NSW CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME FAQ (OTHER NAMES: CDS, CASH FOR CONTAINERS, RETURN AND EARN)

What is a Container Deposit Scheme?

Container Deposit Schemes (CDS, Cash for Containers, Container Deposit Legislation) involves consumers receiving a refund for the return of their beverage containers for recycling. It aims to reduce the amount of container litter and increase the amount of recycling by a financial incentive (usually 10c).

What States and Territories have a Container Deposit Scheme?

Container deposit schemes are currently established in South Australia (since 1974) and the Northern Territory (2012). NSW, Queensland, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory have committed to implementing CDS in the coming years. We now have to convince the remaining states – Victoria and Tasmania - to do the same.

What is Return & Earn?

Return and Earn is the name of the NSW Container Deposit Scheme.

Why is it being implemented?

Return and Earn is the largest litter reduction scheme introduced to NSW, and will help meet the Premier's goal of reducing the volume of litter in the state by 40% by 2020.

When does the scheme start?

The scheme starts on 1 December 2017 with a progressive rollout of collection infrastructure over 2018.
**Who is running the scheme?**

The NSW scheme will operate in a two-part structure through a Network Operator and a Scheme Coordinator. The government sets targets and enforces compliance.

**What does the Network Operator do?**

The Network Operator will set up and run a state-wide network of collection points including reverse vending machines, manual centres and automated counting depots.

**Who is the NSW Network Operator?**

The Network Operator is TOMRA Cleanaway.

**What does the Scheme Coordinator do?**

The Scheme Coordinator will be responsible for financial management, ensuring that the Scheme meets its state-wide access and recovery targets and community education.

**Who is the NSW Scheme Coordinator?**

The Scheme Coordinator is Exchange for Change.

**Who is paying for the scheme?**

The producers of the beverage pay for the scheme. They will pass the cost onto the consumer (who can then redeem) the 10cent deposit. There will also be a small handling charge of 1-3 cents to cover the cost of the new collection infrastructure.

**How much money can I redeem per container?**

You will be able to redeem 10c per eligible container. For the first 18 months the bottlers will be using the labels that note SA and NT 10c deposit schemes to identify bottles and cans in the NSW scheme - as they change labels over to include NSW.
What beverage containers are eligible?

Eligible beverage containers within the NSW Container Deposit Scheme include most empty 150ml to 3-litre beverage containers.

Container materials that may be eligible for a refund include:

- PET
- Aluminium
- HDPE
- Steel
- Glass
- Liquid paperboard

Containers that are not eligible for a refund include:

- Plain milk (or milk substitute) containers
- Flavoured milk containers of 1 litre or more
- Pure fruit or vegetable juice containers of 1 litre or more
- Glass containers for wine and spirits
- Casks (plastic bladders in boxes) for wine or water of 1 litre or more
- Sachets for wine of 250ml or more
- Containers for cordials and concentrated fruit/vegetable juices
- Registered health tonics

Why are wine bottles and milk containers not included?

Eligible containers include those most commonly consumed out of the home and found in the NSW litter stream. These generally align with the eligible containers for the existing South Australia and Northern Territory container deposit schemes. Boomerang Alliance has supported the inclusion of wine and will continue advocating for this. The drinks industry also supports this as they believe it gives a competitive advantage to wine over their other products.
What do I do with containers that are not eligible in the scheme?

If you have containers that are not eligible in the scheme, please use a recycling bin.

How do I get paid my refund?

If you use a collection point to redeem your deposit, you can receive your refund over the counter. If you choose to use a reverse vending machine, you are given the choice of:

- A voucher you can redeem for cash or purchases at a participating retailer
- Register to receive an electronic payment to your account, or
- Donate your refund to charities, schools or community groups at the reverse vending machines

What is a Reverse Vending Machine (RVM)?

A Reverse Vending Machine (RVM) is the opposite of a drink dispensing machine. A person places their empty eligible drink container into the machine, the container is scanned to verify it is eligible and the person receives a voucher they can redeem or they can choose to donate their refund.

Why am I paying more for my beverages before December? Can I retain the empties and get my deposit back?

The scheme requires a large amount of funds to provide the refunds. It was essential to have this money banked (in a trust fund) so that on Day 1 of the CDS, there are funds to cover refunds and costs.

Can I crush my containers?

To be eligible for a 10c refund, containers should be empty, uncrushed, unbroken and have the original label attached so that the barcode can be scanned and the container counted. Lids may still be attached to the bottle at redemption points.
Where can I redeem my containers? / How do I redeem my 10c?

Across NSW, there will be more than 500 Return and Earn collection points, including more than 800 reverse vending machines. There will be three ways you can redeem your 10c throughout NSW; reverse vending machines (RVMs), over-the-counter collection points and automated depots.

Collection points are beginning to roll out, and already there are reverse vending machines in locations from Granville to Glenorie, and others such as Tumut, Lisarow, Medowie and Vincentia. To view the collection points, visit the Return and Earn Website.

Major supermarkets such as Woolworths and Aldi will also be the location of reverse vending machines across NSW.

However, the rollout of collection points is a resource intensive process and will take time. The exact location of other collection points will be released over coming months. Boomerang Alliance understands this may frustrate some consumers who won't have convenient access on Day 1 and agrees government did not provide sufficient time for an adequate rollout on Day 1.

What is the timing of operation?

Major urban area: At least 35 ordinary hours each week, including at least 8 weekend hours.
Regional area: At least 24 ordinary hours each week, including at least 8 weekend hours.
Remote area: At least 16 ordinary hours each 2-week period, including at least 8 weekend hours. More information will be available soon.

How do I become a collection/redemption point?

If you are interested in becoming an over-the-counter collection point, or are interested in hosting a reverse vending machine, send an email to enquiries@tcnsw.com.au or complete the form on the Tomra-Cleanaway website.
What happens to the containers I put in my yellow bin? Can I still use it?

You can still use your yellow bin, but you will not be able to personally receive the 10c refund through kerbside recycling. The NSW scheme is not designed to replace kerbside recycling, but complement the yellow bin service. That means the local council and collector will share the refund.

Eligible containers that are in kerbside recycling bins will still be redeemed. The NSW EPA has stated: ‘Return and Earn will allow recycling facilities to use an EPA-approved method for:

- Accurately estimating the number of containers recovered in the facility claiming the refund from the Scheme Coordinator.
- The recycling facility will only receive the refund amount. They will not be able to claim a handling fee, but they will also not need to separate out containers or substantially change their existing recovery processes.

What fundraising opportunities are there?

Charities, schools, community or sporting groups can establish temporary donation points for fundraising activities for people to donate eligible beverage containers. If you are interested in participating, send an email to enquiries@tcnsw.com.au or complete the form on the Tomra-Cleanaway website.

What if I have multiple containers?

Depending on the number you will be able to redeem these at either bulk collection points; or reverse vending machines (which will have a limited capacity).
How will this benefit my community?

The main beneficiaries of the scheme will be the environment and the community. Economic analysis shows that the scheme will deliver $1.33 of benefits for every $1 of cost. Over the next 20 years, the Scheme is expected to result in:

1. 1.6 billion fewer beverage containers being littered.
2. Almost 11 billion fewer beverage containers ending up in landfill.
3. 12.6 billion more beverage containers being recycled.

In addition, councils are estimated to save $155 million in container collection and transport costs, and costs will be reduced for recycling processors by $33 million.

Who will be monitoring the scheme?

The NSW EPA will be auditing and taking compliance action where necessary. The government has also commissioned the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Authority to monitor drink prices. Boomerang Alliance will keep watch on the government, Scheme Coordinator, Network Operator and beverage industry.

Information has been collected from the NSW EPA’s website, Return & Earn, and Boomerang Alliance. For additional information, please visit the following websites:

- Return & Earn
- Tomra-Cleanaway
- NSW EPA
- Boomerang Alliance