Vermont’s Beverage Container and Redemption Law (“Bottle Bill Law”)

- Beverages under the law are “beer or other malt beverages and mineral waters, mixed wine drink, soda water and carbonated soft drinks in liquid form and intended for human consumption. As of January 1, 1990 ‘beverage’ also shall mean liquor.”

- Manufacturers and/or Distributors are required to register all brands to be sold in Vermont prior to sale in Vermont at: https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/BottleBill/. As part of the registration process, the manufacturer/distributor must identify the pickup agent who will pick-up redeemed containers from retail stores and certified redemption centers.

- Every beverage container sold in Vermont must be labeled with deposit information, as required by 10 V.S.A. Chapter 53 (https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/chapter/10/053), including a 5¢ deposit on all non-liquor beverage containers, and a 15¢ deposit on all liquor containers larger than 50ml.

- Manufacturers and/or Distributors may not refuse to pick up from a retailer that sells its product or certified redemption center any correctly labeled, empty beverage container of the kind, size, and brand sold by the manufacturer or distributor, or refuse to pay the retailer or a person operating a redemption center the refund value of a beverage container.

- Manufacturers and/or Distributors shall reimburse retailers/certified redemption centers 3.5¢ per container for containers of beverage brands that are part of a commingling program and 4¢ per container for containers of beverage brands that are not part of a commingling program.

Other Useful Web Sites/Contacts:

Vermont Department of Liquor Control, http://liquorcontrol.vermont.gov/


Vermont Retail & Grocers Association, http://www.vtrga.org/

TOMRA, Terry Heffernan (terry.heffernan@tomra.com); Josh Nelson (josh.nelson@tomra.com)

Vermont Commingling Group, LLC, Kevin Dietly (kdietly@nbenvironmental.com)
STEP 1: SALE OF PRODUCT

PRODUCT MANUFACTURER / DISTRIBUTOR
m/d charges the retailer a 5¢ deposit + a 3.5¢ handling fee** per container (at this point the m/d is holding 8.5¢)*

RETAILER
charges the customer / consumer 8.5¢ (at this point the retailer is even)

CONSUMER
pays 8.5¢ when purchasing the product (at this point the consumer is out 8.5¢)

STEP 2: RETURN OF THE CONTAINER

CONSUMER
returns the container to a redemption center or retailer and gets back the 5¢ deposit (at this point the consumer has paid 3.5¢ to cover the handling fee**)

RETAILER
pays the consumer the 5¢ (the retailer is now out the 5¢ deposit + has incurred the handling costs)

PRODUCT MANUFACTURER / DISTRIBUTOR
pays the retailer 8.5¢, the 5¢ deposit + the 3.5¢ handling fee** – the m/d is now even and the retailer is now even

In summary, costs are passed on all the way through the system so that it is the consumer paying the costs associated with recycling: i.e., the handling fee.

*Although not required by law, most beverage manufacturers/distributors pass the handling fee per container onto the retailers, and retailers pass it onto the consumers.

**For manufacturers/distributors not participating in the commingling program, the handling fee is 4¢ instead of 3.5¢.