

NEWS RELEASE



Government of
South Australia

Hon Ian Hunter MLC

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation

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SA celebrates 40 years of leading the nation in recycling beverage containers

South Australia is celebrating 40 years since the introduction of the container deposit legislation, leading the nation in the recovery, recycling and litter reduction of beverage containers.

More than 6 billion containers have been returned under the scheme, with an average annual return of around 80 per cent. This equates to about 583 million containers that are recovered and recycled, ultimately resulting in a reduction of landfill waste.

Background

The introduction of disposable drink containers in the 1970s led to a spike in the volume of litter in our streets, parks, beaches and waterways.

The container deposit legislation, which came into effect in 1977, allows clearly marked and authorised containers sold in South Australia to be claimed for a refund.

Beverage suppliers add an extra cost to their product to cover the refund, which can be redeemed more than 120 [collection depots](#) throughout South Australia.

In 2003, the South Australian Government extended the scheme to cover non-carbonated soft drinks, pure fruit juice and flavoured milk containers.

In 2008, the refund increased from 5 cents to 10 and led to more participation.

The container deposit scheme was declared a Heritage Icon in 2006 by the National Trust of South Australia in recognition its role in contributing to the State's cultural identity.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation Ian Hunter

South Australians have embraced this legislation and we have extensive community support for the scheme. Community groups are highly involved with the scheme, using it to raise funds. More than \$60 million is returned to the community each year.

The scheme has also been instrumental in engaging community groups and has generated significant employment in the recycling sector.

This initiative is credited with providing between 800-1000 jobs in the beverage container collection and recycling industry in South Australia.

For more than 35 years, South Australia was the only state or territory in the nation to introduce a container deposit scheme, until 2012 when the Northern Territory Government introduced a similar scheme.

In its 40th year, it is pleasing to see announcements from New South Wales of their intention to copy SA's container deposit legislation.

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