

Recycling Refund Study Engagement

Share your Input on Ecology's Recycling Refund Study

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is studying whether a recycling refund program (sometimes called a bottle bill or deposit return system) could help improve recycling, reduce litter, and make it easier for people to return bottles and cans in Washington State.

A recycling refund program typically means people pay a deposit when they buy certain beverages and receive that money back by returning the empty containers for recycling at designated locations.

Ways to Participate

Ecology is gathering input from a broad range of tactics with communities and organizations throughout Washington. These efforts help Ecology to better understand the experiences and needs of different communities and systems partners. The following are examples of ways you can get involved:

Spring 2026:

Share your input through our statewide survey.

Ecology will also be conducting targeted engagement activities throughout the state during this time.

Summer 2026:

Add your comments through the public review process.

January 2027:

Ecology will submit final recommendations to the state legislature.



Want to Learn More or Stay Involved?

Information about surveys, meetings, and the public comment period will be shared through Ecology's website and community partners.

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/ecology-stay-informed to stay informed!

Why Your Input Matters

Ecology is seeking to better understand:

- What makes returning beverage containers convenient or difficult depending on where people live
- How travel distance, transportation, and time may affect participation
- What barriers, challenges and benefits different communities may face
- What governments, retailers, producers, and recycling system operators would need for successful implementation

Ecology is inviting people and organizations across Washington to share their perspectives, including:

- Residents and community members
- Tribal community members and Tribal governments
- Community-based organizations
- Cities, towns, and counties
- Retailers and beverage producers
- Recycling system operators

Your feedback will help inform recommendations to the state legislature on a potential recycling refunds program by January 2027.

For questions, contact Kara Steward

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