



# Athens-Hocking Recycling Centers, Inc.

(740) 594-5312 [www.athenshockingrecycle.org](http://www.athenshockingrecycle.org) 5991 Industrial Drive, Athens, OH 45701

**Crissa Cummings**  
**Executive Director**  
**(740) 594-5314**  
**[director@athenshockingrecycle.org](mailto:director@athenshockingrecycle.org)**

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## **Recycling totals for 2023 in Athens and Hocking Counties**

**Athens, OH:** In 2023, residents of Athens and Hocking Counties recycled 10,757,400 pounds of mixed recycling, 760,540 pounds of food waste, 18,120 pounds of e-waste, 201,080 pounds of scrap metal, and 104,300 pounds of miscellaneous recyclables at Athens Hocking Recycling (AHRC). In total, that is 11,841,440 pounds of waste diverted from the landfill.

The recycling AHRC collected was sold and turned into usable items such as plastic lawn furniture, compost used by area farms, cardboard boxes, and aluminum for manufacturing.

Last year, AHRC sent 28,051,582 pounds of waste to the landfill. According to the last EPA National Overview of Municipal Solid Waste Management report published in 2018, food is the largest component of landfilled waste, accounting for about 24%. Plastics accounted for over 18%, and paper products at around 12%. AHRC is committed to supporting residents in Athens and Hocking counties to divert even more waste from the landfill in 2024 and in years to come.

AHRC's recycling sorting facility's contamination rate of trash in the recycling is at 10% for 2023, a great deal under the national average of 18% - 20%. Some of the most common contaminants found at AHRC include plastic bags, which are recyclable at most grocery stores, clothing, which can be donated, and food scraps, which can be composted. AHRC is also unable to process black plastics and styrofoam at this time.

A significant percentage of the money needed to run the recycling sorting facility comes from the sale of the recycling we receive. Cardboard, compost, and aluminum cans are the most sought-after items that AHRC sells, followed by mixed paper and steel cans. The remaining funding is generated through fees charged to companies that bring materials to the recycling center and by curbside collection of recycling, compost, and refuse. AHRC is currently exploring other funding sources, such as asking for donations, fundraising events, and grants to further the non-profit's mission to collect and process recyclable materials in the greater southeast Ohio area in order to create a cleaner, safer, and better place to live.