What is Return and Earn?

From 1 December 2017 anyone who returns an eligible drink container to an approved NSW collection point will receive a 10 cent refund.

Consumers and organisations can also give eligible containers to charities, schools, sporting groups or other community organisations for them to redeem and claim the refund as a fundraising opportunity.

Rollout of collection points will commence from 1 December 2017 and when fully deployed, the Scheme is expected to have around 500 operational collection points across the State.

The Scheme includes minimum coverage requirements:

- one collection site for towns of 500 people or more for remote NSW (such as far western NSW)
- one collection site for towns of 1,000 people or more for Regional NSW, with an additional site for each additional 20,000 people in a town
- one collection site for each 20,000 people in the Greater Sydney Region.

Why Return and Earn is important?

Return and Earn will help to reduce litter in the environment and contribute to the Premier’s Priority goal of reducing litter in NSW by 40 percent by 2020.

Over the next 20 years it is expected that Return and Earn will result in

- 1.6 billion fewer drink containers being littered
- and almost 11 billion fewer drink containers will go to landfill

What containers will be eligible?

Most drink containers between 150 millilitres and three litres that are purchased in NSW will be eligible, with some exceptions.

Eligible containers include those most commonly consumed out of the home and found in the NSW litter stream. These generally align with the eligible containers for the existing South Australia and Northern Territory container deposit schemes.

How does Return and Earn work?

A Scheme Coordinator (Exchange for Change) has been appointed to oversee and administer Return and Earn. The Network Operator, TOMRA Cleanaway is responsible for establishing and managing the network of collections points.

What are the different types of collection points?

1. Reverse Vending Machines – self-serve machines that provide the customer with a choice of refund options:
   - redeemable voucher at a participating retailer for cash or used towards purchases. Vouchers are valid for three years
   - electronic funds transfer via a mobile app to customer’s PayPal account
   - donation to a choice of four fundraising organisations or charities

2. Over-the-counter collection points – these are existing shopfronts (for example charity outlets or cafes) that will accept eligible containers and provide the customer with a cash refund.

3. Automated depots – these will be large volume processing facilities that will provide the customer with a cash refund.

A collection point map will be made available online at www.returnandearn.org.au before the scheme commences.

Is planning approval required to host a collection point?

Not always. The State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 was amended to allow low impact recycling equipment such as reverse vending machines for eligible bottles and cans, to be carried out as exempt development (without planning or building approval).

Where can I find more information?

Information about Return and Earn is available at www.returnandearn.org.au or at www.epa.nsw.gov.au