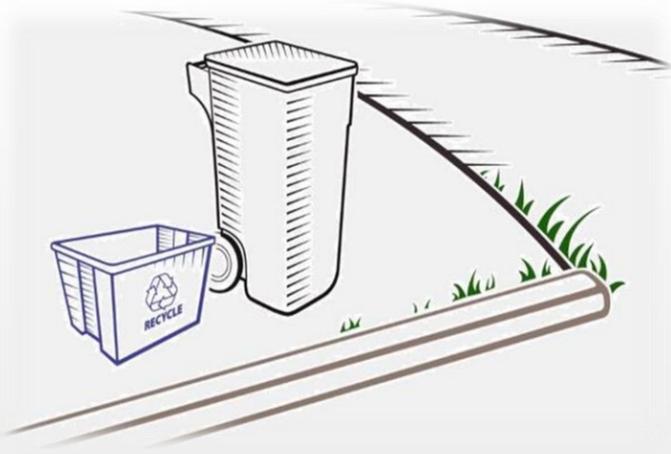


# Spotlight on Sustainability

March 2019

From your Ontario County Eco-Heroes



## Back to the Basics: Reduce Reuse Recycle

Here are some ideas and reminders about what we can do as individuals to keep up with the 3 R's and keep items out of the landfill:

1. Do a waste analysis of your own garbage to see what you are throwing away.
2. Then ask yourself...
  - a. Are there ways to keep that certain items out of your garbage can?
  - b. Where are the items coming from?
  - c. Can you avoid bringing these items home?
  - d. Are there other reusable products that could replace that these items?
3. Consider the alternatives. For example, buying in bulk can reduce packaging. Or other things like...
  - a. Use cloth and reusable bags when you shop to avoid plastic bags
  - b. For lunches, use reusable containers and silverware and try beeswax wrap in place of plastic wrap.
  - c. Buy food that comes in glass containers or recyclable containers - you can reuse these or recycle them instead of putting plastic packaging in garbage.
  - d. Avoid plastic water bottles by using stainless steel or glass containers.
  - e. Set up a compost system at home to keep food waste out of your garbage. And don't forget paper products like paper towels, paper napkins & coffee filters can be composted too!
4. Look to recycle or donate everything! Including clothing, batteries, light bulbs, plastic bags, furniture, etc. To find out where you can recycle or donate these types of items visit: [OntarioCountyRecycles.org](http://OntarioCountyRecycles.org)
5. Try shopping at consignment stores to reuse already made clothing rather than buy new. Sometimes it can also help save you money!

And don't forget! If you hear of a way to reduce, reuse or recycle or find a neat trick to avoid putting something in the trash, share it with your Eco-Heroes so we can pass the tip along!

## 2019 Collection Event Calendar

March 30<sup>th</sup> – E-Waste  
April 26<sup>th</sup> – Paper Shredding  
April 27<sup>th</sup> – Household Hazardous Waste  
September 21<sup>st</sup> – Household Hazardous Waste  
October 18<sup>th</sup> – Paper Shredding  
November 9<sup>th</sup> – Pumpkins

For event details check out:

<http://ontariocountyrecycles.org/150/Events>



## Bioplastics:

Thinking of purchasing bioplastics, also known as plant-based plastics, to green your lifestyle? Here is what you need to know...

As the production of plastics climbs past 8 trillion pounds consumers and manufacturers continue to look for alternative materials and bioplastics have taken the forefront, **but are they the solution?**

**What are bioplastics?** Bioplastics are plastics made from plant or biological material rather than petroleum. Common products made from bioplastics include bottles, utensils, and textiles.

### The argument for bioplastics:

- They reduce the carbon footprint of plastics production. Currently about 8% of the world's oil is used to make plastics.
- Since plants harbor less carbon than oil the amount of carbon released during degradation is much less.
- Plants are a renewable resource that can support a rural agrarian economy, while our oil supply is finite and only found in certain regions.

### The argument against bioplastics:

- Increased fertilizer and water use.
- More and more land is being diverted from food production for the production of bioplastic ingredients.

**How do you dispose of bioplastics?** The time it takes a bioplastic to break down is not much different than that of regular plastic. Therefore if these plastics make their way to marine environments, which most plastics do, they will still break down into micro-sized plastics as regular plastic do and persist for decades, posing a threat to marine life. However bioplastics can be composted, but only effectively in industrial composting sites, which reach the necessary heat to degrade bioplastics. With inadequate composting infrastructure and consumer know-how most bioplastics do not complete the intended lifecycle. Many environmentalists say the outcome of disposing of bioplastics is not much different from regular plastics and deem bioplastics an example of 'greenwashing' ...a coined phrase signifying when consumers are misled about how sustainable a product truly is.