



Government
of South Australia

Container deposit legislation (CDL)

Zero Waste SA

What began in the 1970s as a method for reducing litter is now a key part of South Australia's waste minimisation strategy - and the basis of a thriving industry and employer.

In 1975 the South Australian Government introduced container deposit legislation (CDL) that imposed a deposit on a range of beverage containers. The deposit is included in the retail price and refunded when the container is returned to a collection point.

Similar schemes operate in other countries but South Australia currently remains the only Australian state or territory with this type of legislation. The Western Australian Government has decided to introduce a deposit system in the near future.

The recycling or reuse of containers diverts material from landfill, conserves resources and reduces pollution and energy consumption. And it still helps minimise litter.



10c

Statistics kept since the introduction of CDL demonstrate its effectiveness:

- Items covered by the legislation make up a less than 4% of litter in South Australia.
- Return rates for CDL containers are very high, around 80%.

Industry sources suggest that return rates for beverage containers in South Australia far exceed those in other states and territories without CDL.

In 2003, encouraged by the success of CDL, the South Australian Government extended the scheme to cover a wider range of beverages.

Beverages covered by CDL

NON-ALCOHOLIC

- Carbonated soft drinks
- Non-carbonated soft drinks
- Water (plain, still or carbonated)
in all container types up to and including 3 litres.
- Pure fruit juice (at least 90% of which is fruit or vegetable juice or a mixture of both)
- Flavoured milk
in all container types of less than 1 litre.

ALCOHOLIC

- Beers/ales/stout
- Wine based beverages (wine cooler and similar beverages)
- Spirit-based beverages
- Alcoholic beverages (derived from the fermentation of fruit)
in all container types up to and including 3 litres.

Refund markings

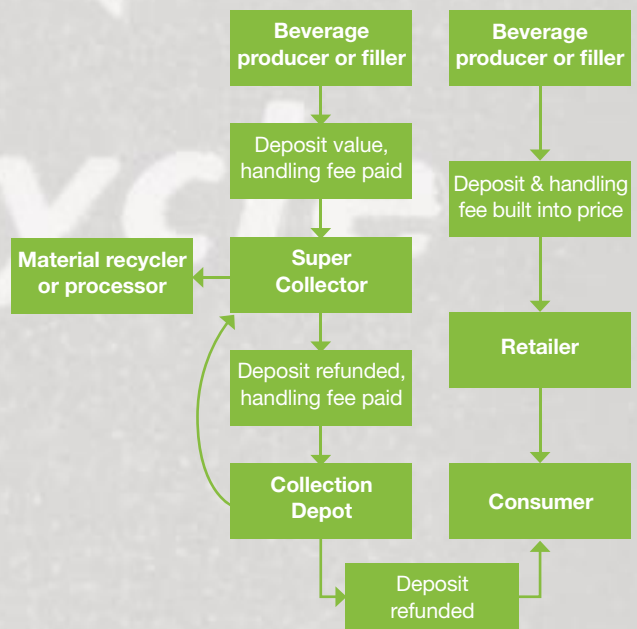
Beverage manufacturers/distributors are required under the Environment Protection Act to seek Container Labeling Approval from the EPA. This not only ensures consumers are aware a refund is available on the container, but ensures the industry is responsible for the financial underpinning of the entire collection system.

All beverage containers subject to CDL in South Australia display approved markings that show how to claim the refund:

- '10c refund at points of sale when sold in SA' means that the container must be returned to a retailer who sells the beverage in that container
- '10c refund at collection depots when sold in SA' means that the container must be returned to a collection depot.

Collection depots are the most common points of return.

CDL collection depot system



REFUND AT COLLECTION

How the collection depot system works

The various container types and brands are sorted and prepared at approximately 119 collection depots across the state for processing by the 'super collectors'.

The super collectors act as agents for the beverage industry. They:

- coordinate the return of empty containers from collection depots
- reimburse depots for refunds paid to consumers and pay depots a handling fee
- sell the containers to material recyclers and processors for recycling, reuse or recovery of energy.

The super collector in turn claims the deposit and handling fee from the beverage filler.

All collection depots must be approved under the Environment Protection Act. For more information go to www.epa.sa.gov.au/cdl.html

The diagram to the left shows the system in simplified form.

Further information

- The EPA www.epa.sa.gov.au is the first point of call for all enquiries about CDL.
- To find your nearest collection depot for CDL containers use the Zero Waste online Recycling Locations:
www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au/Recycler.mvc/Search
- Recyclers of South Australia
www.recyclesa.com.au is an industry association representing the majority of collection depots approved under the legislation.

Sources

Environment Protection Authority. 2000. Container deposit legislation: economic and environmental impacts. EPA, Adelaide.

Environment Protection Authority. 2004. Container deposit legislation (CDL) - A South Australian environmental success story. [Information sheet] EPA, Adelaide.

Zero Waste SA

The goal of Zero Waste SA is to eliminate waste or its disposal in landfill by encouraging South Australians to:

- reduce their consumption of resources
- reuse and recycle materials.

Visit Zero Waste SA's website at

www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au

