

Connecticut's 21st Century Bottle Bill

For three decades, Connecticut residents have paid a nickel deposit with each purchase of soda and beer cans and bottles. The main goal of the "bottle bill" when it was enacted in 1978 was to increase the recycling of these containers and discourage littering.

This objective has been achieved as more and more citizens participate in some form of recycling program, bins for containers are now so commonplace that they blend into the background and the sides of our thoroughfares are no longer strewn with aluminum and glass.

Much has changed, however, in the 31 years since deposits were placed on soda and beer containers.

More and more types of beverages can be purchased in smaller, individual-sized containers, and the methods by which we recycle have become much more sophisticated. The biggest change over this time has been the growth in the bottled water industry – bottled water choices now occupy one entire side of a grocery store aisle – across from the soda selection.

To meet this changing dynamic and further recycling activities without impacting the distribution industry, Governor Rell has crafted a proposal to modernize the bottle bill. This proposal provides a central fund with a dedicated funding stream that preserves the current return-to-retail option, and funds curbside recycling – providing more flexibility and convenience for the public while lessening the burden for retailers, bottlers and distributors.

Highlights of Governor Rell's 21st Century Bottle Bill include:

- A nickel deposit will now be placed on water bottles;
- A Trust Fund will be created under the administration of participating bottlers, wholesalers and other beverage manufacturers. The Trust Fund will be responsible for paying refunds and handling fees to curbside recycles, retailers and redemption centers by the Trust Fund; and
- Curbside recycling will be enhanced – 3.5 cents per container (calculated by weight) – will be returned to the municipality where they were recycled, creating a funding stream to help build recycling infrastructure in Connecticut's cities and towns.

This new approach to recycling will:

- Generate an estimated \$38 million annually for the state's General Fund;
- Create a nickel deposit for water bottle containers;
- Expand and enhance recycling initiatives; and
- Ensure distributors, wholesalers, bottlers, etc. receive funds through a Trust Fund to cover operating costs.

it pays to
recycle.

