

JANUARY 2022



RECYCLING MATTERS

FOR A WASTE-FREE COLLAR CITY

WHAT'S INSIDE OUR NEWSLETTER:

THE 12 R'S OF 2022

NEW NYS LAWS

COMMUNITY NEWS

**UPCOMING EVENTS
SCHEDULE**

12 R's of 2022

Happy New Year! We hope 2022 brings good health and happiness to you and your loved ones. As part of our New Year's Resolution, we will be breaking down 12 of the R's related to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. If you have an 'R' you'd like us to cover this year, email us at recycling@troyny.gov or call (518) 279-7313.

This issue we'll also tackle new NYS laws, textile recycling, and more!

Reduce

The words, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" are familiar to all of us. The word "reduce" comes first for a reason! Reducing is the first step - after we've reduced all we can, we move on to steps two and three - reuse and recycle.

Buying less items/products in your life, whether it's packaging, clothing, or single-use products, means less has the potential to reach the landfill. Some things, unfortunately, are not recyclable. This means some items and products are destined for the landfill, taking up space with little to no chance of breaking down over time. That being said, buying things isn't the end of the world! If you're looking to shop, try for quality pieces which will last a long time, or buy used! Either way will be a savings to you, whether short or long-term.



Pictured: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle in blue and red font with radiating lines.

Here are some suggestions for reducing:

- If you're looking for new wardrobe pieces, try second-hand stores for unique additions to your closet
- Look for packaging with recycled content, recyclable packaging, or package-free
- Use reusable bags when shopping (bonus points for reusable produce bags!)
- Cancel junk-email and mail subscriptions at optoutprescreen.com
- Carpool, walk, or bike when you can
- Buy used if possible
- Buy local
- Wash clothes in cold water
- Compost your food scraps

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Food Donation + Food Scrap Recycling Law

Starting January 1st, all large food-scrap generators are required to either donate edible uneaten food, or recycle their food scraps if within 25 miles of a facility. **A large waste generator is a business or institution which creates two tons of unused food, or food scraps, per week.** This includes colleges, grocery stores, restaurants, hotels, and others. This law does not apply to hospitals, K-12 schools, adult care facilities, nursing homes, or farms. To learn more, visit NYSDEC's website: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/114499.html>

Who it affects:



Colleges



Grocery stores



Restaurants



Hotels

Pictured: a college graduation cap with a yellow tassel, a grocery tote with produce inside, a fork and knife, and a concierge bell.

How donating or recycling food scraps helps us:

- Provides food for families in need
- Lowers garbage costs
- Creates compost, which builds healthy soil
- Prevents the gases from being trapped under other items in the landfill
- Shows our respect for the time, energy, and water used to grow our food

Polystyrene (Styrofoam) Ban

Polystyrene is the fancy, scientific name for styrofoam. Styrofoam is harmful, both to us and to Troy since it's made from chemicals. It also breaks down into tiny pieces which are difficult to clean up. Some facilities will recycle certain kinds of styrofoam, but there is no standard or curbside option for it, which means most of it ends up in the landfill.

Now that you've heard the "bad" news, here's the good news - styrofoam is now banned across New York State! This means those tiny little pieces won't become a problem in the first place. This includes all styrofoam products such as packing peanuts, styrofoam take-out containers, and more. This law is an important step in reducing the amount of disposable products which reach our landfills. Go New York State!



Pictured: a pile of white styrofoam packing peanuts.

For more information, visit the NYSDEC's website at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/120762.html>

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Community News

ekologic

25 years ago, the president, designer, and founder of ekologic, Kathleen Tesnakis, wanted to keep textiles out of the landfill.

Originally from Portland, Kathleen has continued her textile recycling mission here in Troy on the East Coast.

"I thought the one thing I could do and make an impact on was to recycle," Kathleen said.

After deciding to take action, Tesnakis discovered wool was one of the most commonly discarded fibers in our community. When wool became harder to source, her supplier recommended the next most commonly discarded fiber: cashmere.

"I just about dropped off my chair," Tesnakis said, laughing. "That's what my dream was."

Both cashmere and wool are amazing natural fibers. They can be worn between 7 to 11 times before needing to wash them. This is because cashmere and wool are **antimicrobial**, meaning it's much harder for bacteria and other things to grow in the fibers.



Pictured: a gray, long-sleeved crew-neck cashmere sweater with red and orange accents along the neckline and left side. Created by Kathleen Tesnakis.

At her supplier, located in New York City, she searches through thousands of garments, carefully choosing pieces which are the right quality and will last a long time.

After the garments are selected, Tesnakis carefully washes them all before breaking them up into categories. As she sorts, she asks "Is this garment better for clothing, does it need further manipulation? Is this garment appropriate for an accessory?"

Once the garments are categorized, they're taken apart and put back together as a new ekologic creation.



Pictured: ekologic's Farmer's Market display with several hats and pairs of gloves.

"We're trying to give people an alternative to fast fashion - to make products you can pass down in your family," Tesnakis said.

Fast fashion refers to clothing made of cheap, non-natural fibers and mass produced. These kinds of clothes are normally trendy, and don't stay in stores long since those trends are short-lived.

The EPA estimated 17 million tons of textiles, clothing being the majority, were generated in 2018. They also estimated only 2.5 million tons were recycled in some way.

The clothing at ekologic is meant to last a long time. It can be passed down for generations if taken care of properly. To learn more about ekologic, or to plan a visit, check out their website at www.ekologic.com.

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Troy's Textile Recycling Program

Have you seen these blue bins around Troy? They're part of our textile recycling program. We accept **clean and dry** clothing, belts, blankets, curtains and drapes, gloves, hats, hand bags, paired shoes, sheets, towels, sneakers and stuffed animals. All items must be clean and dry. Worn, ripped, stained or damaged items are also accepted. Your old clothing and other textiles can be repurposed in other ways, keeping it out of the landfill!

Please **do not** place trash, furniture, carpets, rugs, toys, foam stuffing, diapers, mattresses, glass, metal, aluminum, and food waste in these collection bins!



Pictured: A large, blue, metal, square bin for textile recycling. Has the words "Clothing Shoes Drop Box" on the side.

Drop-off locations:

- Fire Department Central Station – 2175 6th Avenue (rear alley)
- Fire Department Station #1 – 115th Street and 5th Avenue
- Fire Department Station #3 – 530 Campbell Avenue
- South Troy – Corner of Main Street and E. Industrial Parkway (Troy Resource Management Facility, formerly known as the Alamo)

Upcoming Events

COMMUNITY-BASED SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

RECYCLING AND RESOURCE MGMT. TEAM AT FARMER'S MARKET

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

FOOD SCRAPS DROP-OFFS - TROY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FACILITY

THURSDAYS, 9 TO 1

HOLIDAY LIGHT RECYCLING PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 15TH THROUGH JANUARY 15TH

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT TROY

CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION

NOW THROUGH JANUARY 31

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