

OREGON LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

Oregon's Bottle Bill

Oregon's Bottle Bill was introduced in 1971 as the very first bottle bill in the U.S. The bill was created to address a growing litter problem along Oregon beaches, highways and other public areas. Over the years, the bottle bill has become known as Oregon's most successful recycling program and has prompted several other green initiatives. Today, ten other states operate similar programs.

How It Works

Oregon retail stores pay the beverage distributor a 5-cent deposit for each container of bottled water (as of 1/1/09), beer and soft drinks they purchase.

Consumers then pay the 5-cent container deposit to the retailer when they make a purchase. When they are finished, consumers can return the containers to retail stores in Oregon to redeem their 5 cents.

Distributors pay retail stores the 5-cent redemption for each container returned to the distributor for recycling. Deposits on containers not returned for refund (unredeemed deposits) are kept by the distributors.

Beverage distributors or their contractors who collect containers from stores keep the income from the sale of recyclable material.

Bottle Bill Containers

The containers included in Oregon's Bottle Bill are water/flavored water (as of 1/1/09), beer/malt beverages, soda water/mineral water, and carbonated soft drinks. All redeemable containers are labeled with the OR 5-cent refund value on the label.

OLCC's Role

The state Legislature has given the OLCC authority to administer and enforce the bottle bill. The OLCC is dedicated to the success of the bottle bill by working with distributors, retailers and consumers to make sure they are complying with state laws.

Other state agencies also play a vital role. The Department of Agriculture has the authority to enforce the cleanliness of retailer recycling areas. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is responsible for collecting data associated with solid waste and container return rates. Visit DEQ's bottle bill Web site at: www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/bottlebill.

Although these state agencies oversee the bottle bill, the government does not receive any income, taxes or fees for services associated with this law.



The OLCC administers and enforces the bottle bill. The 2007 Legislature expanded the bottle bill by adding a 5-cent refund value to water and flavored water beverage containers, effective Jan. 1, 2009.

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The mission of the OLCC is to promote the public interest through the responsible sale and service of alcoholic beverages.

www.oregon.gov/OLCC

Benefits of the Bottle Bill

Reduced Litter - In 1971, litter control was a primary reason for initiating the bottle bill. Since then, the percentage of beverage containers among roadside litter has dropped from 40 percent to six percent.

Sustainability - The recycled containers are used to make hundreds of products including fleece jackets, carpeting, baseball bats, license plates, and insulation, as well as new beverage containers.

Conservation - Recycling a ton of plastic bottles saves approximately 3.8 barrels of oil. Recycling one pound of PET (polyethylene terphthalate) plastic bottles saves approximately 12,000 BTUs of energy. In addition, using recycled materials uses two thirds less energy than using raw (virgin) materials.