

A Recycling-Based Society in Oki Town

Oki Town, Fukuoka Prefecture



Situation	Oki Town secures citizens' cooperation when proceeding with town planning and constructing a sustainable society, aiming not to leave the problem for the next generation. These efforts consist of two main projects. One is a biomass recycling facility called The Oki Recycling Center "Kururun", and the other is Oki Town Mottainai Declaration, the second in the country to make a zero-waste declaration
Action	The Oki Recycling Center, Kururun, is a biomass recycling facility that started operations in November 2006. It takes kitchen waste from the town's households and restaurants, along with septic tank sludge and raw sewage, and uses a methane fermentation process to turn it into a biogas that can be used for power generation. After the fermentation, the digestive fluids are used as liquid fertilizer. Furthermore, Oki Town was the second in the country to make a zero-waste declaration, which it officially announced in March 2008 with its Oki Town Mottainai Declaration.
Impact	Kururun is in roughly the central part of the town, along National Route 442, and one of its features is that it's side by side with a roadside station called "Michi no Eki Oki". This area has a shop that sells agricultural produce directly from farmers and a restaurant specializing in local production for local consumption, which are both thriving. And every year 3,000-4,000 observers from within Japan and overseas visit the site for research. Traditionally, residents dislike waste facilities, but this is the base of the recycling society, and has become the pride of the residents and has contributed greatly to the revitalization of the town. The project has brought about a variety of benefits for the town. For example, citizens' sense of participation in creating a community has heightened and the cost of waste disposal has been cut by 310 million yen in 11 years, which has alleviated financial burdens on the town. Under Oki Town's zero-waste declaration, they started separately collecting disposable diapers from households. In 2018, with the cooperation of neighbouring municipalities, business people, universities, and so on, YK Clean (Inc.), which owns a facility that produces oil from the primary separation of plastic containers, packaging, and other plastics, opened a plastics recycling facility, that unusually for Japan works with the cooperation of the local area.