

THE OKRA OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION NEWS

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



					
REFUSE	REPAIR	REDUCE	REUSE	RECYCLE	RETHINK

RETHINKING RECYCLING

2022 OKRA CONFERENCE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
CHICKASAW RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

JOIN THE OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION'S (OKRA) ANNUAL CONFERENCE AS WE EXPLORE DIFFERENT WAYS TO LOOK AT RECYCLING OUTREACH AND PROGRAMS. HEAR FROM EXPERTS ABOUT CHANGING BEHAVIORS AND LEARN ABOUT RECYCLING EFFORTS IN OKLAHOMA.

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER GO TO: WWW.RECYCLEOK.ORG

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](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-oklahoma-recycling-conference-registration-360655268617)



RETHINK

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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SARA IVEY,

**EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COORDINATOR,
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY,
OKLAHOMA GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Sara Ivey is the Education Programs & Services Coordinator at the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). In that role, Sara does outreach and education throughout the state on a variety of environmental topics including solid waste. As part of her role at DEQ she also serves as the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Green Schools Program, and strives to help Oklahoma schools become "greener and healthier places to learn".

Sara is the current Treasurer of the Oklahoma Recycling Association and Education and Outreach Chair. She also serves as a board member for the Oklahoma Association for Environmental Education. Sara has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from the University of New Mexico.



Sara has been involved with OKRA for many years, but something you may not know about her is that her family has made travel a priority and they are hoping to see all 63 National Parks before her kids (ages 10 and 9) graduate high school. As a family they have already seen 24, and have two more on the list to see by the end of 2022.

Sara learned to recycle from her parents growing up in New Mexico. They would save their recyclables and drive them to a nearby town that had a drop-off program. So it was just part of life growing up. It wasn't until Sara was a student at the University of New Mexico that she learned more about the importance of recycling. After college, she moved to Mustang, Oklahoma and discovered that they did not have a recycling program and she helped get a drop-off program started in Mustang. All of those mornings spent outside in Oklahoma's crazy weather educating residents on what could and could not be recycled helped to fuel her passion for recycling in our state and she still tries to help as many people as she can learn how to recycle the right way.



OKLAHOMA
Environmental
Quality

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

Registration is limited 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.

Keynote Speaker Chuck Ralls, City Manager, Comanche, OK
"Creative Recycling"

Session Topics

- **Commodities market update**
- **Time for a Redesign (changing behavior)**
- **Zero Waste Events**
- **OKRA Glass Initiative**
- **Glass Recycling in Bars and Restaurants**
- **Funding Opportunities**
- **Expert Roundtable Discussions**

Exhibits | Door Prizes | Food & Beverage

Registration Fees

- **\$60 for members**
- **\$85 for non-members**
- **\$20 teacher, students & seniors 65+**
- **Fees include continental breakfast, refreshments, luncheon buffet**

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



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

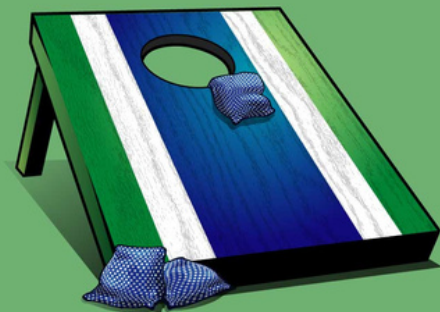
2022 Oklahoma Recycling Conference Schedule "Rethinking Recycling" as of 9-6-22 Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center, Sulphur, OK



TIME	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23	PRESENTERS
7:30 AM	Conference Registration, Continental Breakfast	Exhibitors in Great Room
8:30 AM	Welcome Welcome Address	Megan Waters, Keep McAlester Beautiful - Emcee Keima Borsuah, OKRA President
8:45 AM	Keynote Address - Creative Recycling	Chuck Ralls, City Manager, Comanche, Oklahoma
9:45 AM	Market Update	Tony Schaffer, Waste Management
10:15 AM	Time for a Redesign	Alec Cooley, Busch Systems
10:45 AM	Break	
11:00 AM	Zero Waste Events	Angela Cozby & Seth Lewis - OKC Arts Council
11:30 AM	OKRA Glass Initiative	Chris Knight, Chairman of OKRA Glass Work Group
12:00 PM	Glass Recycling in Bars and Restaurants	Sara Nichols, Resource Recycling Systems
12:30 PM	Lunch	
1:45 PM	Explanation of Breakouts for Roundtable Discussion	Megan Waters
	Round 1: Breakout Discussions	
	Backyard composting & food waste	Crystal Walker, OCASA
	Pre-cycling	Sara Ivey DEQ
	Glass manufacturing infrastructure	Chris Knight, OKRA Glass Workgroup Chair
	Rural recycling	Chuck Ralls, City of Comanche
	School recycling programs	Crystal Bennett Republic Services
	Talking to your local & state elected officials	Senator Susan Paddock
	Public Education and Marketing	Alec Cooley, Busch Systems
	Holding special HHW collection events	Garmon Smith, Ada Recycling Coalition
	E-waste	Amanda Scofield, DEQ
2:15 PM	Break and snacks with exhibitors	
2:30 PM	Round 2: Breakout Discussions	Same topics and hosts as Round 1
3:00 PM	The "Fun" of Funding	Patrick Riley, DEQ
3:30 PM	Closing Remarks - draw for prizes Poll for OKRA Lunch & Learn Topics	Keima Borsuah, OKRA President
3:45 PM	Adjourn Conference	

FREE NETWORKING EVENT AND CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT!

THURSDAY, SEPT. 22 - 6:30PM



Join us at the pavilion, the Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center. Hot dogs, light snacks and soft drinks will be served!

THE CITY OF BROKEN ARROW HELD ITS SECOND BIANNUAL TRASH BASH AND RECYCLING RALLY ON APRIL 9, 2022.

By Galea Albano

This two-part event focuses on litter removal around the city and provides a drive-through event for residents to drop off hard-to-recycle items like tires and e-waste. Through collaborative efforts and community engagement, event participants collected 100 tons of waste and residents dropped off 12.5 tons of items for recycling.

Trash Bash is Broken Arrow's litter cleanup event hosted by Keep Broken Arrow Beautiful (KBAB) as the organization's Great American Cleanup event sponsored by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful. The City of Broken Arrow partnered with KBAB to register cleanup volunteers and hand out supplies to team captains prior to the cleanup date. The City's Solid Waste and Recycling department worked with the Stormwater Engineering and Construction department to identify local creeks that needed litter removal and made these sites the focus for volunteers. This collaboration among groups increased volunteer participation and the total amount of litter cleaned up around the community. Adopt-a-Mile groups, Broken Arrow Young Professionals, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Vanguard Academy of Broken Arrow, Broken Arrow High School's Eco-Club, and more groups came out to beautify their community for Earth Month and made a significant impact.

More than 3 tons of trash were collected by volunteers, 30 tons were collected by the Broken Arrow Police Department in the Camino Villa community, and the Streets and Stormwater Department collected over 65 tons of trash during March and April.

The Recycling Rally portion of the day was held at the Broken Arrow Events Park and there were stations set up for locals to drop off items that are not collected in the curbside recycling program. Volunteers assisted guests by removing their items and placing them at the proper stations. More than 50 volunteers helped at the Events Park from groups such as Broken Arrow High School's AFJROTC, Life Church, Honor Society, and more.

The Metropolitan Environmental Trust (M.e.t.) helped organize the Recycling Rally and worked with the City's Trash Bash and Recycling Rally committee to offer various recycling opportunities that are often hard to come by. The following groups were on site to collect items: Stop Harm on Tulsa S, Broken Arrow Police Department, Tulsa Police Department, Wagoner Sheriff Department, and American Document Shredding. More than 300 people dropped off items and over 12.5 tons of material were recycled safely that day.

The success of the Trash Bash and Recycling Rally is due to the teamwork and joint effort put in by all organizations involved. Together, over 100 tons of waste was diverted out of our waterways and removed from our streets and homes. Events like this keep our community clean, safe, and beautiful. That is something we can all get behind! Mark your calendar for the next Broken Arrow Trash Bash and Recycling Rally on November 5 and keep an eye on www.RecycleBA.com for updates on how to get involved.





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WHY RECYCLING IS IMPORTANT TO TROUT FISHERMEN

By Scott Hood

I was recently invited to attend an OKRA board meeting to express my concerns about trash in our Oklahoma streams, rivers and lakes. I was whole heartedly accepted. After I explained to those attending in person and via Zoom what I was witnessing across Oklahoma, with supporting pictures, I think they all agreed we have serious challenge ahead of us. It's not just getting people to do more recycling, it's also about getting them to recycle instead on being a litter bug.

For me it all started in 2010 when the national organization of Trout Unlimited offered incentives to local chapters across America to host stream and river clean-ups in their local watersheds. Many of our Oklahoma TU members had noted a number of areas we could clean-up on the Lower Illinois River (LIR), below Lake Tenkiller, one of only two year around cold-water trout fisheries in Oklahoma. We took it seriously and collected a trailer load of trash from its banks. There was a competition held for the most unique item collected and we won that first year with a half-full jar of pickled peppers! Every year, since that first year, our chapter has completed twice a year clean-up campaigns. Now days, instead of it taking 3 to 4 hours to complete 2 miles of clean-up it only takes about 2 hours. It seems, there is a lot less or is it because there is less, there isn't more? (People may be less likely to leave a mess behind when there wasn't one in the first place.) We hope that to be the case.

More to the story. About 2 years into those clean-ups on the LIR, on a trip back from an LIR fishing trip we took a side trip to the Webbers Falls Lock and Dam on the Arkansas River. I was totally disgusted by what I witnessed there. So much trash and debris from humans that I formed a Facebook group called THE OKLAHOMA RIVER WARRIORS. Participants are asked to select some place in Oklahoma, that might be their favorite place to fish, hunt or hike and to keep it clean. Organize a group to help you clean-up on a select meeting date or to just take a trash bag with you next time and before you leave, make it cleaner than it was when you arrived. To not just haul out what you hauled in, but to haul out MORE than what you hauled in.



There's a problem. I can't tell, as an individual any way if it works like it appears to be doing on the LIR. However, I personally don't care. I can't care for each of those other special places, but I know that others are and that's what's important, they care.

Enough background. To the subject ... "why is recycling important to a trout fisherman", or to any angler for that matter? For me and for many like-minded people, I think it's about the mentality of becoming a "recycler". The more we can get people to understand the purpose of and the action of recycling the more appt that person is to not be a litterer when they are out and about. It's all about changing attitudes and raising awareness of the importance of both. Odds are, at least in my opinion, a recycler won't be a litter bug and a non-litter bug is also likely to become a recycler. A not so vicious cycle if you ask me.

How do I and OKRA go about this? We work hard to change attitudes. We point out problem areas and we don't just sit on our hands doing nothing! We encourage recycling and we encourage people to clean up trash and litter where ever it is. We stop, stoop and bend to pick it up and take it to the dumpster and even take the minute or two extra it takes to separate the non-recyclable from the recyclables and place it where each belongs.

After attending that board meeting, I joined OKRA as an individual and I didn't have to hard sell the board members of the Oklahoma Chapter of Trout Unlimited to join either. We are all "like minded" and appreciate what OKRA does for all of Oklahoma.

Find OKLAHOMA RIVER WARRIORS group on Facebook and Oklahoma Trout Unlimited Chapter #420 at www.tu420.com

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

September 22

Nov 4



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



SIGNAGE ABOVE BINS IMPROVES RECYCLING



By Alec Cooley

When it comes to recycling and waste bins in public spaces most program managers are familiar with best practices like using color distinction and restrictive openings. A 2019 project by the University of Georgia (UGA) demonstrated another, less recognized practice: placing signage above the bin. This blog reviews the findings of the UGA project and other academic research showing how signage at or close to eye level provides a visual prompt that can improve recovery and reduce contamination by 20% or more.

To read the full article click on the link here:

<https://www.buschsystems.com/blog/advancing-recycling/signage-above-bins-improves-recycling/>

SECONDHAND SEPTEMBER

Second Hand September is a campaign to encourage people to buy only second hand items for 30 days in the month of September.

Since 2019, Second Hand September has inspired thousands of people to shop in a way that is kinder to people and planet.

By recirculating our clothes – buying, wearing and donating second hand – we can help to reduce the demand for new clothes, which in turn helps to reduce the damage to our planet.

Use the hashtags #SecondHandSeptember
#FoundInOxfam



WOODY GUTHRIE FESTIVAL 2022

By Amanda Scofield

Every year, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) coordinates recycling efforts at the annual Woody Guthrie Folk Festival in Okemah, OK. Despite the intense summer heat, this festival attracts music lovers from around the state and beyond to celebrate the life and legacy of Oklahoma's own Woody Guthrie.

This year, DEQ recruited 12 volunteers from within DEQ and the Oklahoma City community willing to fight the heat for an opportunity to participate in this effort. Volunteers worked a combined 160 hours over the course of 6 days. During that time, they collected 2,746 pounds of recyclable materials! Specifically, they collected 78 lbs of plastic, 138 lbs of aluminum, 990 lbs of cardboard, and 1,540 lbs of glass!

Interested in volunteering for the Woody Guthrie event next summer? Email Miranda.Vesy@deq.ok.gov for more information.



THANK YOU TO OKRA's 2022 RECYCLING CONFERENCE SPONSORS

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