

THE OKRA NEWS

OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

October 2021

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: www.recycleok.org/get-involved



OKRA Online Conference *Keeping a Lid on Contamination*

September
22-23



The 2021 Oklahoma Recycling Conference, “*Keeping a Lid on Contamination*,” was held September 22nd and 23rd. Due to continued concerns about COVID-19, the conference was held virtually over Zoom.

Oklahoma Recycling Association Vice President Megan Waters welcomed participants to the conference. She encouraged them to get engaged, to ask questions and to participate in the online polling questions throughout the event.

OKRA Program Director, Ellen Bussert, provided information on OKRA Facebook Lives and Lunch & Learns.

Ellen said it was very easy to select the theme of this year’s conference because contamination is still such a big problem for the recycling industry. She thanked the OKRA Board, the Conference Committee and the OKRA Technical Council and gave a special shout out to this year’s conference sponsors and supporters.



Day one of the OKRA Annual Recycling Conference, *Keeping a Lid on Contamination* couldn’t help but spark excitement amongst the attendee’s with the

presentation “Avoid the Spark” delivered by Todd Ellis, Managing Director of Services & Solutions for Call2Recycle. Todd’s position focuses on raising awareness of battery product stewardship programs among industry stewards, stakeholder groups and sustainability experts. Todd’s expertise serves as a resource for battery legislation and other compliance issues integral to product stewardship.

Todd’s presentation provided attendees the opportunity to learn from Call2Recycle, a non-profit organization that has been in operation for nearly 30 years and is the nation’s largest

consumer battery stewardship and recycling program. Disposing of batteries safely is an important action that Call2Recycle facilitates by working tirelessly with over 200 collection partners across the state of Oklahoma to ensure that they are complying with state regulations. The key points for battery safety are in identifying dangers and mitigating risks, which is done by keeping batteries out of curbside recycling/trash bins, identifying lithium and damaged batteries, and creating safety solutions to protect people and property. The conference attendees were educated on the best practices for preventing battery fire dangers by utilizing education and outreach. Call2Recycle offers three different shipping options: mail-back box kits, bulk, and DDR (lithium-based batteries) mail-back bulk kits.

In Oklahoma Call2Recycle has facilitated proper disposal of over 970,000 pounds of batteries since the late 90’s, with 66% of Oklahomans living within 10 miles of a public collection site. With so many locations available in the state it is important to remember to never throw batteries in the trash or curbside bin. Batteries must be handled with special care when they are being disposed of, to prevent fires and to ensure safe working environments for all. Fires caused by improper battery disposal are real, as evidenced by the battery fire that took place at the Tulsa Recycle Transfer Facility earlier this year, which led to the suspension of MRF operations. The City of Tulsa’s recycling stream had to be diverted to incineration or possible disposal because of the battery fire. “This fire shows the importance of not tossing batteries and electronics into curbside recycling and waste carts at home,” said Robert Pickens, VP of Recycling from the Tulsa MRF, in the city’s announcement. “Throwing away a battery can seem harmless, but they are ticking time bombs in the recycling and waste world.” Call2Recycle makes it possible for Oklahomans to do their part to “Avoid the Spark.”



CURTAILING CONTAMINATION

The Curtailing Contamination panel was moderated by OKRA Board Member, Kara Berst, Undersecretary, Outreach and Services Chickasaw Nation. Panel members were Bret Scovill, Solid Waste Manager, City of Norman; Chris Knight, Solid Waste Director, City of Stillwater; Tracy Horst, Director of Environmental Compliance and Recycling, Choctaw Nation; and Bobby Schultz, Executive Director of The Metropolitan Environmental Trust (M.e.t.). Below is a synopsis of the panel discussion.

What type of recycling program do you have?

Panel members discussed their recycling programs, which ranged from curbside programs plus drop sites for the cities of Norman and Stillwater to the hub and spoke operation (2 facilities) of the Choctaw Nation and the 10 drop-off recycling depots run by The M.e.t. All panelists said their programs accepted traditional recyclables—cardboard, plastics (at least #1 and #2), paper, and aluminum cans. In addition, Stillwater's drop-off center accepts electronics, furniture and metals; the M.e.t. depots accept oil, batteries, and even eyeglasses; the Choctaw Nation accepts tires, tin, and Styrofoam; and Norman operates a full composting facility.

Do you accept recyclables in plastic bags?

Bret said Norman does not accept recyclables in plastic bags. He stressed that to expedite processing plastic bags need to be eliminated. Likewise, Chris said Stillwater does not accept plastic bags. He said they are a nuisance for MRFs and he advises residents to recycle bags at local Wal-Mart stores. Bobby Schultz said the M.e.t.'s drop off sites are open 24/7, and that many people drop off plastic bags full of recyclables, so they do accept them. Tracy said recyclables are easier to sort if not in bags, but that one of the Choctaw Nation facilities will accept them while the other will not.

Does your recycling program accept glass?

Bret said Norman accepts glass at drop centers, but not curbside. He stated that Oklahoma should have regional drop centers so smaller communities could participate in glass recycling. Chris said that Stillwater accepts glass both curbside and at the drop center, but said there are safety concerns with glass collection. Tracy said the Choctaw Nation does not accept glass, that breakage would be a safety concern with the manual sorting of the recyclables. Bobby said the M.e.t. does accept glass at its collection depots.

What are the top 2 or 3 contaminants in your program?

Chris and Bret said that plastic bags and yard waste were two of their primary contaminants for both Stillwater and Norman. Tracy said glass and plastics #3 through #7 topped the list for the Choctaw Nation. Bobby said food, Styrofoam,

and mattresses (or other furniture) were the main culprits for the M.e.t.

What are financial impacts your recycling program has experienced from contamination?

Brett said that currently there are no impacts to Norman's program because of the contract they have with Republic Services (Republic keeps the value of the collected recyclables). But, he said there could be an impact long term as contamination issues could result in higher contract costs upon renewal. Chris said that contamination has resulted in increased rates for recycling in the Stillwater. Bobby said Tulsa has to pay about \$40,000/year to haul away and handle contamination. Tracy said it costs not only to dispose of the contaminants, but it also takes extra time to sort the recyclables that are comingled with the contamination.

What are effective methods you have used to improve contamination in your program?

All panelists said education is key. Brett said it's easy to fall behind, particularly with the transient college population, so they continually talk to students about contamination, and are relentless about getting the message across. He said if Norman finds a recycling container with obvious contamination, they take it, but they also leave a note on the door to educate the customer and correct the issue. Bobby said the M.e.t. regularly uses social media to get the message out as well as full-time school educators providing programs on recycling. Tracy said the Choctaw Nation visits schools and has discussions and contests with the school kids to educate them on proper recycling. Chris said education comes first, but that enforcement plays a part in Stillwater's program. They audit the recycling carts and show the residents why certain items are not acceptable. The panelists discussed "wishful recycling" and why it is an issue that contributes to contamination.

If you had one message that you could use to reach your customers, what would it be?

Bret Scovill: **"Keep it simple, kitchen, laundry and bath!"**

Chris Knight: **"Educate yourself on your community's program!"**

Bobby Schultz: **"Don't be afraid to recycle. You'll be amazed how much you can do!"**

Tracy Horst: **"Recycling is important and it does make a difference!"**



MARKET UPDATE

Next up was the Market Update presented by Jim Marcinko, Director of Recycling Operations for Waste Management. Jim said the recycling markets are strong currently. He said there was a shift in recycling during the COVID pandemic, to more cardboard and more bottles/cans because of changes in consumer habits (due to increased staying at home).

Jim said that domestic mills are running strong now and prices are strong. He said that HDPE is at the highest price in history. He also said that mixed paper has had a major turnaround and is now doing great. And he feels like the market for mixed paper will stay high.

Jim said there are now more and more markets for PET and that there is huge demand for returned HDPE natural containers (like milk jugs). He said that there is a high demand for polypropylene (what many butter tub lids are made of) and that they are often recycled into plastic paint cans.

Jim said the recycling markets are driven by the world economy and currently there is a lot of construction, there is high demand and the outlook is optimistic. He said that prices have stabilized over the past few months and now remain fairly steady. Jim also said that transporting recyclables is getting to be a challenge. There is currently a shortage of truck drivers and freight rates have increased sharply.

Jim said that much production is returning to the U.S., and we have many new mills opening in the country. Overall the market is very strong and is projected to remain that way.

“PRECYCLING” with Michael Patton

Next up was an entertaining video featuring Michael Patton at Reasor’s grocery store demonstrating how to shop right by “precycling”. Michael said every dollar we spend can be a vote for something, so why not vote for the environment. To start off, Michael visited the **Bulk Aisle** (for nuts, grains, etc.). Michael loves the bulk aisle, because you can buy just the size you need with minimal waste. Other areas that Michael visited in the store along with his tips for each section were:

Bread: Some breads are baked with sustainable energy, which will be noted on the packaging. Michael suggested buying local as many breads are baked in Oklahoma.

Orange Juice and Milk: Comes in a carton or jug, and OJ also comes frozen. Avoid the carton, almost totally un-recyclable. Frozen results in less waste, and the jug can be reused or recycled.



Michael also said to note the plastic code on the jug or on any other plastic container. Plastics #1 and #2 are more recyclable in the U.S. Buy #1 and #2s if you can! If you can’t, then purchase large containers rather than multiple small containers of plastics #3 thru #7.

Eggs: Packaging matters. Styrofoam is bad for the environment and hard to recycle. It can be reused (Michael uses as starter container for seeds). Paperboard cartons are better for the environment.

Cereal: Cereal companies support recycling. They use 100% recyclable materials to make their boxes. This is a good recycling success story!



Cleaners: Buy products in concentrate form, so you get more with less packaging.

Paper Towels: Look at the number of paper towels per roll, and total square inches of towels and try to buy ones that are made with recyclable content. Hint: Brawny paper towels are made with recyclable content, while Bounty is made with virgin materials (not usually noted on the label).

Bottled Water: High cost and lots of waste. Buy a filter for tap water. If you have to purchase bottled water, buy a large container rather than small or buy a thicker bottle you can reuse. Also consider buying local (Dasani or Aquafina).

Cookies: Packaging is crazy! Apparently consumers hate broken cookies. Buy ones with minimal packaging.

Beverage Bottles: Glass is very recyclable, although its weight makes it difficult to ship. Aluminum is very recyclable also. Either is a decent choice as long as you recycle them.

Steel/Tin Cans: One of the most recyclable materials.

Condiments: Many are plastic #1 that are easy to recycle. Look for the number and buy #1 and #2 whenever possible.

Paper Plates: Paper is best. Next is plastic. Avoid the Styrofoam, as it is the worst for the environment.

Greeting Cards: Look for the ones with recycled paper.

Produce/Fruit: Buy unpackaged. Buy whole if possible (not cut up) to avoid package waste and save money.



And what to carry your groceries in? Michael suggests using your own reusable bag. If you can’t do that, at least re-use paper/plastic grocery sacks to pick up dog waste or as liners for small trash cans.

SOCIAL HOUR

At the end of conference day one, Fenton Rood led a lively discussion during the social hour. Participants introduced themselves, several of us modeling the latest in OKRA fashion (t-shirts and socks). Then we had an open discussion on topics of interest to participants. We discussed the current hot topic of PFAS (Perfluorinated alkylated substances) and whether they would have impacts on recycling operations, as well as the recent Advanced Plastics Bill (SB488) that recently passed the State Senate. We also discussed the statewide issue of how we keep batteries out of recycling streams and trash, and discussed all the loss (equipment/vehicles/facilities) that has occurred due to fires.

Fenton wrapped up the social hour by saying that as humans we need to emulate nature, where one animal's waste is another animal's food. We definitely need to do a better job at reducing, reusing and recycling and stop with all the wasting!

OKRA MATERIALS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Megan Waters, OKRA Vice President, welcomed participants to Day Two of the conference and introduced Zach Benedict, Chair of the OKRA Materials Exchange Program. Zach described the RENEW (Resource Exchange Network for Eliminating Waste) program, which is now in all of EPA Region 6. Since 1989, RENEW has facilitated over 499 material exchanges resulting in over 1 billion pounds of material for reuse/recycle, which allowed companies to save over \$27 million in disposal costs. Zach encouraged participants to check out the RENEW website when we have excess materials, and whenever we need materials that may be available on the site.



FEET ON THE STREET

Our morning speaker was Vincent Leray, Grant Development Manager for The Recycling Partnership who spoke on the Feet on the Street Program. The programs' objective is to systematically approach curb side feedback to improve recycling quality and encourage behavior change. Leray started his presentation by first discussing one of the biggest issues within recycling programs; contamination, which is defined as the wrong materials in the system, or the right materials prepared the wrong way.

Contamination can be minimized by educating residents on what can and cannot be put in their curbside bins. According to Leray the use of imagery-focused info cards is the most effective way to correct unintentional recycling contamina-



tion. The Recycling Partnership has specific categories for measuring improvements in recycling quality, such as the set-out rate of homes placing their recycling out at their curb on any given collection day, the tagging and rejection rate and the type of contamination by category.

The Feet on the Street program methods have a proven success rates across many cities with most contamination rates dropping 50% and material capture rates increasing close to 30% from participating communities. When communities are educated about contamination prevention and programs and instill tracking methods to notate areas of improvement, we can all become better recyclers.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

GLASS

Josh Boyer, from Ripple Glass led the Glass Breakout session, which continues to be a hot topic across the country as curbside recycling programs continue to drop acceptance of this material. Boyer shared hard truths about the lack of incentives for haulers to collect glass given that it is not a big money maker, and often has high levels of contamination from mirrors and tempered glass bringing the value down. Participants asked about ways to motivate their community stakeholders to find alternative ways to collect glass that larger hauling services no longer want. Boyer shared incentives into financial gains that are often overlooked, such as saving in tipping fees that haulers pay when taking glass to landfills versus having it recycled. Participants addressed the issue that many rural communities in Oklahoma do not have the same glass recycling opportunities that larger communities have. Boyer suggested one way to give smaller populations a fair chance is to partner with adjacent communities and drop off glass at a central bunker. Ongoing education on the types of glass that should be kept out of the bunkers would provide a cleaner stream that would add value.

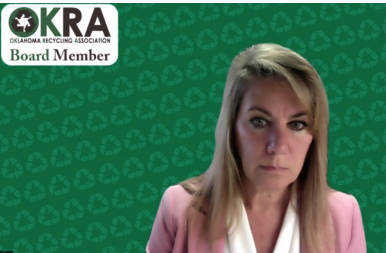
By building a central glass recycling bunker, surrounding communities can drop off their glass and companies like Ripple Glass could collect it once the minimum 25 tons is reached. Oklahoma is home to three glass manufacturing plants. But without a location to process the glass, turn it into cullet and make new material from it, the ability to keep glass in the state is not yet possible. The cost to collect and transport the glass out of state will continue to require a larger supply to make the collection financially beneficial for the haulers. With many Oklahoman's continuing to express their desire to recycle glass, it may be time to turn attention to partnering with our state neighbors in Kansas where Ripple Glass takes their glass to be processed.

ANTI-CONTAMINATION KITS

The Anti-Contamination Kits breakout session was led by Vincent Leray, Grant Development Manager for the Recycling Partnership. Leray has worked with a wide range of community stakeholders to grow and strengthen their recycling programs through dedicated technical assistance and grant development. Leray shared with participants about how to message around contamination specifically regarding community recycling program outreach efforts. The theme of trust and communication resonated with participants as Leray discussed the importance of trusting your program and asking community members directly what resonates with them when they think about recycling. Education stood at the forefront for minimizing contamination during the breakout session. Participants also discussed with Leray different forms of communication, and he recommended catering messages to individual residents along with incentives for recycling participation. Leray said the methods of involving the community directly and continued education work together to create a cleaner stream of recycling.

RECYCLING 101

Facilitator Tracy Horst led off an interactive discussion where participants aspects of their community recycling programs. Tracy said the Choctaw Nation offers a variety of recycling programs. In addition to the traditional recyclables, they have done a Toys4Tots toy recycling program, which helped 400 kids have a Christmas. They also collect/reuse drugs and ammunition through the Tribal Police and recycle old towels



OKRA Board member, Jeanette Nance, attends the 2021 conference

and blankets through animal shelters. Megan Waters provided info about Keep McAlester Beautiful's recycling program, saying they collect plastics #1 and #2, cans and cardboard. Jeanette Nance from Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) talked

about KOB's Lend a Bin program. Participants discussed the Chickasaw Nation's recycling facility in Ada, as well as their drop-off bins for Styrofoam recycling. They also have a fun program where they catch people "Green-Handed" and put their pictures on plasma screens to recognize their efforts. Norman does traditional recyclables, with drop-off collection for glass, and they are getting a Styrofoam densifier. All in all, the Recycling 101 breakout was a good forum for sharing ideas about recycling.

CHALLENGES OF COMMERCIAL RECYCLING

This breakout session was led by Dr. Lisa Skumatz. She spoke on the challenges and the benefits of commercial recycling.

She said that commercial recycling provides big bang for the buck and that it creates jobs. But, she said collecting trash and recycling from businesses will always cost more because of the need for two separate trucks. Skumatz gave some options to help communities move into commercial recycling, such as requiring that Construction and Demolition (C&D) recycling containers be provided at construction sites any time a trash container is provided or requiring a permit deposit and if they recycle, they get their deposit back or requiring business with liquor licenses to recycle certain containers or face non-renewal of their license. Skumatz also said Pay as You Throw (PAYT) programs for commercial trash is very effective at solving the cost barrier to recycling as companies can save on trash costs if they recycle.

Dr. Skumatz said that now is a good time to be looking into commercial recycling, even if you don't start the program until the commercial climate improves (still down from COVID pandemic). She said in the end it is usually worth it! Large percent of your communities recycling program will come from commercial recycling, lots of tonnage which will help your community reach its recycling goals.

BEST STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING CONTAMINATION

This year's Keynote Speaker was Dr. Lisa Skumatz, President-Principal of Skumatz Economic Research Associates (SERA). Lisa has spoken at more than 100 conferences, and keynoted at conferences in both the US and internationally. She is on the board of Recycle Colorado and is Chair of the Board for the National Recycling Coalition (NRC). Lisa has won two nationwide lifetime achievement awards for her work in Solid Waste. During her presentation Lisa emphasized three core questions that every community program should seek to answer when it comes to battling contamination. The core questions were: What can be done to get cleaner materials? What makes sense to recycle? And, is there a sustainable recycling structure? Contamination is an across-the-board hot topic in the recycling industry and Skumatz studies show that a mix of multiple strategies must be applied; starting at the curb, education and Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) incentives. These strategies all work together to produce cleaner recycling streams. The decision on what to collect is crucially based on the type of processing equipment because when it comes to smaller collection MRF's the feasibility of purchasing high-end sorting machines may not be possible, so instead a dual stream recycling program may lead to lower contamination rates. It is also important to note that not all materials that can be recycled are created equal, some may yield a higher processing cost than the revenue recycling those materials generates. When recycling programs begin spending more to process their materials than they make from the sell for the material it can make maintaining the program very

difficult. Skumatz concluded with discussing the third core question she proposed in earlier slides. Deciding whether your community has a sustainable recycling structure in place and the evidence necessary to answer that question?

The eagerness to have a recycling program must be accompanied by a program structure that is sustainable. Community members alone face limitations regarding policy changes that are necessary to further the longevity of recycling as a business. When programs have too much contamination it lowers the overall value of the materials collected, making it cost restrictive to keep collections going. Skumatz’s method for improving the longevity of recycling programs requires community members call upon stakeholders to advocate for change at the state and national level. Policy change is the realest way to improve the business of recycling. Requiring specific certifications and education for MRF’s and residents would help to lower collection contamination, processing cost and combat the changing market demands by providing a cleaner stream of recycling yielding more valuable materials to be made into new products. The MRF’s who are not governed by Boards of Trade, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) or carbon tax prevents them from being required to meet criteria, and moving forward policy changes would solve this problem.

Along with Skumatz, the attendees also heard from Ms. Ann Vander Vliet, Resarch Analyst/Consultant for SERA, who has conducted community outreach for recycling programs and participated in social marketing research projects and accessing recycling program participation. The expertise of both Skumatz and Vliet on the topics of addressing contamination, and strategies for improving the business of recycling made an impact on many OKRA conference attendees that wish to begin or improve recycling programs in their communities.

After the keynote, OKRA Vice President Megan Waters thanked Kara Berst and the Chickasaw Nation Dept. of Commerce (particularly Jared Presley) for the graphic design work they provided for the conference. She thanked the ODEQ for providing funding for OKRA events and website. She thanked the conference committee and gave a special shout out to all the conference sponsors and supporters.

The 2021 conference is a wrap! We believe most participants left the conference encouraged, inspired and better-equipped to improve Oklahoma’s recycling programs.

OKRA thanks the following contributors to this article:
Shavara Johnson & Trudi Logan

Thanks to our conference sponsors and supporters



CITY OF

Tulsa

A New Kind of Energy.























Natural Evolution, Inc.

An Electronics Recycling Company





Give Your Jack-O'-Lantern a New Life! Compost It at The M.e.t. in November



The Metropolitan Environmental Trust and Full Sun Composting are partnering for the fourth Annual Great Pumpkin Rescue to bring awareness to the issue of food waste by accepting holiday pumpkins at six M.e.t. Recycling Centers and the Owasso Recycling Center.

Residents can drop off their holiday gourds, squash, and pumpkins at any of these seven locations free of charge during the month of November. Please remove all decorations, such as candles, plastics, or stickers.

It would be scary to put your pumpkin in the trash. Much like recycling, composting turns food waste into something new – organic fertilizer! Lower your food waste this holiday season by turning your pumpkins into compost.

Participating locations accepting pumpkins include: Broken Arrow (302 N Elm Pl), Coweta (14762 S 289th East Ave), Sand Springs (105 E Morrow Rd), Owasso (499 S Main St), Central Tulsa (3495 S Sheridan Rd), East Tulsa (2160 S. Garnett Rd), and Bixby (211 N. Cabaniss Ave).

Drop-off Styrofoam Recycling in Norman

Churches Caring for Creation (CC4C), a mission-based environmental organization in Norman, Oklahoma, currently operates two “Styro-Stations” located at local churches in Norman and are open to the public for dropping off foam recycling. Materials accepted at the drop-off locations include foam cups, plates, clamshell take-out containers, meat trays, egg cartons, as well as coolers. CC4C received a \$23,000 grant from the Foodservice Packaging Institute’s Foam Recycling Coalition (FRC) to add a foam densifier to its current operations. With this new equipment, CC4C can expand its operations from two drop offs to providing collection events for an additional five neighboring towns, providing access to foam recycling to approximately 90,000 more households. CC4C is the 20th grant recipient to receive FRC funding since 2015. Over 4 million additional residents in the U.S. and Canada can recycle foam as a result of FRC grants. Visit www.RecycleFoam.org to learn about foam recycling, read about previous recipients, or apply for a grant.



Keep Oklahoma Beautiful Announces Finalists for their Environmental Excellence Celebration



September 14, 2021, Oklahoma City, OK - Oklahoma residents with a passion for their communities will attend and/or be honored as a finalist at, Keep Oklahoma Beautiful's 31st Annual Environmental Excellence Celebration to be held in person and virtually on Friday, November 19th, 2021.

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB), a statewide nonprofit recognizes Oklahomans doing their part to help preserve the beauty and sustainability of our great state. This year, over 35 individuals, communities, businesses, municipalities, state agencies and more from across the state will be recognized for their work accomplishing our mission in beautification/sustainability during the past year.

Each year, KOB hosts the Environmental Excellence Celebration, where the public nominates groups and individuals for their efforts to benefit Oklahoma's environment. The nominations are presented to a panel of guest judges from the community, who determine finalists in various categories.

"Here at Keep Oklahoma Beautiful we are about communities, not profit," said Jeanette Nance, Executive Director of Keep Oklahoma Beautiful. "When disconnected people come together as a community with a cause, we change the face of Oklahoma. I absolutely love this event where we can honor so many deserving individuals and groups for the good, they do across our state."

Finalists for the Environmental Excellence Competition showed exceptional work in the following areas: education, conservation, beautification, sustainability practices, nonprofit efforts, youth leadership, litter prevention, and more. The environmental heroes and category finalists for this year's celebration can be found [here](#).

Winners will be announced the night of banquet. Purchase your ticket(s) online at www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com. Keep Oklahoma Beautiful is a statewide nonprofit with a mission to empower Oklahoma citizens to preserve and enhance the state's natural beauty and ensure a healthy, sustainable environment.

OCTOBER 23, 2021



Broken Arrow held a Trash Bash and Recycling Rally on October 23rd. They partnered with Keep Broken Arrow Beautiful (KBAB) and the Tulsa M.e.t. KBAB held clean-ups at many of the city's main streets, parks, creeks and trails and the M.e.t. provided drive-thru recycling at the Broken Arrow Events park. They collected tires, electronics, cardboard, batteries and had 311 visitors at the Events Park! They would like to thank their amazing volunteers from Union JROTC and Broken Arrow AFJROTC for their help with the event.

Great Job Broken Arrow!

Diversion & Disposal

Mark Your Calendar
March 29, 30, 31, 2022

**SWANA
Oklahoma Indian Nations Chapter
2022 Annual Conference
and
Golf Tournament**

The Sheraton at the Reed Conf. Center
**5800 Will Rogers Rd.
Midwest City, OK 73110**



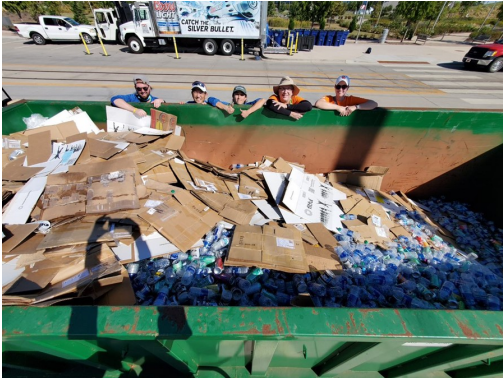
RECYCLING AND REMEMBERING

Running a marathon is not for everyone, but here in Oklahoma City, there is a place for everyone to remember the 168 people who lost their lives on April 19, 1995.

Each April, the spirit of Oklahoma City comes alive at the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon (OKCMM) where the energy is like none other... and the Marathon team pulled off an amazing (and safe) race weekend this October 2021, despite the obstacles of COVID-19.

The city was excited to run together again!

For many years, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has partnered with OKCMM to recycle at the event. This year was no different. Eighteen DEQ employees and others volunteered their



weekend, got dirty, and **collected 1,020 pounds of recyclables!** That's 1,020 pounds diverted from the landfill!



Recyclables included plastic bottles, cans, and cardboard. Heat-sheet blankets were also collected and recycled separately.

DEQ could not have accomplished these efforts without the help of the marathon coordinators, OEMA, Batliner Recycling, the volunteers, and the runners.

Want to join the fun at the next race?? Mark your calendars

for the weekend of **April 24, 2022** and email Amanda.Scofield@deq.ok.gov if you'd like to volunteer for the OKCMM Green Team to collect recyclables. If you'd like to run or volunteer in a different area, check out the Marathon's website at <https://okcmarathon.com/> and **let's marathon!**



by: Amanda Scofield

America Recycles Day is fast approaching!

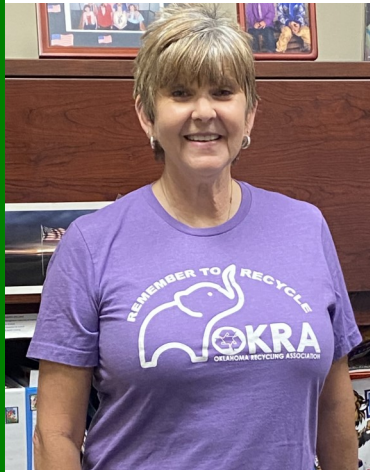
Submit photos and event articles after your event to OKRA to be featured in the Dec 2021 edition of the OKRA News!

Send articles/photos to OKRA News Editor, Trudi Logan, at trudi.logan@us.af.mil

Let's Highlight Recycling in Oklahoma!

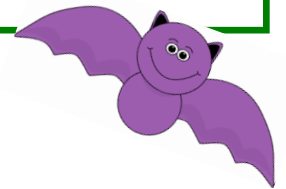


Get your OKRA on!



OKRA fanatics, Trudi Logan, Keima Borsuah and Ellen Bussert show off their OKRA "Remember to Recycle" and "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle T-shirts! The shirts are soft and thin and super affordable. It's a great way to show off our OKRA pride. If you are interested in purchasing a T-shirt, contact Ellen Bussert and if we get enough interest we will place another order.

Keep McAlester Beautiful is encouraging "spooks" to recycle their treat trash this Halloween by dropping candy wrappers in "Trick or Trash" boxes! A great idea to help keep candy wrappers out of landfills!



TRICK OR TRASH

We're participating in Trick Or Trash. Don't forget your wrappers!

#TrickOrTrash

**LIFE CHURCH
MCALESTER TRUNK
OR TREAT 6-8PM
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 30TH**



TRICK OR TRASH

Help keep your community's candy wrappers out of landfills this Halloween!

#TrickOrTrash

**TRUNK OR TREAT AT SAM WAMPLER'S
FREEDOM FORD FRIDAY 4-7 PM
RECYCLE YOUR CANDY WRAPPERS TOO!**