

# 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](http://www.recycleok.org/get-involved)

## OKLAHOMA COMMUNITIES CELEBRATING EARTH DAY 2024



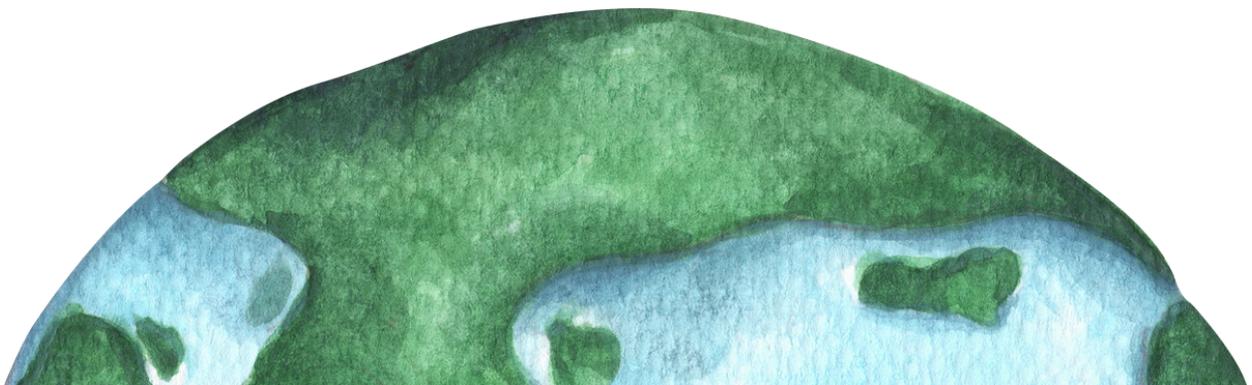
Midwest City  
Earth Day Event



Earth Day worm composting at  
Dove Science Academy Elementary



M.e.t take back event



# OKLAHOMA EARTH DAY EVENTS

OCASA participated in several Earth Day events, including OKC Beautiful's Earth Fest, Midwest City's Earth Day Festival and UCO's Earth Day Fair. OCASA highlighted the importance of composting and waste diversion, methods of composting, including interactive worm bins, and explored the importance of compost advocacy in Oklahoma.

We also celebrated International Compost Awareness Week, the first full week of May each year! OCASA, Fertile Ground, and OKRA hosted a series of educational community events across central Oklahoma leading up to OCASA's Compost Festival at Scissortail Park, as well as a social media awareness-building campaign.

ICAW events included:

- OKRA Lunch and Learn Virtual Tour of Norman's Compost Facility in Norman
- "Science of Compost" Sessions in Norman
- Vermicomposting class and Kiss the Ground screening at the downtown OKC Library
- Common Ground screening at Rodeo Cinema in OKC
- Social Hour at Sailor & The Dock in OKC
- Compost Festival at Scissortail Park in OKC

Check out @okcomposts for our social media campaign:

- It's ICAW! What does that mean?
  - Informational reel from OCASA board members
  - Why is composting so important, and how do you do it? (POVs from board members)
- Composting and Local Government
  - Proclamation reel - photos of mayors and legislators and their proclamations
    - The importance of individual action, advocacy and the support of local government - OKRA legislative advocacy and composting teams
- Commercial Composting
  - What materials can and cannot be composted commercially?
    - interview with Terry Craighead about compost socks
- Residential Composting
  - What can and cannot be composted residentially?
    - Ride along with the Fertile Ground truck
- Composting in Gardens
  - The importance of carbon in the composting process
    - A look at Commonwealth Urban Farm and Scissortail Park
- Zero Kitchen Waste Cooking
  - Cooking and composting demonstration with Chef Lisa Brewer's
- What did you learn this week?
  - Recap & resources for further learning

Save the date and stay tuned for next year's Earth Day events in April 2025 and ICAW events (May 4-10, 2025)!



**INTERNATIONAL  
COMPOST  
AWARENESS**  
MAY 5 - MAY 11  
*Week*



# EARTH DAY

By Ellie Howell

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) appeared at multiple Earth Day events this month! Volunteers from the DEQ Green Team represented the agency at the Cherokee Nation Earth Fest, the OKC Earth Fest, the Midwest City Earth Fest, and the Norman Earth Fest, promoting environmentally sustainable practices to members of the community.

DEQ's Green Team also encouraged environmental sustainability through trivia games with college students, faculty, and staff from the University of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma City University, and the University of Oklahoma at their respective Earth Day events. Additionally, a few volunteers from the Green Team visited Virginia Smith Elementary to teach kindergarteners about the importance of recycling and composting. Members of the DEQ Green Team were proud to have been an active part of these Earth Day events and are looking forward to these celebrations next year!



# OSU EARTH FEST

By Katie Beitz

Each year around Earth Day, we hold Oklahoma State University's Earth Fest, bringing together sustainability-focused student and faculty groups. The event features information about Energy Services, SGA sustainability initiatives, and various ongoing student projects. This year, we had around 500 students join us, where they received free plants, bamboo toothbrushes, and seed packets. Landscape Services and Energy Services engaged attendees with quizzes about our campus, offering plants and seeds as prizes.

A standout feature of this year's Earth Fest was a booth dedicated entirely to campus recycling. A senior capstone group put in significant effort to collect recycling data, including the locations of recycling bins, usage patterns among students, faculty, and staff, and awareness levels regarding what can and cannot be recycled.

At the booth, they handed out stickers, keychains made from recycled tires, and magnets illustrating acceptable recyclable items on campus. Special thanks to Landscape Services, Energy Services, the Office of Sustainability, SGA Sustainability groups, and the Environmental Sciences Capstone class: Macie Warner, Suhaila Nease, and Lucas Fenderson.

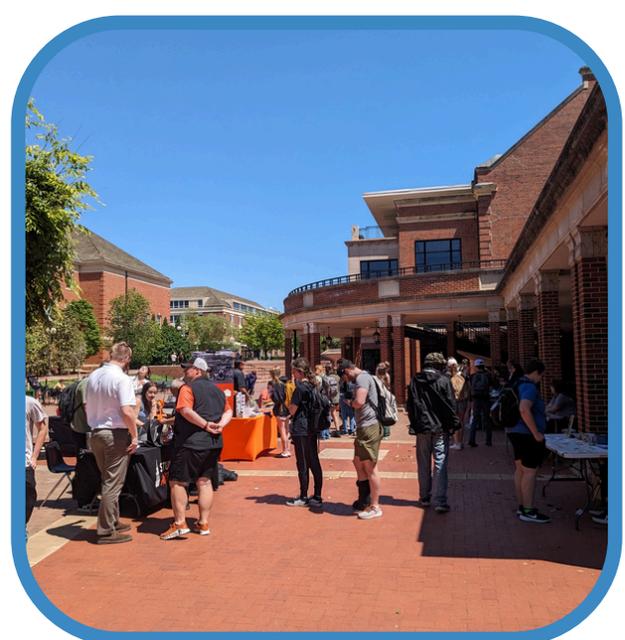


## FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

By Cat Ecker

The Festival of the Arts is cherished for many reasons, one being that it's the largest zero waste event in Oklahoma! The festival requires each vendor to provide compostable cups, plates, and utensils. The Go Green Team ensures each item is properly placed in the compost and recycling bins. A big thank you to Fertile Grounds for taking all the compost!

The Go Green Team also hosts a plant sale at the festival. Oklahoma native plants are donated by Native Plants Nursey in OKC. The diverse selection of perennials invites the community to learn more about Go Green's mission. All proceeds go back to the Go Green Team to ensure that each year the zero waste initiative is at the highest standards.



# 2024 OKC MEMORIAL MARATHON

The 2024 OKC Memorial Marathon celebrated its most sustainable year yet! Co-chairs Amanda Scofield and Cat Ecker led the Marathon's Green Team to success. With the help of 150 (wow!) dedicated volunteers, two full roll-off dumpsters of mixed recycling and an estimated 5,000 pounds of compost were diverted from the landfill!

Volunteers were hard at work as they sorted through contamination in the recycling and compost bins, prevented litter in Scissortail Park, gathered recyclables at the relay points and bananas for compost at Gorilla Hill. While sorting through trash isn't in everyone's day of fun, volunteers were proud to be a part of the Green Team's mission to create and encourage a sustainable difference in our community.

It doesn't end there! Volunteers gathered used Heatsheet blankets and plastic film wrap to be donated to Trex, a company that will turn the used items into a community park bench. Clothing items left behind from runners were gathered and donated to a resell clothing store. Lastly, the leftover food was donated to a local food pantry.

Race weekend is a team effort, and every bit helps! Whether you volunteered all weekend long, assisted someone in making a better choice of where to put their waste, or simply a bystander interested in learning more about Green Team, you were appreciated! More volunteers are needed every year as our goals for change grow bigger and bigger. Stay on the lookout for more recycling volunteer opportunities and hope to see you with Green Team next year at the 2025 Memorial Marathon.



# OKRA EARTH MONTH PHOTO CONTEST 1ST PLACE WINNERS!



**TRAVIS HINSHAW- RECYCLE**



**MELINDA BARKER-REUSE**



The OSU team presented a strategic framework about Oklahoma’s Solid Textile recycling at the LEAPS 2024 Textile Waste Conference, which was a virtual event that occurred on Thursday, April 25th. Their involvement that this is generated from OSU’s Textile and Apparel Science Laboratory (TASL).

TASL houses state-of-the-art technology and lab equipment that is utilized to test and research the physical and chemical properties of textiles, polymer materials and apparel to assess their serviceability. As a teaching and research-based laboratory, TASL investigates various topics from the fundamentals of garment quality to the advanced properties of polymers.

The Textiles and Apparel Science Laboratory educates and trains approximately 200 undergraduate and graduate students each academic year.

To learn more tap [here](#).



# OKRA MEMBERS ON THE MOVE!



**Board Meeting Dates**  
**July 19**  
**September 20**  
**December 6**



International Compost Awareness Week  
Lunch & Learn



Cherokee Nation Environmental Fair



Environmental Expo  
at Guthrie Green, Tulsa



State Capitol - Day of  
Advocacy



Okie Recycling Tour- City of Norman  
Compost Facility



Oklahoma Recycling Festival, Stillwater



2nd Annual Compost Festival,  
Scissortail Park



SWANA Conference



State Capitol

# GET INVOLVED WITH OKRA IN 2024 - 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 2024. 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 2024 or contact Ellen Bussert at [okra.secretary@gmail.com](mailto: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: Shavara Johnson) 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: Eric Pollard) 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: Fenton Rood) 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: Amanda Scofield): 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.

Product Stewardship (Chair: Cat Ecker): 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 opportunities to get involved go to [www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org) -Get Involved**



# UPCOMING EVENTS



**2024 OKRA**  
OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION  
**CONFERENCE**

Clean Future, Green Communities:  
Collaborating for Sustainable Solutions

Oct. 8-9  
Sequoyah State  
Park Lodge  
19808 Park 10, Hulbert, OK

Register online at  
[www.RecycleOK.org](http://www.RecycleOK.org)

The banner features the OKRA logo, a QR code, and a row of colorful houses at the bottom. The top right contains a green box with the event title and a row of icons representing recycling, sustainability, and community.

Show us how you recycle for the 4th of July!

Send in your pictures July 1-8th and tell us:

- \*What you recycled
- \*How much you recycled
- \*How you got everyone to participate in recycling

Send pictures in jpeg or png format to [info@recycleok.org](mailto:info@recycleok.org).

Pictures will be shared on the OKRA website and social media. Participants will be put in a drawing for a free registration to the Oct 9, 2024 OKRA Conference “Clean Future, Green Communities: Collaborating for Sustainable Solutions”



**STAY TUNED.**

*Photo*

**CONTEST**

4TH OF JULY

OKRA  
OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

The banner has a light blue background with a camera icon, a recycling bin, and fireworks. The text is in various fonts and colors, including red, blue, and black.



Small steps,  
big difference.

PLASTIC FREE JULY

Join millions of people worldwide  
choosing to refuse single-use plastic.  
[PlasticFreeJuly.org](http://PlasticFreeJuly.org)

2023  
JOIN THE CHALLENGE

The banner features an illustration of a diverse group of people holding reusable bags and a globe. The text is in green and black, with a circular logo at the bottom left.

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?

# THANKS TO OUR 2024 CORPORATE PARTNERS

## Platinum Corporate



We'll handle it from here.™



## Gold Corporate



## Silver Corporate



Natural Evolution, Inc.



An Electronics Recycling Company



BATLINER RECYCLING  
A Pioneer Industries International Co.



## Bronze Corporate



### **Basic**

Eco Wood Solutions  
Dowling's Haul Off Services LLC  
GFL Environmental  
Keepin' Enid Green  
NEwSolutions  
Rehrig Pacific  
SCL Recycling  
United Engines - Environmental

### **Government**

Association of Central Oklahoma  
Governments (ACOG)  
City of Broken Arrow  
City of Edmond  
Cherokee Nation  
Chickasaw Nation  
Otoe-Missouria Tribe  
City of Norman

### **Higher Education**

Oklahoma Cooperative Ext.  
OSU Facilities Management  
OSU Landscaping

### **Non Profit**

Ardmore Beautification Council  
Electric Synergy Foundation  
Keep McAlester Beautiful  
Keep Oklahoma Beautiful  
Land Legacy  
Oklahoma City Beautiful  
Oklahoma Compost and Sustainability  
Association (OCASA)  
Oklahoma Green Schools  
Sustainable Durant  
Tulsa Zoo  
University Lutheran Church Foam Recycling  
Program



### **Individual**

Galea Albano  
Matthew Aldrich  
Michael Barton  
Zach Benedict  
Susan Bergan  
Lisa Brewer  
Ellen Bussert  
Bill Cade  
Beverlee Caraway  
Wes Davis  
Susie Derichweiler  
Bobbi Dove  
Deena Frieling  
Douglas Hamilton  
Kaylee Harless  
April Hathcoat  
Kristina Higginbotham  
Tracy Horst  
Wayne Issacs  
Trudi Logan  
Amy Luznicky  
Brandon McLendon  
Jeanette Nance  
Conney Pattilo  
Michael Patton  
Robert Pickens  
Eric Pollard  
Jamie Saxon  
Jeanette Nance  
Shawn West  
Justin Wilson

### **Family**

Kara Berst Family  
Peter Grant Family  
Sara Ivey Family  
Chris Knight Family  
Bobby Schultz Family  
Amanda Scofield Family  
Megan Waters Family

### **Senior**

Herman Bohnhoff  
Ben Pollard  
Fenton Rood  
Bret Scovill  
Luann Waters

### **Student**

Alaska Doolin  
Jaden Jenkins  
Sayak Nandi

**To become an OKRA Member click [here](#)**