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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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**“Go Green” for Halloween**

Halloween is upon us and it’s easier than ever to go green. According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), 175 million Americans will participate in Halloween activities this year, spending on average \$86.79, up from last year’s \$86.13 on costumes, decorations and candy. Total spending is expected to reach \$9.1 billion, the second highest in the history of NRF’s annual survey.

“The Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority offers tips to “green” your Halloween in order to benefit the environment and your wallet,” stated Jamie Tuttle, Authority Recycling Educator.

**Get creative with decorations.** Use natural Halloween decorations like gourds, pumpkins and corn stalks – they can be composted when you’re through with them! Turn recycled paper into window decorations like spiders, pumpkins or witch hats. Paint grocery bags Halloween white for ghostly effects or make a graveyard scene with paper tombstones and spooky trees. After Halloween, send your paper decorations on for recycling.

**Make your own costume.** Halloween wouldn’t be the same without a costume. Skip the racks of expensive, plastic costumes and come up with creative ideas for homemade costumes and win your costume contest! If you have no sewing skills or anything costume-worthy in your closet, check out secondhand stores or host a costume swap with friends.

**Collect your treats in reusable bags.** Instead of spending your money on plastic pumpkins and plastic Halloween bags, use old pillowcases or reusable shopping bags for trick-or-treating. You can even make them festive by decorating them to match your costume! **The Authority is providing FREE reusable bags for children at its EcoDrops Utica and Rome through October 31<sup>st</sup> during regular business hours.** Visit [www.ohswa.org](http://www.ohswa.org) for locations and hours of operation.

**Stay local and walk instead of drive.** Stick close to home this Halloween and walk to help reduce air pollution and fuel use. It’s also a great way to connect with the neighbors and get some exercise as well!

**Compost your pumpkins.** You can add pumpkins, gourds and corn stalks to your compost pile! If you do not compost at home, Halloween is a great time to start. If you live in a community where green yard waste is collected, place your pumpkins to the curb to be collected for composting.

“Waste reduction and recycling is the easiest way to help the environment. With a little creativity and mindfulness, we can make the holiday season less wasteful. Reducing the amount of waste we create will conserve our region’s landfill space, natural resources and energy,” continued Tuttle.

For more information on how to “green” your Halloween, please visit the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority’s Facebook page – “Oneida Herkimer Solid Waste Authority.” For solid waste and recycling questions or for more information on the Authority’s other programs, please visit [www.ohswa.org](http://www.ohswa.org) or call (315) 733-1224.

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