

Welcome to the premiere issue of the Oklahoma Recycling Association's 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 list serve on our website:

**[www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org)**

*The above article was written by Carol Cole, Norman Transcript staff writer. Managing Editor Andy Rieger contributed to this report. Reprinted with permission from Carol Cole. (ccole@normantranscript.com).*

## OKRA WORKGROUP UPDATES

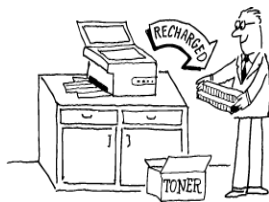
### Materials Exchange Coming Soon

OKRA is teaming up with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to develop an on-line exchange for waste and used materials. The "Oklahoma Materials Exchange" will feature a website that connects buyers and sellers or "givers and takers" who have or need surplus materials. The Exchange will target general businesses, industrial, and manufacturing firms in and around Oklahoma, although those from outside the region would not be barred from trading.

Materials that may be traded include: Industrial process waste, manufacturer byproducts, surplus stock, scrap and overrun material, used equipment, used office furnishings, packaging and transport materials.

The OKRA Materials Exchange Workgroup has established guidelines and drafted website content. Once the scope and cost of the project is determined, the Workgroup will pursue partnerships and funding opportunities.

An Oklahoma Materials Exchange is just one more way to reduce waste



and give new life to used materials. Many on-line exchange services exist throughout the country. By providing this service via the Internet, statewide exchanges can easily be facilitated among Oklahomans. For more information, e-mail Diane Wilkins @deq.state.ok.us.

OKRA owes a big "pat on the back" to the Waste Exchange Workgroup for working out the details of the plan: Ilda Hershey (Chair), Bob Rabatine, and Garmon Smith.

### State Recycling Goal Bill to be Re-Introduced in 2008

The OKRA Advocacy Workgroup worked hard for the passage of SB 498 to implement a State Recycling Goal, but ran into some unexpected barriers. We appreciate Richard Chapman who championed our bill at the Capitol and Sen. Susan Paddock (Ada) who introduced the bill. Special thanks to Garmon Smith for securing our sponsor and Traci Phillips for rallying grassroots support for the bill.

The issue has received more consideration and a higher profile at the legislature than ever before. Next year, at least some people will be familiar with the concept and goal. We will definitely try again in 2008!

### Kimball Collecting K-12 Educational Resources

K-12 Education Workgroup's Chair, Dr. Sarah Kimball (kimball@ok-state.edu), is collecting information about recycling resources (programs, displays, materials, curricula, DVDs, etc.) currently available in Oklahoma. Please complete the form online if you have anything to contribute to her compilation.

### Market Development Workgroup Needs Chair

This workgroup needs YOU! To increase our recycling opportunities in Oklahoma, we need an active committee to help pave the way. Please email interim chair, Ellen Bussert at: ellen.bussert@deq.state.ok.us if you are interested in this leadership position or would like to serve as a member of the workgroup when it is up and running.

## National Recycling Coalition Annual Conference

[www.recyclingconference.org](http://www.recyclingconference.org)

This is an exciting time in the fields of recycling and sustainability. Corporations are adopting and implementing sustainability policies. All levels of government are considering their roles in regulating the way we use materials and dispose of waste. The environmental community is pushing for more accountability and action from individuals, businesses, and government.

Wouldn't it be nice if all of these parties in recycling and sustainability could come together at the same event to discuss the important issues that we all face and to develop common solutions to our many challenges?

That's exactly what happens each year at NRC's Annual Congress & Expo.

Once a year, more than 1,000 recycling and sustainability professionals gather to take part in NRC's Congress & Expo, the nation's premier recycling and sustainability conference and exhibition. From local recycling coordinators and state and federal policymakers to corporate leaders and environmental activists, the who's who of recycling and sustainability will be in Denver, September 16-19, 2007 and you should be there too!

If you would like to hear from an expert about the value of attending this conference, please call Michael Patton, founding president of OKRA and member of the National Recycling Coalition Board of Directors. Michael may be reached at The M.e.t., (918) 584-0584. He would love to have more folks from Oklahoma attend this year.

### YOUR IDEAS NEEDED!

Please help the OKRA Board by emailing your ideas about what types of information is needed on our website ([www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org)) to: [susie.shields@deq.state.ok.us](mailto:susie.shields@deq.state.ok.us).

Thanks!

**Kathy's  
Komposting  
Korner**

*By Kathy Moore  
OKRA Board Member  
Composting Advocate  
(Woodward, OK)*

In nature, recycling is a common practice that most of us may have not given much thought about until recently. Trees drop their leaves annually and if left in place, those leaves with the addition of time, rain (water), soil, and air decay (break down into useable nutrients) and become food for the tree in the springs that follow.

Composting involves this same process or recipe of taking organic wastes in the correct proportions (carbon/nitrogen ratio) and adding water, air and time to make soil organic matter with nutrients and elements immediately available to plants if properly composted.

Most of Oklahoma's soils had four to six inches of rich organic matter before we began farming the land. Today, many of our farms have less than one half inch organic matter critical for plant or crop health. In nature it takes about a hundred years to create one inch of soil or organic matter.

There is a huge opportunity for specialty crops and agritourism to grow our rural communities' and state economies by diverting land fill wastes to farms for composting. This simple cultural and policy shift will yield endless possibilities for our future including protecting our water supply.

Organic matter retains more water, provides plant nutrients, reduces soil erosion, reduces pumping costs, improves our public health, and more.

Transitioning our culture, policies and practices about waste maybe hastened by the realization that our natural resources are finite and by collaborating with other groups and State Agencies with similar missions such as the State Water Plan public hearings.

These hearings are engaging diverse stakeholders and communities in serious debates discussing how we can ensure clean and abundant water to support future generations. One way we can add to the discussion and possibilities is to revise our local and state policies to promote on-farm composting.

As recently stated by another recycler and composting advocate: "Our region has a strong agricultural community. As a vital part of a comprehensive organic materials management strategy, we view returning organic materials to farms as ideal locations to encourage composting." We have the same vision for composting in Oklahoma.

## Oklahoma Celebrates America Recycles Day November 15, 2007

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA), Metropolitan Environmental Trust (The M.e.t.) and Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) request your help in promoting increased recycling in Oklahoma.



Every year, communities, organizations, schools and businesses hold America Recycles Day (ARD) events to celebrate recycling and to keep it in the public eye. ARD celebrates clean air and water, a reliable supply of energy, and a healthy future for our children. However, a lot of valuable materials are still being wasted. So America Recycles Day also means rededicating ourselves to recycling. This year, our theme is "Oklahoma Celebrates America Recycles Day." The annual ARD date is November 15<sup>th</sup>, but a lot of events are starting much earlier!

DEQ, OKRA, the M.e.t. and KOB are encouraging citizens to make a pledge to do their part in keeping recycling working. By filling out a pledge card and returning it to the M.e.t. or DEQ by November 21, participants are automatically entered into drawings for state and national prizes. Following the state contest drawing, pledges will be sent to the national contest for their drawing to be held in December.

DEQ will provide pledge cards in pads of 100 and signs for anyone wishing to collect the pledges in offices, schools, public places, etc. You may also make your own copies of the pledge cards (4 to a sheet) by downloading the PDF from the OKRA website (2007 version available by August 1). A self-addressed envelope will be provided returning the pledges to the DEQ in time for the drawing for our state prizes. State prizes donated for last year's celebration may be seen on the OKRA website: [www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org).

For those planning an event or celebration, a variety of promotional and educational materials are available from the DEQ. Contact Susie Shields at [Susie.Shields@deq.state.ok.us](mailto:Susie.Shields@deq.state.ok.us) or (405) 702-5166.

An event planning guide is available on the OKRA website or from DEQ. We encourage you to register your event on the OKRA website and we will relay that information to the National ARD calendar.



*Photo on left: Holly LaRue and son of Oklahoma City pose with her new eGo Cycle, a rechargeable electric scooter donated to ARD 2006 by Shields Pipe and SWANA.*





PO Box 521154  
Tulsa, OK 74152-1154



**We need your  
help to  
grow OKRA . . .  
Join us online!**

## OKRA LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

Board of Directors	Position	E-Mail
Traci Phillips (Natural Evolution)	President	<a href="mailto:recycle@naturevolution.com">recycle@naturevolution.com</a>
Ande Reed (The M.e.t.)	Vice-President	<a href="mailto:ande@metrecycle.com">ande@metrecycle.com</a>
Ellen Bussert (DEQ)	Secretary	<a href="mailto:ellen.bussert@deq.state.ok.us">ellen.bussert@deq.state.ok.us</a>
Michael Patton (The M.e.t.)	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:recyclemichael@yahoo.com">recyclemichael@yahoo.com</a>
Susie Shields (DEQ)	Past-President	<a href="mailto:Susie.shields@deq.state.ok.us">Susie.shields@deq.state.ok.us</a>
Garold Beasley (Midland Recycling)	Advocacy Chair	<a href="mailto:gbeisly@midlandrecycling.net">gbeisly@midlandrecycling.net</a>
Ilda Hershey (DEQ/Sustainable Stillwater)	Materials Exchange Chair	<a href="mailto:ildahershey@suddenlink.net">ildahershey@suddenlink.net</a>
Dr. Sarah Kimball (OSU Extension/SWANA)	K-12 Education Chair	<a href="mailto:kimball@okstate.edu">kimball@okstate.edu</a>
Trudi Logan (Tinker AFB)	At-Large	<a href="mailto:Trudi.Logan@tinker.af.mil">Trudi.Logan@tinker.af.mil</a>
Kathy Moore (OK Composting Council)	At-Large	<a href="mailto:anichinimoore@hotmail.com">anichinimoore@hotmail.com</a>
Garmon Smith (EPA/Ada Recycling Coalition)	At-Large	<a href="mailto:smith.garmon@epamail.epa.gov">smith.garmon@epamail.epa.gov</a>
Dr. Doug Weirick (ECU/Ada Recycling Coalition)	Membership Chair	<a href="mailto:dweirick@mailclerk.ecok.edu">dweirick@mailclerk.ecok.edu</a>

## Calendar of Environmental Events

Please email your events for the next issue (early September 2007) to [susie.shields@deq.state.ok.us](mailto:susie.shields@deq.state.ok.us).

**June 12-13, 2007**—OSU's Food & Agricultural Products Center **biodiesel workshop**. Register here: [www.fapc.biz/pages/](http://www.fapc.biz/pages/)

**June 19, 2007** (5:30 to 7:30 p.m.)—**Green Drinks** hosted by Sustainable OKC (SOKC) Gather with like-minded individuals for conservation conversation. 3rd Tuesday monthly at Oklahoma City's Trattoria il Centro (corner of Main and Walker in the Montgomery Building.). Sign-up for SOKC electronic distribution list here: <http://www.sustainableokc.org/>

**March 1 through June 30**—**Great American Cleanup**—Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) is coordinating litter cleanups statewide. Contact Gail Ederer 405-286-9141.

**July 7—Illinois River Cleanup:** You can float the river for free, spend time with fun people and help get the river in great shape for the upcoming summer. This cleanup is also a great way to be part of a community effort benefiting our local riparian environment. To pre-register, call the OSRC at (918) 456-3251, or e-mail [osrc2@fullnet.net](mailto:osrc2@fullnet.net).

**July 14—Reggae Fest Tulsa & Green Country Eco Expo.** Jenks Riverwalk Crossing and amphitheater from 4PM to 11PM. Contact: [amie.c.nguyen@gmail.com](mailto:amie.c.nguyen@gmail.com)

**July 9-10**—The Inter-Tribal Environmental Council (ITEC), a consortium of 41 Tribes from Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas, is holding its **12th Annual Environmental Conference** in Tulsa, OK. Everyone is welcome! More information is available online at: <http://www.itecmembers.org>.

**July 11-15—Woody Guthrie Festival,** Okemah—Recycling volunteers needed! Contact: [Melissa.Adler@deq.state.ok.us](mailto:Melissa.Adler@deq.state.ok.us)

**Sept. 7—Illinois River Cleanup** (free lunch and kayak giveaway) See July 7 event above . .

**Sept. 29— National Public Lands Day**—This event started 14 years ago as a volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy. Today it's the nation's largest lands restoration event. In 2005, nearly 90,000 volunteers built

trails and bridges, planted trees and plants, and removed trash and invasive plants. Read more online: [www.publiclandsday.org](http://www.publiclandsday.org)

**Oct. 3—Energy Star Change-A-Light Day**—State leaders, communities, and individuals across our country are taking a small step that can make a big difference to protect our environment and preserve energy resources—switching out a single light bulb or fixture at home to one that's earned the government's ENERGY STAR for energy efficiency. Find out more online: [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

**Oct. 22-26**—Free “three-for-one” event in Dallas. (1) Region 6 EPA EE roundtable, (2) Recycling Market Development Roundtable, and (3) Ecological Footprint field trip. To sign-up for the electronic distribution list, contact Senna.Patty@epamail.epa.gov.

**Sept. 16-19—National Recycling Congress,** Denver, CO (Pg. 2)

**Oct. 13—Illinois River Festival**—For event details, watch [www.oklahomascenicrivers.net/](http://www.oklahomascenicrivers.net/).

**Nov. 14-17—North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Conference,** Virginia Beach, VA ([www.NAAEE.org](http://www.NAAEE.org)) This conference now includes a sustainability education strand.

**Nov. 15—Oklahoma Celebrates America Recycles Day** (Pg. 3)

**Feb 7, 2008—Annual OKAEE EE Expo** (Broken Arrow). Watch for details online at: [www.OKAEE.org](http://www.OKAEE.org).

**Feb 28 & 29**—The Oklahoma Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Annual **Waste Management Symposium** will be held at the Cherokee Casino in Catoosa, Oklahoma. There will be a one day tour of local waste management and recycling facilities, exhibitor reception, exhibits, state SWANA Chapter meeting and one day of sessions on various waste management issues, updates, and topics. For further information, call Sharon Swepston at (918) 453-5377 or email her at [sswepston@cherokee.org](mailto:sswepston@cherokee.org)