

NSW Container Deposit Scheme: Container approval process

All eligible beverage containers supplied into NSW must be approved by the NSW EPA.

Return and Earn

The NSW Container Deposit Scheme, *Return and Earn*, started on 1 December 2017 and is the largest litter reduction initiative introduced in NSW.

The NSW community has embraced the scheme. Since it began, more than eight billion containers have been returned and the volume of drink container litter has fallen by 52%.

Return and Earn ensures that industry and the community share the responsibility for reducing and dealing with the litter generated by beverage product packaging.

Container approval process

To ensure the integrity of *Return and Earn*, each class of eligible container (each unique product) supplied into NSW must be approved by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) under [s 38 of the Act](#).

Check if an approval is in place

Before applying for a container approval, please check if an approval is already in place using the [Return and Earn container search tool](#).

Check if containers are eligible

If your container is not yet approved, please make sure it is eligible before submitting for approval. To find out which beverages are eligible, visit the [Return and Earn website](#).

Excluded containers

Most NSW beverage containers between 150 millilitres and 3 litres are eligible for a 10c refund.

Some containers are excluded from the scheme and do not require a container approval.

These include (but are not limited to):

- 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.



How to apply for a container approval

1. Log into the [NSW Container Approval Portal](#). Please remember to add “.cads” to the end of your email address for your username.
2. Click on Container Approval Applications and then New Approval Applications.

3. Enter all the required details – take care that the barcode, dimensions, material type and product group are recorded accurately. You may wish to have a sample of the beverage container on hand to assist in this process.
4. Go to the Payment menu to pay the application fee to submit your application.
5. Once payment is processed in the portal you will receive a payment receipt via email.
6. The EPA will review your container applications and you will receive a 'Container Approval Notification Email' once your container has been approved.

If you are paying by bank transfer please ensure that you **include the unique CDS Reference Number before processing the payment**, as failure to do so may delay the approval phase.

You must pay the application fee before the EPA can review your application. This fee is not refundable.

Bulk upload

If you are applying for 10 or more container approvals at once you can use the bulk upload feature. For instructions go to the Help and Support menu of the portal.

Refusals, suspensions, revocations and conditions

The EPA can refuse, suspend, revoke, or apply additional conditions to an approval for reasons including but not limited to: the container is not compliant with conditions; a supply arrangement is not in force; the EPA considers the container is not suitable for re-use or recycling, or that it interferes with the proper operation of the scheme.

The EPA has refused containers on the basis that they are not recyclable. Once a container has been refused an approval, it cannot be supplied or offered for supply in NSW.

You will be notified if the EPA intends to refuse, suspend, revoke or apply conditions to an approval, and be given the opportunity to provide comments and have your views considered before a final decision is issued.

We are here to help

More information, including fact sheets for [retailers](#) and [suppliers](#), is available at www.epa.nsw.gov.au.

For a more in-depth user guide please refer to the resources within the Help and Support menu of the portal.

If you have any questions about these requirements, please contact the EPA:

- phone: 131 555
- email: container.approval@epa.nsw.gov.au.

References

EPA 2017, *Role of first suppliers of drink containers*, www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/return-and-earn/role-of-first-suppliers-of-drink-containers

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulation 2017 ('the Regulation')

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001 ('the Act')

NSW Environment Protection Authority

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Website: www.epa.nsw.gov.au

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