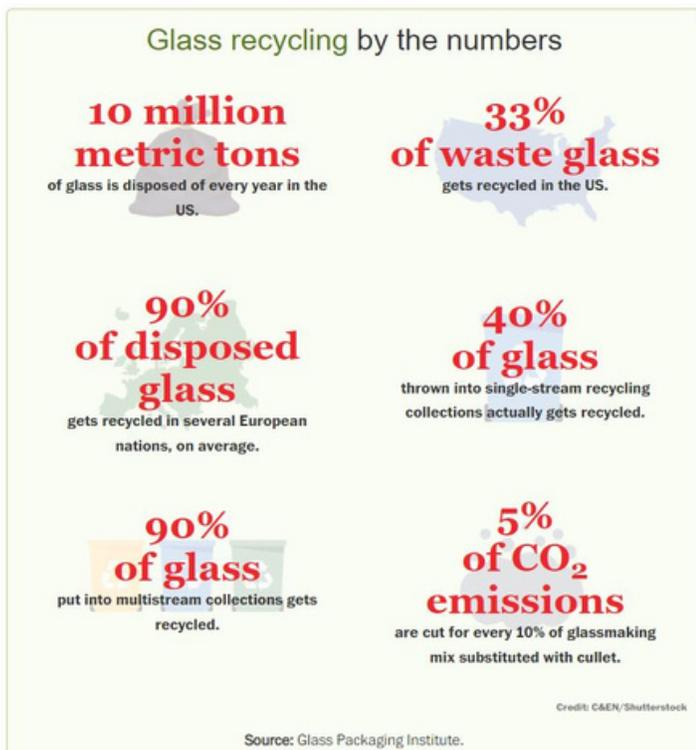
Another fun fact about glass is that it's not clear in its natural form. It's actually a greenish color naturally. To get clear glass, the iron content in the molten glass formula must be reduced.

GLASS RECYCLED REDUCES POLLUTION

Glass produced from recycled glass reduces related air pollution by 20% and related water pollution by 50%.

RECYCLING ONE TON OF GLASS

Saves 42 Kwh of energy, 0.12 barrels of oil (5 gallons), 714,000 BTU's of energy, 7.5 pounds of air pollutants from being released, and 2 cubic yards of landfill space. Over 30% of the raw material used in glass production now comes from recycled glass.



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

OKRA's 2022 Oklahoma Recycling Conference:

"Rethinking Recycling"

Friday, September 23, 2022, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM

Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center, Sulphur, Oklahoma

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-oklahoma-recycling-conference-registration-360655268617>

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OKRA'S 2022 SPONSORS

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Natural Evolution, Inc.



An Electronics Recycling Company