

Collection depots – reverse vending machine (RVM)

Updated July 2022

EPA 956/22: This guideline is intended to assist applicants in completing the online [Application for approval of a collection depot – reverse vending machine \(RVM\)](#).

Introduction

South Australia operates a container deposit scheme where a 10-cent refund is available on certain empty beverage containers when the beverage is purchased in South Australia. The majority of approved containers are Category B containers meaning they must be returned to an approved collection depot for the refund.

The definition of 'collection depot' in the *Environment Protection Act, 1993* (the Act) includes a reverse vending machine (RVM).

Under Section 69(1) of the Act a person must not operate a collection depot without the approval of the Authority. The penalty for doing so is a maximum \$60,000 for a body corporate or maximum \$30,000 for a natural person.

Requirements under the Act

Under the Act, the operator of an approved collection depot–RVM is required to:

- accept category B containers that bear the approved refund marking or a former refund marking
- pay the person delivering the container 10 cents for that container in cash or by way of a credit note redeemable for cash
- request a person presenting 3,000 or more containers within a 48-hour period, to complete a declaration form
- keep the declaration for three years and make it available to an authorised officer, if requested.

However, the operator of an approved collection depot may refuse to accept the container for refund if:

- the container is unclean
- he or she reasonably suspects the container was not purchased in South Australia
- the request for a declaration has been refused.

Application

An application must be completed and approved by the EPA before the depot commences operation.

The Authority will consider the following when assessing an application for approval:

- The suitability of the waste management arrangement (WMA)¹ for the aggregation of the containers and the payment of refunds to consumers. This is usually achieved by entering into a contractual arrangement with the approved super collectors. However some depots return their containers via another approved collection depot without the need for a direct relationship with the super collectors. The Authority will consider other suitable proposals that ensure the containers are returned for recycling and consumers are refunded 10 cents.
- Whether planning approval has been granted by council or the relevant planning authority for the operation of the RVM at the site.
- The payment of the application fee.

Conditions of approval

If the depot is approved, the following conditions may be imposed depending on individual circumstances relating to the proposed location of RVM and other details of operation:

- The Approval Holder who wishes to transfer the operation of the RVM to another person or intends to change the location of the RVM must notify the Authority in writing prior to the change.
- The Approval Holder who wishes to cease operation of that depot must give notice in writing to the Authority.
- The Approval Holder must not pay a refund on, or seek reimbursement, for containers that the approval holder knows were not purchased in South Australia.
- The Approval Holder must provide quarterly data, in a manner determined by the Authority, pertaining to containers returned to the RVM at the approved site.
- The Approval Holder must ensure appropriate signage is displayed at the site:
 - providing information and contact details in the event of machine breakdown or complaint resolution
 - stipulating the RVM is specifically for the acceptance of approved Category B containers bearing a deposit
 - detailing the penalties for the offence of presenting containers purchased outside of South Australia for a refund.

Important information regarding your approval

Section 69(6) of the Act allows the Authority to vary an approval or impose, vary or revoke a condition of an approval.

Section 69(7) allows the Authority to revoke an approval if satisfied that a condition of approval has been contravened.

Under section 69D it is an offence to contravene a condition of approval – maximum penalty \$4,000 and Expiation fee of \$300.

¹ Pursuant to Section 68(3)(iii) of the Act a WMA, 'in relation to containers of a particular class, means an arrangement for the collection, sorting and aggregation of containers of that class when empty and their reuse, recycling or other disposal'.

Contact details for industry super collectors

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Scott Goldspink

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Telephone: 08 8376 0555

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Fees

Application fees

The following fees apply to **new** applications for approval to operate a collection depot. Please note your application for approval will not proceed unless payment is made.

Description	Application fee
Collection depots – RVM	\$408.60

Annual fees

Description	Annual fee
Located in metropolitan Adelaide	\$340.50
Located outside of metropolitan Adelaide	\$170.25

Payment options

Payment must be made at the time of application – by credit card if using the online application or by cheque or money order if using the hard copy form. Refer to the application form for further details on how to pay.

Disclaimer

This publication is a guide only and does not necessarily provide adequate information in relation to every situation. This publication seeks to explain your possible obligations in a helpful and accessible way. In doing so, however, some detail may not be captured. It is important, therefore, that you seek information from the EPA itself regarding your possible obligations and, where appropriate, that you seek your own legal advice.

Further information

Legislation

Online legislation is available free at [Legislation SA](#).

General information

Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4670
Freecall: 1800 623 445 (country)
Website: <https://www.epa.sa.gov.au>
Email: EPA.CDLteam@sa.gov.au
