

Michigan's Bottle Deposit: It Makes Cents!

Nearly 35 years ago, Michigan enacted the Michigan Beverage Container Act or "Bottle Bill". The purpose of the bill was to reduce roadside litter, help clean up the environment, reduce landfill volume and reduce the use of energy and natural resources. Michigan has the highest deposit in the country at 10 cents, but also has the highest recycling rate of these refundable containers at nearly 97%. Beverage containers that require deposit include soft drinks, beer, carbonated & mineral water, wine coolers, canned cocktails and carbonated energy drinks. They come in the form of glass, aluminum and plastic containers. Once these containers are empty and acceptably clean, they can be returned to retailers that sell those specific brands. Some places allow containers to be returned at the customer service desk, but most large retailers have reverse vending machines in which the containers are fed into the machine and a slip is printed for cash reimbursement or credit towards a purchase by choice of the customer. Many people would like to see the Bottle Bill expanded to include other beverage containers such as water bottles, sports drinks, other non-carbonated drinks, wine and hard liquor bottles. Petitions can be found online or write your legislators. The reality is that these containers make up approximately 50% of the trash collected from roadways and parks, much at the expense of taxpayers. It is said that only 20% of 1.4 billion non-refundable beverage containers are recycled each year in Michigan. The beauty of our area is a significant aspect to the well-being of each one of us and the quality of life to our community. Let's each do our part to recycle, reduce and reuse, and encourage our leaders to expand our current Bottle Bill.

For more information, please visit www.bottlebill.org.

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