

Oregon's Bottle Bill Expansion – S.B. 707

Frequently Asked Questions

When will bottled water become part of the Oregon Bottle Bill?

Beginning Jan. 1, 2009, Oregon is adding water and flavored water to the list of containers that can be redeemed for a 5¢ deposit.

What kinds (types) of containers are included in Oregon's Bottle Bill?

- Water/flavored water
- Beer/malt beverages
- Soda water/mineral water
- Carbonated soft drinks

Can I redeem containers that are not labeled with the OR 5¢ refund value?

No. All kinds (types) of containers included in the Oregon Bottle Bill that are sold in Oregon must be labeled appropriately with the OR 5¢ refund value to receive the 5-cent redemption. Containers of water and flavored water sold before 1/1/09 that are not labeled with the OR 5¢ refund value will not be accepted by retailers for a refund value.

Can I redeem my gallon and 5-gallon jugs of water for a 5-cent deposit?

No. Beverage containers under the Oregon Bottle Bill are in quantities less than or equal to three fluid liters.

Can I redeem my sports drinks containers for a 5-cent deposit?

With the addition of bottled water beginning 1/1/09 to Oregon's Bottle Bill, water and flavored water means any beverage identified through the use of letters, words or symbols on its product label as a type of water.

Example: Gatorade cannot be refunded for a 5-cent deposit, but Propel Fitness Water can.

Where can I return my private label or store brand beverage containers?

Retailers under 5,000 square feet are required to accept back only brands and sizes they sell. Retail outlets of 5,000 square feet or more are required to accept bottle and can returns of all brands and sizes of beverage containers for each kind (type) they sell. (effective 1/1/09)

Example 1: If Joy's Supermarket (a store over 5,000 sq. feet) sells water, soft drinks and beer, then they are required to accept bottle returns of *all* brands and sizes of water, soft drinks and beer - even brand names that they don't carry in their stores.

Example 2: If Christie's Mega Food Warehouse (over 5,000 sq. feet) carries only soft drinks and water (but does not sell beer) then, they are only required to accept back all brands and sizes of soft drinks and water- even brands that they don't sell. However, they are not required to accept back any beer containers, because they do not sell that kind (type) of beverage.

What is a retailer 5,000 square feet or more?

Typically, we think of the big retail chains as falling into this category. However, some independent retailers may also fit this criterion. If you're not sure, ask your local store manager.

How many containers can I redeem each day?

Retailers of 5,000 square feet or more can limit the amount of containers a consumer can redeem to a maximum of 144 containers per person per day.

Retailers under 5,000 square feet can limit the number of containers to a maximum of 50 per person per day.

Can a store refuse to accept any containers that are returned for refund?

Beverage containers that visibly contain or are contaminated by a substance other than water, residue of the original contents, or ordinary dust may be refused. Containers that are damaged to the extent that the brand appearing on the container cannot be identified may also be refused.

Starting January 1, 2009, stores of 5,000 square feet or more must take back empty containers and pay the refund value if they sell, or have sold within the past six months, that same kind (type) of beverage – even if the containers are different sizes or brands that the store sells.

Stores smaller than 5,000 square feet may continue to refuse to take back any empty beverage containers of any kind, size, and brand that they do not sell.

I crushed my aluminum cans, and now the store refuses to take them back. What do I do?

Stores cannot refuse to accept back cans and pay the refund value simply because the cans are crushed. However, if the can is crushed in such a way that you cannot see OR 5¢ refund marking, then the store can legally refuse to accept back the container. Stores under 5,000 square feet can refuse to accept back containers if the brand of the container is not visible.

Can I bring my out-of-state cans to Oregon and redeem them for the 5-cent refund value?

No. The 5-cent refund value applies only to containers sold in Oregon. A 5-cent deposit is paid when a container is purchased in Oregon, and then 5 cents is refunded when the container is returned.

Can my store sell cans and bottles that do not have the OR 5¢ designation on the label?

No. Only cans and bottles labeled appropriately with the OR 5¢ refund value should be sold.

Our store does not charge the consumer a 5¢ deposit, do we have to accept bottle returns and/or pay a 5¢ redemption?

Yes. The 5¢ redemption must be paid to the consumer – even if you did not include the 5¢ deposit in the retail price to the consumer.

I work with a non-profit, and we accept empty beverage containers as a donation, but my store refuses to accept back more than 144 containers per person per day. Is there anything I can do so the non-profit group can get the deposits donated to it?

Stores can legally refuse to accept back more than 144 containers per person per day. Stores less than 5,000 square feet can legally refuse to accept back more than 50 containers per person per day. Although stores are not required to take back more than 144 containers, some stores will work with non-profits to allow greater number of containers to be returned.

Beverage distributors or associations of distributors such as Container Recovery Incorporated are only required to accept back containers from retailers and are not required to accept containers directly from the public or from non-profit organizations. At their option, though, they may choose to do so, and Container Recovery Incorporated will work with groups that can demonstrate their valid non-profit status.

What is the penalty for not complying with Oregon's Bottle Bill?

Business owners may be subject to certain penalties and sanctions.

Who should I call if I want to make a complaint about a business?

Consumers should contact the OLCC's Jan Smith at 503-872-5217.

Where can I get more information?

Contact Lynne Johnson at 503-872-5188, or toll free at 800-452-6522, ext. 5188.

Revised March 18, 2009

