

---

# Guidelines for container approval

## *Environment Protection Act 1993*

### Beverage container provisions

---



EPA approval is required if you intend to sell beverages covered by the Beverage containers provisions of the Environment Protection Act 1993 (the Act) in South Australia.

An application form, copies of artwork/labelling and proof of a return mechanism is required before the EPA can approve your application.

The following guidelines will assist you on how to do this.

The EPA may request the removal of containers from the retail trade and prohibit further sales, and/or other enforcement action may be taken, where beverage containers are placed on the market and do not comply with the requirements of the Act.

---

## 1. RETURN MECHANISMS— CATEGORY 'A' OR CATEGORY 'B'

### **Category A container—containers returned to 'points of sale' for 10c refund.**

If intending to use 'points of sale' as the return mechanism for the containers, the applicant should ensure retailers are aware of their obligation under the Act to refund the deposit, irrespective of place of purchase, providing the containers were sold in South Australia. It is a condition of approval for this category that there are proper arrangements in place for the empty containers to be retrieved from retail outlets and aggregated for reuse or recycling, to the EPA's satisfaction.

### **Category B container—containers returned to collection depots for 5c refund.**

If intending to use the collection depot system for the return of containers, a proper arrangement, satisfactory to the EPA, must be established and maintained for the payment of refunds to consumers and for the aggregation of the empty containers for reuse or recycling. This is generally achieved by negotiating a contract with one of the recognised industry 'super collectors'. This involves financially underpinning the payment of deposits and handling fees to the super collector and the establishment of a collection system to recover the containers. Contact details of the industry super collectors are attached to this document. The EPA will also consider alternative arrangements that satisfy the requirements of the legislation.

---

## 2. REFUND MARKINGS

- The refund marking or statement should be clear and legible to the consumer.
- Only an approved refund marking may be used.
- Minimum size requirements apply for both the alpha and numeric in the refund marking.  
The numeric (i.e. '5' or '10') **must be a minimum 3 mm in height.**  
The smallest letter in the wording **must be a minimum 1.5 mm in height.**
- A minimum 3 mm 'free space' boundary around the refund marking is recommended.

### *Refund statement*

If using collection depots as the return mechanism:

**5c** refund at collection depots when sold in South Australia (or 'SA')

or

If using 'points of sale' as the return mechanism:

**10c** refund at points of sale when sold in South Australia (or 'SA')

### *Using a sticker*

If the container label does not have the refund marking printed on it a sticker with the refund marking printed on it may be used. The sticker must be firmly placed in an appropriate place on the container—not over the opening mechanism so that it is partially or completely removed when consumed.

It is recommended that samples of artwork be submitted to the EPA for appraisal and advice before the commencement of any printing or production. It is preferable that an authentic label be provided.

---

## 3. APPLICATION

An application form must be completed, signed and approved by the EPA before the distribution of containers in South Australia.

The following documentation is also required in support of the application:

- a) If applying for approval of a Category B container and a contractual arrangement with an industry super collector is in place, written advice from the nominated super collector is required, confirming a satisfactory collection system is in place for the containers.
- b) Irrespective of the return mechanism a sample of the container must be submitted, displaying the appropriate refund statement. Alternatively a suitable facsimile or other reproduction of the proposed label or sticker, clearly displaying the refund marking, may be submitted.
- c) It is important to give full details of the container, including size, colour, type, and the material type of any wrap-around sleeve or label.

---

## 4. PROHIBITED CONTAINERS

Section 72 of the Act specifically prohibits the sale of 'ring pull containers'. Ring pull containers are sealed containers made from metal, with ring pull opening devices that separate from the body of the container when opened.

---

Copies of the Environment Protection Act & Regulations may be purchased from the Government Information Centre, Lands Titles Office, 101 Grenfell St, Adelaide; telephone 13 23 24, or via their website [shop.service.sa.gov.au](http://shop.service.sa.gov.au).

## Attachment 1—List of beverages covered by the Environment Protection Act

The following chart should be used only as a guide to assist you in determining which beverages and containers are covered by the beverage containers provisions of the Environment Protection Act (CDL). If in doubt, please contact the CDL Unit at the Environment Protection Authority on (08) 8204 1180, or email [andrea.woods@epa.sa.gov.au](mailto:andrea.woods@epa.sa.gov.au)

Beverage	Container Type	Size
<b>Carbonated soft (non-alcoholic) drinks</b>	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Water</b> —plain, still or carbonated—spring water, mineral water and any other water intended for human consumption	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Beers/ales/stout</b>	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Wine-based beverages</b> —any beverage that contains wine with an alcohol per volume percentage of less than 10%. This can include (but is not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>low alcohol wine</li> <li>non-alcoholic or de-alcoholised wine</li> <li>fruit flavoured wine</li> <li>wine coolers</li> <li>ready to drink 'alcoholic sodas'</li> </ul>	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Spirit based beverages</b> —any beverage that contains any spirit with an alcohol per volume percentage of less than 10%	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Alcoholic beverages</b> —derived from the fermentation of fruit (cider, alcoholic lemonade etc.)	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Non-carbonated, soft (non-alcoholic) drinks includes</b> (but is not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fruit juice drinks</li> <li>fruit drinks</li> <li>'sports' drinks</li> <li>'vitamin' drinks</li> <li>'energy' drinks</li> <li>ready-to-drink cordials</li> </ul>	All	Up to and including 3 litres
<b>Pure fruit juice</b> — a liquid at least 90% of which is fruit juice or vegetable juice or a mixture of fruit and vegetable juices	All	Less than 1 litre
<b>Flavoured milk</b> - cow's milk or the milk of any other animal, soy milk, ultra heat-treated milk, low fat milk etc.	All	Less than 1 litre

## EXAMPLES OF APPROVED REFUND MARKINGS

Wording: minimum 1.5 mm height (for the smallest letter in the statement)

Numeric: minimum 3 mm height

The statement should be clear and easily recognised by consumers. It should appear within a space that is not encumbered by other printing or artwork. A minimum of 3 mm 'free space' around the refund marking is recommended.

These refund markings are examples only.



5c - REFUND AT COLLECTION  
DEPOTS WHEN SOLD IN SA.

5c - REFUND AT COLLECTION  
DEPOTS WHEN SOLD IN SA.

5c REFUND AT COLLECTION DEPOTS WHEN SOLD IN SA

