

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WANTED: Mercury Thermostats and Thermometers

Covanta offers \$10 reward (Lowe's gift card) to residents who turn in mercury containing items at Aug. 15 drop-off event

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (August 3, 2016) — Mercury can be harmful to humans and wildlife if improperly handled. Keeping mercury thermometers and thermostats out of the trash or the sanitary sewers benefits the environment and people.

To prevent the potential hazards of mercury, OCRRA, [Covanta](#), the operator of the local Waste-to-Energy Facility, and [Thermostat Recycling Corporation](#) (TRC) are sponsoring a special mercury thermostat and thermometer take back day on Monday, Aug. 15, 2016!

Onondaga County residents are invited to bring mercury thermometers and thermostats to OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Transfer Station ([5808 Rock Cut Road, Jamesville](#)) from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 15.

This event is open to residents in Onondaga County. Attendees must complete a short drop-off certification form beforehand and bring it with them to the event. The form can be downloaded at OCRRA.org (www.ocrra.org/events/mercury-event/).

Covanta, TRC and OCRRA appreciate the outstanding efforts and vital role that residents play in the safe and proper removal of mercury from the waste stream.

What items contain mercury?

- **Thermometers** that contain mercury have a **silver**, **metallic grey** or **black filling** in their tubes. If the filling is red, blue, purple, green or any other color, it is not a mercury thermometer and is not eligible for drop off at this event. Unlike mercury thermometers, these can be thrown in the trash.

- **Thermostats** that contain mercury have levers or dials that you must physically move to change the temperature. If you remove the faceplate of your thermostat and see one or more glass capsules containing a silver substance, it is a mercury thermostat. Do not remove or break the capsules. If your thermostat is digital / programmable, it is not eligible for drop off; it can go in the trash.

As an added bonus for keeping harmful mercury objects from the waste stream, attendees will receive a \$10 gift card to Lowe's*. Residents bringing in mercury thermometers will also receive a replacement thermometer (mercury-free and digital). Both rewards are courtesy of Covanta.

In addition, Thermostat Recycling Corporation will buy 500 lbs. of carbon off-sets for every mercury thermostat returned. This will not only cover the environmental costs of driving a car to the event, but also covers a little extra to make sure the event recovers more carbon than it uses.

"We are pleased to team up with Covanta and OCRRA to help stimulate mercury thermostat collections in the state," said Ryan Kiscaden, TRC's Executive Director. "Events like this help create awareness of the importance of recycling mercury thermostats, while offering an easy solution to do so."

"According to the U.S. EPA, on average a mercury thermometer contains one gram of mercury. As for thermostats, the Thermostat Recycling Corporation notes one thermostat contains an average of three to four grams of mercury. This is equivalent to the amount of mercury in approximately 1,000 compact fluorescent bulbs," said Ann Fordock, OCRRA recycling specialist. "The volume of mercury in these thermometers and thermostats underscores why proper disposal through this program is so important."

"We are excited to partner with OCRRA and TRC to recognize the outstanding efforts of Onondaga County residents to remove mercury from the waste stream. It is our hope that the reward program will encourage more residents to participate," said Kathleen Carroll, Covanta Onondaga client-waste solutions manager.

Can't make the drop-off event? Mercury thermometers and thermostats are collected year-round at **OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Drop-Off Site. Residents dropping these items off will** receive a \$5 gift card as a reward*.

**One gift card per household, regardless of the number of mercury containing items that are dropped off.*

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About Thermostat Recycling Corporation: *The Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC) is a non-profit stewardship organization that facilitates and manages the collection and proper disposal of mercury-containing thermostats. Originally founded in 1998 by Honeywell, White-Rodgers and General Electric as a voluntary venture, TRC's program has been working with Onondaga County since 2011. Our collective goal is simple: keep mercury out of the waste stream in order to protect the environment.*

Today more than 3,600 businesses and communities in 48 states are enrolled in TRC's program. Since founding, TRC has collected over 2.1 million mercury-containing thermostats – that has kept 10 tons of mercury out of the waste stream. OCRRA has contributed 566 thermostats, diverting over 5 pounds of mercury from Onondaga County in just 4 years.

About OCRRA: *OCRRA is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation created by the New York State Legislature that has been serving Onondaga County, NY since 1990. OCRRA's comprehensive solid waste management and resource recovery system includes: a strong recycling and composting program, a foundation for local waste disposal at the Waste-to-Energy Facility, two convenient trash and recycling drop off sites, a robust education component and programs for hard to manage materials, such as household hazardous waste, batteries, fluorescent bulbs and other mercury-containing devices.*

OCRRA is not an arm of County Government, nor does it receive tax support for its award-winning programs. Fees users pay to deliver trash to OCRRA locations, as well as the sale of energy created at the self-powered Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville, NY generates the majority of OCRRA's revenue. For more information, visit www.OCRRA.org.

About Covanta Onondaga: *Covanta Onondaga operates the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Facility, which serves Onondaga County and the greater Syracuse region with sustainable waste disposal, processing approximately 990 tons of municipal solid waste per day into more than 39 megawatts of clean, renewable electricity. The facility also recycles approximately 12,000 tons of metal annually – enough to build 10,000 automobiles. For more information, visit covanta.com.*

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