



# BOTTLE BILL ADVISORY GROUP

August 21, 2023

Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance

# **TODAY'S AGENDA**

**1. Housekeeping and Logistics**

**2. Survey Results**

**3. Presentation: Preparing for the Deposit Increase to 10 cents**

**4. Open Discussion**

**5. Next Steps**

# HOUSEKEEPING AND LOGISTICS

**This meeting is being recorded.**

**Please remain muted unless you are speaking.**

**An hour is budgeted for this meeting.**

**We will have an open discussion after the presentation.**

**DEEP will continue to hold Bottle Bill Advisory Group meetings once a month between now and the end of the calendar year.**

**DEEP encourages stakeholder feedback during this process. Feedback can be provided orally during these meetings, or via email to [DEEP.MMCAPlanning@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.MMCAPlanning@ct.gov).**

# PURPOSE OF ADVISORY GROUP

- DEEP has received a significant number of questions about Bottle Bill changes and has seen substantial interest from consumers, retailers, distributors and legislators
- DEEP is committed to transparency, predictability, and efficiency in agency processes and has determined that continued stakeholder engagement is warranted and will provide for effective implementation of the Bottle Bill
- DEEP will host a series of meetings to engage all stakeholders and legislators in a Bottle Bill Advisory Group to solicit input on the areas of interest and question regarding various components of Bottle Bill implementation
- Meetings will be held virtually, noticed in advance and include 1) presentations by DEEP staff on relevant issues requiring stakeholder education, engagement or feedback and 2) an opportunity for input from meeting participants



# Survey Results

# **SURVEY RESULTS**

- **Discussion topics suggested for today's presentation that are best reserved for future meetings:**
  - Sunsetting the use of "CTRV" on labels
  - Escheats
  - Cross-border redemption
  - Monitoring RMV and redemption center volume
  - Higher level, more general information on the bottle bill
  
- **Discussion topics suggested for future meetings:**
  - Refill/reuse programs
  - Reverse vending machines for miniatures
  - Stewardship organization next steps
  - Data
  - Redemption accessibility for residents
  - Higher level, more general information on the bottle bill



# SURVEY RESULTS

- **Do you think that drinks like Kool-Aid and Hi-C are covered beverages?**
  - **Yes**
    - Marketing – phrases such as “flavor your fun with real juice” or “real fruit juice”
    - Public sees them as juices or flavored water
    - Juice drinks are no different than products like iced teas or Hawaiian Punch
    - DEEP should interpret the purpose/spirit of the law, i.e. reducing litter and improving recycling of beverage containers
  - **No**
    - “Fruit flavored drinks” or “soft drinks” are not specifically listed under “noncarbonated beverages”
    - Do not contain juice
    - Many beverage products contain water as an ingredient but are not considered flavored water

# SURVEY RESULTS

- **Do you think that coffee concentrates are covered beverages?**
  - **Yes**
    - Coffee concentrates are “coffee” and are explicitly covered
    - Covered if they are ready to drink
    - DEEP should interpret the purpose/spirit of the law, i.e. reducing litter and improving recycling of beverage containers
  - **No**
    - Concentrates and other not-ready-to-drink products are omitted from the law
    - Concentrates need water added to drink, DEEP guidance states that mixers, “products that are not marketed for or intended to be consumed on their own,” are not covered
    - Under federal law, coffee and coffee concentrates are named differently



# SURVEY RESULTS

- **Do you think that non-alcoholic wines and spirits are covered beverages?**
  - **Yes**
    - These beverages are considered “flavored water,” “juice,” or “juice drink”
    - Non-alcoholic wines and spirits are not excluded by Public Act 23-1
    - If they are ready to drink they should be included in the law
    - DEEP should interpret the purpose/spirit of the law, i.e. reducing litter and improving recycling of beverage containers
  - **No**
    - The bottles are all different and there is no infrastructure to return them
  - **Unsure**
    - Non-alcoholic wines and spirits are a gray area that may need statutory clarification

# SURVEY RESULTS

- **How should DEEP approach whether hard ciders are covered beverages?**
  - **Hard cider should be in**
    - Hard ciders are clearly identified as being covered by the language in PA 21-58 and PA 23-1
    - If it is ready to drink it should be included
  - **Middle Ground**
    - Malt-based hard ciders should be covered, spirit-based should not

# DISCUSSION ABOUT SURVEY RESULTS

- Please share your thoughts on these survey results, including the specific products we asked about



**Preparing for the Increase to 10  
Cents**

# COMMON QUESTIONS

- **Q: What happens to covered beverages purchased prior to January 1, 2024 but redeemed after that date?**
  - A: Even if a beverage was purchased prior to January 1, 2024 with a 5 cent deposit, if it is redeemed after that date it will yield a 10 cent refund.
- **Q: Is there a grace period for labeling requirements?**
  - A: There is not a specific grace period (e.g., 6 months), however if retailers or distributors have any mislabeled stock as of December 31, 2023 they are still allowed to sell it.
    - [PA 23-76: AN ACT CONCERNING THE LABELING OF CERTAIN BEVERAGE CONTAINERS, THE REVIEW OF MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS FUNDED BY NIP PAYMENTS AND THE RETURN OF BEVERAGE CONTAINERS FOR THE REDEMPTION VALUE.](#)
- **Q: Will the state be maintaining a list of Universal Product Codes (UPCs) for covered beverages?**
  - A: No. Public Act 21-58 required all deposit initiators to provide UPCs to reverse vending machine operators and other system operators. The state does not receive such information and is not required to maintain such a list.

# COMMON CONCERNS

- **Retail locations' ability to handle the expected increased volume of redemptions**
  - HB 6001 – places 240 limit on number of beverage containers may redeem at one time at RVMs
  - Retailer bottle room or RVMs - Lack of availability
  - Staff/Customer service knowledge level about bottle deposit legislation – Refusing to take back containers
- **Lack of public education/consumer awareness**
  - Unlabeled beverage containers
- **Confusion around the use of “CTRV”**
  - Consumers
  - Manufacturers

# Recycling **Makes Cents**

Starting January 1, 2023 a new state law makes most beverage cans and bottles eligible for five cent deposit refund. Connecticut's deposit law has proven to reduce litter and raise recycling rates and now it will expand from beer, soda and water to most beverages in cans and plastic and glass bottles.



## ELIGIBLE

All glass, metal and plastic containers that contain 150ml to 3 liters of a carbonated beverage and 150ml to 2.5 liters of a non-carbonated beverage only



BEER ENERGY DRINK WATER SPORTS DRINK SODA HARD SELTZER HARD CIDER TEA & COFFEE KOMBU-CHA PLANT WATER JUICE



## NOT ELIGIBLE



LIQUOR WINE MILK/DAIRY PLANT-BASED MILKS PAPER CARTONS POUCHES MINIATURES LARGE CONTAINERS (> 3 liters)



For more information visit:  
[RecyclingMakesCentsCT.com](https://RecyclingMakesCentsCT.com)



Connecticut  
Department of Energy &  
Environmental Protection





# BEVERAGE CONTAINER RECYCLING GRANT PROGRAM

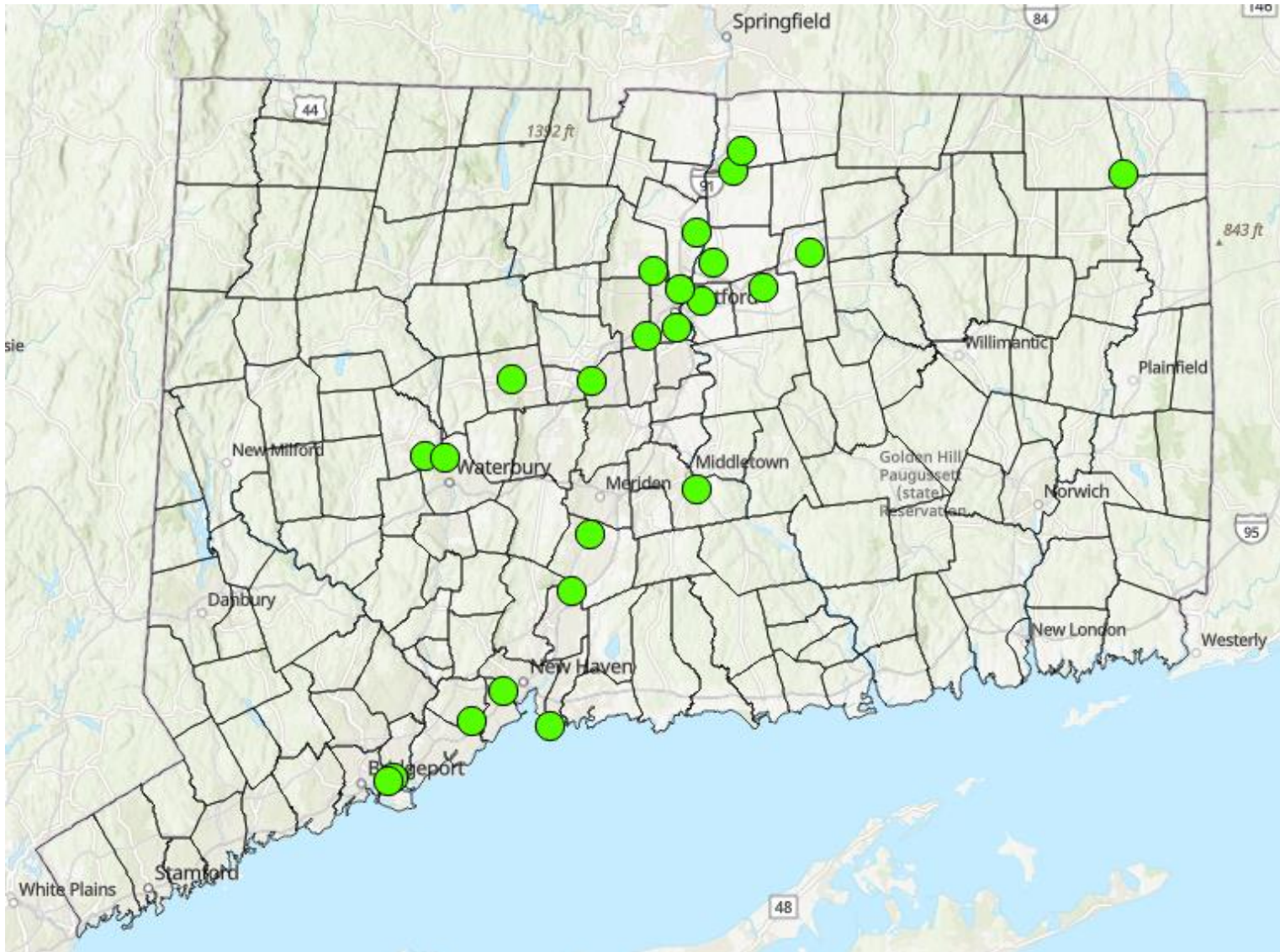
- **Brief History**

- Grant program established in June Special Session Public Act 21-2 to provide grants targeting new redemption centers in underserved areas
- DEEP charged with administering the grant program; this was challenging because DEEP does not have economic development expertise
- Contracted with a third-party vendor for program administration – a lengthy process
- First round of awards made in June of this year; nearly all qualified applicants were along I-91 corridor

- **Current Status**

- Nearly all first-round grant contracts are complete and initial fundings occurred last week
- Second round of awards initiated in July; applications have begun to arrive
- Outreach efforts are underway with a focus on the eastern and western sides of the state where there are few existing redemption centers

# MAP OF CURRENT REDEMPTION CENTERS



Large portions of the state, including several larger population centers, remain uncovered by a redemption center after the first round of grant-making

- Norwalk-Stamford
- Groton-New London
- Danbury
- Torrington

# PREPARING FOR DEPOSIT INCREASE

- **Context**

- Connecticut's redemption rate has stagnated around 50% and since COVID has dropped into the mid-40% (lowest in the U.S.)
- Other states have seen large increases in redemption rates following an increase in the deposit amount
  - For example, Oregon saw the redemption rate increase from 64% in 2016 to over 88% today after increasing the deposit from 5 to 10 cents
- Further, it is possible many consumers will hold Q4'23 containers to be redeemed in Q1'24
- There are back-orders for much of the equipment needed by redemption centers

- **Current Focus**

- Deploy grant funds to awardees as soon as possible
- Facilitate the equipment ordering process for redemption centers
- Actively seek sites and operators for redemption centers in unserved urban areas
- Explore all alternatives for container redemption

A stylized, colorful landscape illustration. The top right corner features a bright yellow sun. Below it is a large green hill with a dark blue outline. The bottom of the image shows a light blue area representing water, also with a dark blue outline. The text "Open Discussion" is centered on the green hill.

**Open Discussion**

A stylized, colorful landscape illustration. At the top right, a bright yellow sun is partially visible. Below it, a large green hill with a dark blue outline dominates the middle ground. To the left, a smaller, lighter green hill is partially visible. At the bottom, a light blue area represents water, also outlined in dark blue. The text "Next Steps" is centered on the green hill.

**Next Steps**

# NEXT STEPS

- **Next meeting: September 18, 1:00 pm**
  - [Register here](#)
- **Poll for future meeting topics**
- **We will utilize feedback received regarding the specific products mentioned in making decisions for those manufacturers**
- [Sign up](#) for Bottle Bill Stakeholder Process email list
- **Any additional questions or feedback can be submitted via email to [DEEP.MMCAPPlanning@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.MMCAPPlanning@ct.gov)**