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Preserving the environment through integrated recovery and disposal.

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Solid Waste Authority Recognizes America Recycles Day

Thursday, November 15th marks the 21st annual America Recycles Day, a nationwide initiative dedicated to increasing awareness and showcasing the accomplishments of recycling. Each year, millions of people are encouraged to “Go Green” by reducing waste, increasing recycling, and purchasing recycled products.

Currently, Oneida and Herkimer Counties have an outstanding recycling rate of 54%, while recycling rates across the nation stand at approximately 34%. Residents and businesses in our region have made the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority’s (Authority) comprehensive solid waste management system and recycling program one of the most recognized programs in the country.

Since 1991, the Authority has recycled over 970,000 tons of material. The Authority continually monitors recycling markets to find long-term, secure markets for material. This allows the Authority to provide recycling opportunities for as many materials as possible. Expanding the list of recyclable items not only allows the Authority to recover items that would otherwise be landfilled, but also preserves valuable resources and conserves energy.

It is the Authority’s goal to be progressive and is currently constructing a new facility that will allow for the recovery of food scraps in order to divert them from the Regional Landfill and recover them for energy. This new **Food2Energy** program is simple and cost-effective and is set up to begin with food scrap collection from large waste generators such as businesses, restaurants and institutions. With **Food2Energy**, the Authority will be able to divert food waste, which makes up roughly 22% of the waste stream, from the Regional Landfill.

In order to promote recycling and waste disposal education, the Authority introduced a mobile web app, “[Am I Recyclable?](#)”. This app includes a “Quick Finder” which highlights the top items that are improperly recycled or disposed of. Users can search for hundreds of items to easily learn how to properly recycle or dispose of them. The app can be viewed by visiting www.AmIRecyclable.com or the Authority’s website www.ohswa.org.

The Authority continues to promote its Business Recycling Program which assists businesses, industries, and commercial establishments by providing information on starting and maintaining a recycling program as well as decreasing the volume of waste produced. Through a waste assessment/audit, the Authority evaluates current solid waste and recycling practices; identifies waste generation points; assesses individual work spaces and waste produced to document participation and recycling rates; and determines potential opportunities for increasing recyclable material recovery. This service is provided free of charge.

As part of the Business Recycling Program, the Authority also offers a voluntary RecycleOne Business Certification which recognizes businesses and industries for taking steps to reduce solid waste, increase recycling and save energy.

Additionally, the Authority continues its efforts to improve recycling in schools throughout our region and is dedicated to working with the schools in Oneida and Herkimer Counties to develop, support and maintain recycling programs in each school through a Go Green initiative. The Go Green School Recycling Program provides free educational tools,

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resources, promotional materials, technical information, recommendations, program training and recycling and waste evaluations to the schools.

Even with the region's impressive commitment to reduction and recycling, there are still items that must be landfilled. However, the Authority does capture energy from the landfilled waste through its Landfill Gas to Electricity Facility at its Regional Landfill in Ava. Through active gas collection, the system is designed to produce electricity from the methane generated from decomposing waste. Currently, the facility is producing enough renewable energy to power more than 3,300 homes per year. Over the next 15 years, the facility will be expanded to generate enough energy to provide the annual electrical needs for over 8,500 homes.

In recognition of America Recycles Day, the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority congratulates the region on their efforts and encourages everyone to take an active role in protecting our region through recycling, reuse, reduction and proper disposal of our waste stream. "Recycling has many benefits. It helps reduce pollution, preserves valuable natural resources, conserves landfill space and saves money," stated Emily Albright, Director of Recycling for the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority. For more information on recycling and other Authority programs, please visit www.ohswa.org or contact Emily Albright at (315) 733-1224 Ext. 1600.

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