

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 Local Schools for Keeping Plastic Film Out of Curbside Recycling Bins**

The Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority (Authority) sponsored its third annual Plastic Film Recycling Challenge for local schools in an effort to promote and educate youth and the community on proper recycling of plastic grocery bags and other plastic film, **which cannot be recycled through regular curbside recycling programs.**

In 2009, New York State's Plastic Bag Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Act went into effect. The law states that stores with 10,000 square feet or more of retail space and chains which operate five or more stores with greater than 5,000 square feet of retail space, and which provide plastic carry out bags to customers, are required to establish an in-store film plastic recycling program and ensure that collected film plastics are recycled.

"When residents place plastic film in their recycling bin, it contaminates acceptable recyclables and causes mechanical problems at the Recycling Center," stated Authority Recycling Educator Jamie Tuttle. "We encourage residents to utilize the plastic film recycling programs provided by retailers across the region," she continued.

Nineteen schools participated in the 2018 Plastic Film Recycling Challenge and had five weeks to collect plastic film for recycling. Participating schools partnered with local grocery/retail stores and delivered the plastic film directly to them for proper recycling. The initiative focused on collecting clean, dry, plastic film to keep it out of our region's landfill.

With the efforts of these schools combined, just under 6,000 pounds of plastic film was collected for recycling in 5 weeks – that is the equivalent of recycling almost 400,000 plastic grocery bags.

Below are the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place schools in each category.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Rome Catholic School** With 104 students, Rome Catholic School collected 375 pounds of plastic film for recycling. This equals 3.61 pounds per student.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Sauquoit Valley Elementary School** With 399 students, Sauquoit Valley Elementary School collected 843.3 pounds of plastic film for recycling. This equals 2.11 pounds per student.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Bradley Elementary School (New Hartford CSD)** With 467 students, Bradley Elementary School collected 674.7 pounds of plastic film for recycling. This equals 1.44 pounds per student.

The Authority would also like to commend E.R. Hughes Elementary School (New Hartford CSD) on their efforts in collecting 1.28 pounds of plastic film per student.

The Authority also thanks Boonville Elementary School, Camden Elementary School, Myles Elementary School, Poland CSD and Stokes Elementary School for their excellent participation.

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## MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL:

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Remsen Jr/Sr High School** With 176 students, Remsen Jr/Sr High School collected 404 pounds of plastic film for recycling. This equals 2.3 pounds per student.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Adirondack Middle School** With 288 students, Adirondack Middle School collected 538.9 pounds of plastic film for recycling. This equals 1.87 pounds per student.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Whitesboro Middle School** With 499 students, Whitesboro Middle School collected 219 pounds of plastic film for recycling. This equals 0.44 pounds per student.

The Authority would also like to thank Camden High School, Clinton Middle/High School, Jarvis Middle School, Madison-Oneida BOCES, New Hartford High School, Rome Free Academy and Strough Middle School for their excellent participation.

Rome Catholic School will be awarded presentations from the Utica "Zoomobile" and Remsen Jr/Sr High School will be awarded appearances from KISS FM DJs.

The following items **cannot be placed in your curbside recycling bin**, but can be recycled at participating grocery stores and other retailers:

- Grocery Bags
- Bread Bags
- Case Overwrap
- Dry Cleaning Bags
- Newspaper Sleeves
- Ice Bags
- Wood Pellet Bags
- Ziploc and other Reclosable Bags
- Produce Bags
- Bubble Wrap
- Salt Bags
- Cereal Bags

For a list of participating retailers near you, please visit [www.ohswa.org](http://www.ohswa.org).

If you are unable to deliver your plastic film for proper recycling, please place plastic film in your regular garbage for disposal.

For more information about the Authority's *Go Green School Recycling Program*, please contact Jamie Tuttle, Recycling Educator, at (315) 733-1224 ext. 2300 or via email at [jamiet@ohswa.org](mailto:jamiet@ohswa.org). For more information on recycling and waste disposal, visit [www.ohswa.org](http://www.ohswa.org). You may also ask questions and find information on the Authority's Facebook page (Oneida Herkimer Solid Waste Authority).

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PICTURES BELOW



*Photo 1 Adrienne Greer, third grade teacher at E.R. Hughes Elementary holds approximately 10 pounds of plastic film, or the equivalent of over 650 plastic grocery bags.*



*Photo 2 Adrienne Greer, third grade teacher at E.R. Hughes and Jason Stefanski, Principal at E.R.Hughes Elementary show off 215 pounds of plastic film collected by their school in the first few weeks of the challenge.*