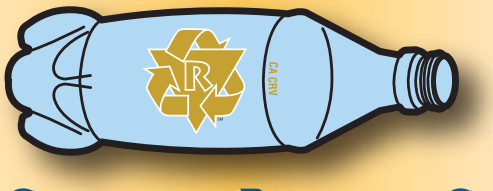
Recycler Fact Sheet

Weights & Measures



Background to the California Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Program

California's Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Program (Program) is intended to provide consumers the opportunity to return beverage containers conveniently, efficiently, and economically. In order to accomplish this, the law allows certified operators to weigh beverage containers to reduce the time to complete a transaction. To create a weight-based returns system, the Department of Conservation, Division of Recycling (Division) establishes separate minimum reimbursement rates for each material type, for example $1.55 per pound for California Refund Value (CRV) aluminum. Consumers are allowed by regulation to request to be paid by count for up to 50 empty beverage containers of each material type (i.e., aluminum, glass, plastic [each resin type] or bimetal).

Hints to Increase Scale Accuracy

- Have your scale professionally calibrated at least quarterly.
- Confirm the calibration of your scale with a test weight daily.
- Position your scale on a firm, level surface and check your scale frequently to assure it stays level. Most electronic scales have a bubble level and adjustable feet. These scales must be checked for level every time they are moved or repositioned.
- Frequently weigh the container used to hold beverage containers on the scale for accurate tare weight or tare the scale for each transaction, if possible.

Scale Accuracy Compliance

If a consumer is paid less than the total amount required based on improper weighing or is paid less than the posted amount per pound or per container, the recycling center may be out of compliance with both the Business and Professions Code enforced by counties and the Public Resources Code enforced by the Division.

The California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association and the Division are working together to ensure that scales are accurate, sealed and used properly in beverage container recycling transactions. This coordinated effort will consist of the normal compliance enforcement currently managed by county staff and the Division with referrals to the other agency when recycling centers are not complying with regulations specific to proper weighing of and payment for material.

Our primary goal is to increase consumer confidence and customer service in beverage container recycling to encourage greater consumer use of the recycling centers throughout the state.

Payment by Count

As of July 29, 2004 the California code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 5, Section 2535(b) has been revised to read:

"For deliveries to a recycling center, except reverse vending machines:

(1) The consumer has the option of being paid based on count for up to 50 empty beverage containers of each material type.

(2) The recycler may pay based on count for all deliveries of empty beverage containers received from consumers."

For good customer service and accurate payment of CRV, it is recommended that all recycling centers post a sign to inform employees and consumers of payment by count options.