

THE OKRA NEWS

OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

June 2018

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

NonProfit Advocacy Day at the State Capitol

by Ellen Bussert

On April 25, 2018, the Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA) participated in NonProfit Advocacy Day at the Capitol sponsored by the Oklahoma Center for NonProfits. At this event, OKRA joined with other non-profit organizations across Oklahoma to visit with legislators about the contributions nonprofit agencies make to our State.

The week before the event, OKRA President Tracy Horst sent a letter to every legislator introducing them to OKRA and letting them know a member would be stopping by their office. Her letter outlined OKRA's mission to promote the business of recycling and function to serve as a central communication point for exchange among businesses, industries, government entities, public and private organization, schools and citizens about recycling.



OKRA Advocacy work group members, Stephanie Giacomo and Ellen Bussert promote recycling during NonProfit Day at the Capitol

OKRA Advocacy work group members Stephanie Giacomo (Pride in McAlester), Keima Kamara (OSU Extension Services) and Ellen Bussert spent the day passing out packets of OKRA seeds and visiting with the legislators about the importance of improving

OKLAHOMA
CENTER
FOR
NONPROFITS



Trent Brewer, from the Oklahoma Center for NonProfits visits with Ellen Bussert

recycling in Oklahoma. OKRA's message was well received. An important step in building a relationship with State elected officials was successful.

If you are interested in spreading the message of OKRA and would like to join the OKRA Advocacy work group, please contact Ellen Bussert at okra.secretary@gmail.com.



Keima Kamara and Ellen Bussert distributed OKRA pamphlets and seeds to State Legislators.

News from Around the State

ADA

Earth Day 2018: The Ada Recycling Coalition sponsored a poem contest entitled "Stop Plastic Pollution" to celebrate Earth Day this year. Congratulations go to Hayden Dalluge, a Stonewall High School student! Hayden placed first and received \$200 from ARC for his poem.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection: Members of the Ada Recycling Coalition (ARC) volunteered to collect, sort and mix latex paint during the city of Ada's Household Hazardous Waste Collection event held on Saturday, May 5, 2018. Garmon Smith, ARC Chair, reports they mixed and diverted from the waste stream (saving the cost of disposal) approximately ten 5-gallon buckets of white and off-white paint and filled two Gaylord boxes of latex paint containers of various sizes. This paint went to the Chickasaw Nation's Re-Use Center where it will be given away and re-used.



Hayden Dalluge with the ARC poem contest winner's check



Above: ARC Chair, Garmon Smith mixes paint during Ada HHW collection event

Right: Kelly Bronnenberg helps unload waste paint from customers' vehicles

Far Right: Phillip Cravatt stacks cans of waste paint



TULSA

20th Annual Enviro Expo: Celebrating Earth Day in Tulsa, OKRA participated in the 20th Annual Enviro Expo on April 18, 2018 at Guthrie Green. The event is sponsored by the Friends of the M.E.T. (Metropolitan Environmental Trust) and provides an opportunity to Network with fellow "green" individuals and sustainably-minded businesses, non-profits and agencies. Approximately 2,500 people visit this lunchtime event. OKRA's exhibit was about closing the loop. Ellen Bussert spoke to Expo attendees about the manufacturers in Oklahoma that make recycled content products and the importance of purchasing products made with recycled materials. The M.E.T. is a member of OKRA.



OKRA's Ellen Bussert and Michael Patton

YUKON

Earth Day Recycling Collection Event and Rain Barrel Giveaway:

To celebrate Earth Day in Yukon, Stormwater Management Division gave away a rain barrel. Entries were collected during the City of Yukon Earth Day collection event on April 21st. Residents of Yukon brought their big trash items and recyclables to the collection site, and simply filled out an entry form to enter the drawing. Recyclables collected included tires, appliances, batteries, e-waste, metals, oils, anti-freeze and hydraulic oils. Most items were free to recycle, although some electronics/appliances required a small fee. The winner of the rain barrel was Victoria, who is pictured with her family and Yukon Stormwater Manager, Anna Waggoner.



SHAWNEE—Oklahoma Baptist University

OBU Partners with PepsiCo on Bottle and Can Recycling: In partnership with PepsiCo Recycling, OBU rolled out over 100 new recycling containers earlier this year. The new recycling containers include 34 outdoor and 59 indoor. They are about 5-feet tall and look like a giant Pepsi bottles. The containers accept both plastic bottles and aluminum cans for accessible recycling. OBU encourages all students, faculty and staff to deposit bottles and cans in the new bins to help make the OBU campus more sustainable.

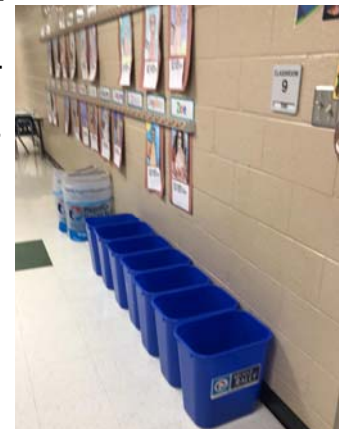


ENID

Glenwood Elementary School Promotes Recycling:

Glenwood Elementary in Enid is working diligently to promote recycling among students and their parents. The Glenwood Recycling program was set up by 2nd grade teacher, Hollee Terry, because she wanted to change the way that children view "trash." The school partners with Keepin' Enid Green, which provides free pickup of the recyclables and they participate in the PepsiCo Recycling program. The program allows students to actively participate in recycling. The students collect the recyclables and bring them to

the curb. Rain or shine, cold or hot, the students happily gather the materials. At the end of the day, this is the generation that can have a positive effect on our environment. By utilizing this program at such a young age, Ms. Terry prays that she is planting seeds of earth awareness and respect that will last lifetimes. She reports that the Glenwood Grizzlies have been amazing in facilitating and helping reach their recycling goals. As Ms. Terry always tells her students "We have to take care of this planet because there is no Planet B!"



OKLAHOMA CITY

OKC Curbside Recycling is Going Green: On June 1st, OKC will discontinue its "Little Blue" curbside recycling program in preparation for new large Green cart recycling program. Recycling services will be suspended through the month of June to allow OKC to acquire new automated side-arm trucks for the recycling pick up, and then the new curbside service will start in early July. The new Green carts are 5x larger than the Little Blue bins and have wheels and a lid. The new large cart will make it easier for residents to recycle, will save landfill space by diverting more materials for recycling, and will reduce litter (due to the lids). OKC is also adding 7200 new customers to their curbside recycling program. Details about the program are available at www.okc.gov/recycle.

Oklahoma Recycling Conference will be in September this Year!

The 2018 Oklahoma Recycling Conference will be Thursday, September 20th at the ConocoPhillips Alumni Center on the Oklahoma State University campus in Stillwater.

The full-day conference and expo, hosted by the Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA), offers networking opportunities, educational sessions, exhibits, tours and workshops.

**Save the
Date!
Sept. 20, 2018**

This year, the focus will be on using education and marketing techniques to help Oklahomans recycle right. For instance the luncheon speaker, Tom Mills



The OSU Stillwater campus is a welcoming setting in a central location



Participants listen to a panel at the 2017 conference

with Greenshortz Media, produces short videos about easy ways to recycle and will share ways to create and customize those for a targeted audience.

In lieu of an Expert Panel in the afternoon, there will be Expert Roundtables for smaller group discussions on various recycling subjects. At the end of the day, participants may tour a local materials re-

covery facility or take a composting workshop. The Conference Planning Committee is working on the program, which they will make available soon at www.recycleok.org/events-activities.php.

Continental breakfast, buffet lunch, refreshment breaks and parking will all be covered with registration fees that range from \$50 to \$95 (discounted rates for OKRA members!). Online registration will be available in July. Stay in touch with OKRA in the meantime via the Announcement List or FaceBook: <https://www.recycleok.org/get-involved/>

OKRA is a volunteer-run, non-profit organization. Consider supporting the conference with a sponsorship of \$500 to \$3,000. Contact info@recycleok.org if you are interested in learning more about sponsor and exhibit opportunities.

Ilda Hershey, May 25, 2018

Arkansas Recycling Coalition Conference & Trade Show

The Arkansas Recycling Coalition announces their 2018 conference will be held in Eureka Springs October 8-10, 2018. The keynote speaker will be John Bradford, Global Manager of Waste Reduction, General Motors, Michigan. John recently retired in March 2017 after 39 years with GM and has some great stories to tell.

The ARC anticipates a full house this year, so they recommend you call the Best Western Inn of the Ozarks (479-253-9768) early to book your lodging if you wish to stay onsite. Request the ARC Conference Block when making reservations.

Conference registration forms will be available on the ARC website – www.recycleark.org in the coming weeks.

The China Crisis - Whose Crisis is It?

WASHINGTON DC, May 15, 2018 -- It is ours. Recycled materials and trash should look very different from each other, but for years they have been converging in the U.S. China has not been the creator of today's crisis in the industry - U.S. mills have been complaining for years - but China's recent embargo of U.S. recycling imports is shining a mirror on our recycling industry and providing a clear signal that we can no longer pretend diversion of waste into a recycling bin is recycling.

MRFs (Material Recovery Facilities) can produce quality materials out of both single stream and dual stream inputs, but not when 20+% of the input "recyclable" stream, in some cases, are not recyclables. The plants are not built to handle those specs, and slower, cleaner processing has not historically been rewarded with higher market prices. Now fast, dirty recycling is being punished with no markets. Rightly so. Clean material is a resource; dirty is not. Clean recyclables have been the minority for years.

The good news and bad news is that customer enthusiasm for recycling is strong. The public wants to recycle, but they express that enthusiasm by recycling materials that are not eligible. A combination of "wishful recycling" and insufficient enforcement of quality is proving very damaging to the industry - abysmal and volatile markets, a dirty product that is not a reliable "commodity", closed plants, and programs that are hurting economically.

The National Recycling Coalition, along with other major industry associations, is working aggressively in a new nationwide collaborative, to develop strategies to resolve some of these fundamental industry and market issues.

In the meantime, the National Recycling Coalition notes that it is important to remind your residential customers now that they should **ONLY** recycle the items on their **LOCAL** recyclables list. This is important for U.S. users of recycled materials, and the current China embargo makes this an opportune time for this reminder. When in Doubt - throw it in the trash!

We cannot continue to act and behave as if business as usual will offer a solution to today's issues. We must fundamentally shift how we speak to the public, how we collect and process our recyclables, and what our end markets accept and utilize to truly recycle. The NRC is working through collaboratives, its series of Market Development Workshops, and Quarterly Market Calls to take steps to turn recycling into an industry with a quality product, but we all need to work together to meet the challenge. It seems about time - or so the world is telling us.

Press Release from the National Recycling Coalition

If you would like more information about this topic, or NRC's Series of Recycling Markets Development Workshops, or NRC's Quarterly Market Calls, please call Marjorie Griek at 720/745-0966 or email marjie@nrcrecycles.org.



Have you seen local recycling heroes in action? Or have recycling events or info that you would like to share?

Send photos or a news

article to our OKRA newsletter editor (trudi.logan@us.af.mil) and we will try to include it in an upcoming edition of the OKRA news!

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***It's easy to get connected with OKRA!
Like us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/RecycleOK.org/***



OKRA Welcomes our New and Renewing Members for 2018!

Corporate Gold Partners



Corporate Silver Partners



Corporate Bronze Partners



Natural Evolution, Inc.



An Electronics Recycling Company

OGI-E



Corporate Basic Partners



Closed Loop Recycling



Government Partners

City of Ada
City of Midwest City
City of Moore
City of Norman
City of Tulsa
City of Yukon
Oklahoma Conservation Commission
Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality
Oklahoma State University – Facilities Mgmt
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town

Non-Profits

Ada Recycling Coalition
Ardmore Beautification Council
Arkansas Recycling Coalition (ARC)
Keep Oklahoma Beautiful
Pride in McAlester
Show Inc
Solid Waste Institute of NE Oklahoma
Steel Recycling Institute
The Metropolitan Environmental Trust
Tulsa Master Recyclers

Regular Members

Matt Albright
Kara Berst
Ellen Bussert
Matt Faulkner
Peter Grant
Ilda Hershey

Tracy Horst
Sara Ivey
Pat Ivey
Chris Knight
Trudi Logan
Natalie Mallory
Michael Patton
Robert Pickens
Carol Preston
Sharvara Rice-Johnson
Brett Scovill
Garmon Smith
Bob Stewart
Jade Urash
Katerina Vasquez
Larry Wright

Educators

Luann Waters

Student Members

Kristen Ball
Rebecca Dye
Emily Leupp
Sydney Mantzke
Sarah Matchett
Elise Rodman
Tara Sepulveda
Ashleigh Warren



HELP US GROW OKRA! Consider joining today!

To learn about membership levels and member benefits, such as discounts to OKRA events, see our membership section at www.recycleok.org.

To join or renew your membership: Go to www.recycleok.org and click on the recycling bin to access the online membership form. You can pay online via Check, PayPal, or credit card (follow the PayPal link and select "Pay by Credit Card" instead of PayPal).





ABOUT OUR MEMBERS... Ada Recycling Coalition

Each edition of the OKRA News highlights one of our members by asking them to answer a few basic questions. The spotlight this month is on the Ada Recycling Coalition (ARC). Answers provided by Garmon Smith, ARC Chair

What are your biggest recycling challenges?

At this time the biggest challenges involve trying to continue to update our curbside program. This is primarily due to the City of Ada continuing to do extensions on its ongoing solid waste/recycling contract with WCA without considering any revisions. Discussions with the City Manager some time ago informed him that we need to upgrade our curbside recycling containers to facilitate neater, cleaner materials and neighborhoods by reducing scattered wind-blown materials. Another challenge is what to do with old TVs and CRT monitors, as recyclers are now requiring payment to handle these, and they are now being disposed in the city landfill. This is not a good situation and I believe many in our community would pay to have these items recycled properly if a payment process was set up to do it. The city does provide continuous e-waste recycling, which is a great benefit to the community and has been well received.

Which material would you like to add to the recycling program?

We would like to see glass (likely mixed colors due to the handling required to have clean separated colors) and Number 5 (PP) plastic items added to the recycling program at this time. Glass recycling would not become part of the curbside program, as

it is a single stream process and glass would cause major handling programs at the curb. We would setup a container for glass at one or more of our drop-off locations, and hopefully have it handled by an outside recycling company.



There are many challenges with recycling. Why do you do it?

The Ada Recycling Coalition has been active for over 25 years, and we have been very successful in encouraging and working with our city management and the City Council to grow and maintain an active and strong program. The city management involved us in the initial discussions of contracting out the city solid waste handling program, and we were successful in having curbside recycling added to the program at no extra cost (at that time) to the citizens. Although it has met with some issues, it really encouraged us to keep moving forward to have the City of Ada develop the best community program in the state for a city its size. ARC has primarily become an instrument to help with education of our citizens and encouragement for the city management, and the program has been sustained through overall good income and increased manpower. We know that present economic conditions will continue to stress the ability to maintain the program, but quality city employees in the recycling program have always found a way to make things work well. Recycling has become part of the solid waste business, and will continue to provide both economic and environmental benefits for our citizens and our city.



OKRA OFFICERS

President: Traci Horst, Choctaw Nation

Vice-President: Chris Feeney
Keepin' Enid Green

Secretary: Sara Ivey, ODEQ

Treasurer: Robert Pickens
American Waste Control

OKRA Board/Council: www.recycleok.org/okra/about-us/

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Cost is \$75.00 per issue.
For more information contact Trudi Logan (trudi.logan@us.af.mil)

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