For 51 years and counting, OBRC and its distributor participants have served every corner of Oregon, providing access, convenience and always the highest level of recycling quality for beverage containers.

In January 2023, I stepped into the role of President and CEO of Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative. It’s a company with a talented team, a drive for innovation and a critically important mission. After growing up with Oregon’s Bottle Bill, leading this company and stewarding Oregon’s legacy is a dream come true.

The success of the Bottle Bill and the OBRC system is possible because of our focus on continuous improvement. We invest and innovate, year after year. But more than that, it is possible because of the people involved.

Thank you to the Oregonians who use the system daily, weekly and monthly. Thank you to the policymakers who help safeguard the system for all. Thank you to our nonprofit partners who bring community into our mission by directing millions of dollars in refunds to great causes across Oregon. Thank you to our co-op members who combine expertise with both foresight and oversight. And perhaps most, thank you to our employees, who work in challenging jobs to ensure every dime is refunded and every container is recycled.

In 2022, we learned from public opinion research that Oregonians give the system an A+, with 97% agreeing that it’s good for Oregon*. While that highlights the success of where we’ve been, even more so, it shows the importance of where we are going and the responsibility to do it well. You can count on all of us at OBRC to work every day to continue to make our Bottle Bill the most successful in the world and to create a world where no resource is wasted.

*2022 survey by DHM Research
Convenience means results. 2022 marked the first time ever that more than 2 billion containers were redeemed through Oregon’s Bottle Bill. That’s more than 2 billion containers recycled domestically to the highest and best outcomes and more than $205 million paid out to Oregonians and Oregon nonprofits in container refunds.

2022 by the Numbers: 2 Billion and Counting!

513 employees
301 co-op participants
164.8 million pounds of materials processed
117,831 new BottleDrop account sign-ups
26 full-service BottleDrop Redemption Centers (1 new)
94 bag drop locations (12 new, 1 closed)
51,337 metric tons of CO2 equivalent emissions reduced – comparable to taking 10,900 passenger cars off the road*
88.5% redemption rate**

*by recycling containers through OBRC vs. sending them to landfills, as calculated by US EPA Waste Reduction Model
**Preliminary data. OBRC submits final data to OLCC in June of each year.
OBRC’s Statewide Network is Powered by Innovation

Being good stewards of every container

Customers drop off their tied and tagged Green Bags, and our drivers pick them up. We pick up millions of bags annually. OBRC’s system can help improve recycling everywhere. Systems around the country are using OBRC’s technology. Next stop: the world.

It takes two to seven days to process and credit BottleDrop accounts.

OBRC’s patented Smart Count AI is extremely accurate and continuously learns as billions of containers are processed each year.

Using advanced technology, OBRC’s specially trained crews process Green Bags at our six plants.

Our patented Smart Count AI counts containers from each Green Bag using image recognition and artificial intelligence.

Each unique bag tag is scanned to link a customer’s containers to their BottleDrop account.

What happens to beverage containers after they’re returned to a retail bag drop site?

The refund value is credited to their BottleDrop account in real time before the containers move on to be recycled.

OBRC’s system mechanically sorts by material – glass, aluminum and plastic – using time-tested and fine-tuned equipment.

After being compacted and processed, containers are ready to be recycled into Grade-A materials, including new bottles and cans – right here in the U.S. Green Bags get recycled too!
OBRC’s Technology Makes the Redemption Process Faster and More Convenient

Thirty-one thousand.

That’s how many Green and Blue Bags of redeemable beverage containers, on average, are processed at BottleDrop locations every day in Oregon. And when it’s at peak volume, it can hit 50,000.

Meeting that demand in an efficient, speedy and convenient way is no easy task. But by developing an innovative technology right here in Oregon, OBRC has created a solution that’s made the redemption process faster, more accurate and more convenient for customers everywhere.

Oregonians return more than 2 billion containers annually, so efficiency and accuracy are key. OBRC’s patented Smart Count AI helps on both fronts, rapidly and accurately counting containers and crediting customers’ BottleDrop accounts instantly.

The Smart Count AI’s system uses image recognition, scanners, cameras, advanced software and artificial intelligence to rapidly identify and count bulk batches of OR 10-cent containers returned through the Green Bag and Blue Bag programs. After counting, customers’ accounts are credited immediately.

The system is extremely accurate and continues to learn over time as the software is updated to include more container and material types. OBRC has deployed the patented Smart Count AI technology at some of its processing plants and Redemption Centers.

In 2022, OBRC also deployed a second version of the technology called Stream Count AI, which counts beverage containers while they are in motion on a conveyor belt. The technology, made available at Redemption Centers in Northeast Portland and North Bend/Coos Bay, allows customers to empty up to 350 containers onto a conveyor belt, where the bottles and cans are instantly identified and counted underneath an optical system. Customers receive a voucher and can redeem it immediately.

OBRC regularly hosts delegations visiting from across the nation (and the world) to learn about the innovations that have made Oregon’s system one of the most efficient and convenient of its kind. Oregon’s first-in-the-nation Bottle Bill was inventive from the start, and OBRC’s focus on innovation continues to deliver nation-leading results.
Growing the BottleDrop Network

Convenience is a key factor in the performance of Oregon’s Bottle Bill. In 2022, OBRC expanded the BottleDrop network by opening a BottleDrop Redemption Center in North Bend/Coos Bay and replacing the Northeast Glisan Street BottleDrop Redemption Center in Portland with a state-of-the-art facility featuring first-of-its-kind technology. The BottleDrop network ended the year with 94 Green and Blue Bag drop sites across Oregon, 11 more than the previous year’s end. New drop locations were added through retail partnerships in Aloha, Ashland, Bend, La Pine, Lincoln City, Portland and Tualatin.

The percentage of containers returned through the BottleDrop network stabilized throughout 2022 compared to the COVID-19 pandemic-era highs that occurred during retail return suspensions in 2020 and 2021. Comparing the two most recent years without retail return suspensions (2019 and 2022), the BottleDrop network continues a steady trajectory of growth in the overall percentage of return volume.

“The savings that we are having with this, not just in terms of resources but in terms of time, is so invaluable for this community, for my neighborhood. We are working-class, refugee and BIPOC communities, and it’s just such a relief to know that we’re seen and that we’re valued and that we have this incredible technology that’s bright and shiny right here in an area that has felt traditionally underserved.”

– State Rep. Andrea Valderrama

Resource Recycling, 11/28/22

Above: The new Redemption Center at 122nd and Glisan in Portland

Left: The new BottleDrop Express in Ashland and North Bend/Coos Bay Redemption Center
THE OBRC NETWORK

- 94 Bag Drop Doors
- 26 Redemption Centers
- 6 Processing Plants
- 1 Corporate Headquarters
Making a Real Difference Across Oregon – and Beyond

Oregon’s Bottle Bill was created to reduce litter and protect the environment. While it continues to fulfill these core missions today, it has also become a big part of the social fabric in communities across the state – and even the world, as was the case when Oregonians showed up in a big way for their distant neighbors in Ukraine during the spring of 2022 (see the feature story on Page 8). Whether through Containers for Change, the OBRC Emergency Fund or an enduring partnership with the Oregon Community Foundation through the BottleDrop Fund, OBRC regularly partners with Oregonians to provide support during emergencies and to transform container redemption into community progress everywhere in Oregon.

13 nonprofits were awarded grants through the BottleDrop Fund at the Oregon Community Foundation in 2022.

- **Adalante Mujeres**, empowering women through environmental education and leadership in Forest Grove.
- **AdoptOneBlock**, supporting volunteers who beautify communities through litter collection.
- **Blanchet House**, improving sustainability at the Blanchet Farm residential recovery facility in Yamhill.
- **Children’s Forest of Central Oregon**, boosting access to the NatureHoods Program and field trips for students.
- **Elakha Alliance**, working to restore sea otter populations on the Oregon Coast.
- **Everyone Village**, launching an alternative container redemption service in conjunction with their safe rest village in Eugene.
- **Ground Score’s People’s Depot**, operated by and providing container redemption services for canners and gleaners in Portland.
- **Growing Gardens in Portland**, serving students through food systems education and environmental action.
- **Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (Cans for Kids)**, providing funds for children’s programming and activities through container donations in Cave Junction.
- **Lomakatsi Restoration Project in Ashland**, engaging youth in ecological stewardship training and employment.
- **Oregon Bee Project at Oregon State University**, supporting pollinator research.
- **Spruce Up Warrenton**, rallying the community to beautify Warrenton.
- **Trust for Public Land**, incorporating environmental education and design into school playgrounds at Madras Elementary and Alameda Elementary.
In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, triggering the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. By the end of that month, more than 4 million people had fled the country.

Almost immediately, Portland-based Mercy Corps, a global provider of humanitarian relief, sprang into action to help – and so did OBRC and our BottleDrop customers.

In March, OBRC announced that it would match donations up to $50,000 from its Emergency Fund to help support Mercy Corps’ efforts in Ukraine. The cooperative encouraged BottleDrop account holders – more than 810,000 at the time – to make donations to Mercy Corps from their online accounts. Oregonians returning containers at BottleDrop Redemption Centers could also donate their refund value to support Mercy Corps.

The campaign generated more than $125,000 in less than a month. The funds have helped Mercy Corps support local organizations in Ukraine, Poland and Romania that were providing critical relief services for refugees and those still in Ukraine.

“From grain shortages to fuel prices, the war in Ukraine has had significant ripple effects around the world,” said Lynn Hector, Mercy Corps’ senior director of global communications. “Oregonians stepped up tremendously in 2022 by donating their bottles and cans to support Mercy Corps’ relief efforts in Ukraine. This unique BottleDrop fundraising effort shows us once again how deeply interconnected we are as a global community and how even small acts of generosity can make a tremendous impact.”

This wasn’t the first time OBRC and Oregonians returning their containers teamed up to help others in need. Originally launched in 2020, the OBRC Emergency Fund aims to help communities and neighbors during times of crisis, often through matching campaigns or calls to action that provide opportunities for BottleDrop account holders and Oregonians to leverage the full redemptive power of their containers.

The Emergency Fund was first activated at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and raised $200,000 for the Oregon Food Bank to help people experiencing food insecurity. The fund has also been activated to help rural firefighters during a devastating wildfire season and to support cooling and warming shelters during extreme weather events.
Giving Back, Giving Big

It’s easy to get lost in the numbers: more than 110 checks each week, 480 per month, 5,800 per year, totaling more than $5.1 million raised by Oregon nonprofits through BottleDrop Give in 2022. Behind each of those checks is a town festival bringing people together, a food bank providing nourishing meals, an animal rescue brightening a home with a shelter pet, a youth or senior services provider enhancing lives, and an environmental group caring for our planet.
513 of the 5,565 Give profs raised more than $2,000 in 2022 through BottleDrop Give
Going Far Beyond the Dime

Container redemption is about more than just the dime. Oregon’s Bottle Bill boosts community organizations across the state, helps keep Oregon beautiful, reaches new heights through creative partnerships and continues to inspire change beyond our borders through relentless innovation.

CHEERS TO RESILIENCE!

“We have long known the sustainability benefits of refillable bottles, but the recent bottle and can shortage in the beverage market showed us a whole new benefit of the program. While other brewers were scrambling to find bottles, even at significantly escalated prices, the steady supply of Refillable bottles coming back through OBRC’s Refillable program meant that we had bottles available the whole time – and at a price that stayed stable, despite the whims of market scarcity.”

– Matt Swihart
Double Mountain Brewery

199,431 BottleDrop account holders took advantage of BottleDrop Plus in 2022, making their redemption dollars stretch farther by getting an extra 20% added to their funds to shop with in-store credit at participating retailers. That’s a 25% increase from 2021.

OBRC unveiled a much-improved website in 2022. OBRC.com now features information about Oregon’s Bottle Bill, the unique and effective nature of the Oregon Model and the excellent recycling outcomes it produces.

In 2022, BottleDrop account holders transferred more than $400,000 to nearly 4,000 Oregon College Savings Plan accounts. Oregon is the only place in the world where people can directly save for education through container redemption.

OBRC continues to lead the way in refillable glass bottles. The only statewide refill program in the U.S., BottleDrop Refillables now includes 11 craft beverage producers and 112 unique beverage options.
An Annual Celebration of Oregon’s Bottle Bill

In 2022, OBRC once again celebrated the Bottle Bill’s anniversary (51!) by engaging Oregonians in a statewide hunt for hidden commemorative bottles. Each lucky finder got to direct a $1,000 donation to the BottleDrop Give nonprofit of their choice.

- Amber Kaney and teammates Tommy, Edith and Vina Hefflinger, Jason Stride and Neal Dietz, all of Oregon City and Portland
  Found in Wilsonville’s Memorial Park
  Selected nonprofit: Rose Festival Foundation

- Megan Futrell of Tigard, hunting with Elizabeth and Katen Guise of Beaverton
  Found in Trojan Park near Rainier
  Selected nonprofit: Rabbit Advocates

- Johanna Field of Eugene, assisted by Dawn, Marie and Melissa Dettner
  Found in Eugene’s Amazon Park
  Selected nonprofit: Shelter Animal Resource Alliance (SARA)

- Nicole Ferguson and Jesse Grimes of Pilot Rock
  Found in Hermiston’s Riverfront Park
  Selected nonprofits: Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter (PAWS)/Pioneer Humane Society

- Shane Chatham of Bend
  Found in Bend’s Hollinshead Park
  Selected nonprofit: Upper Deschutes Watershed Council

- Kim Thurman and Rob Schneider of Shady Cove
  Found on the Quarry Trail near Jacksonville
  Selected nonprofit: Rogue Valley Genealogical Society
Oregonians who redeem their containers responsibly get to enjoy the system’s strong environmental and recycling outcomes at almost no cost – and at no taxpayer expense. That’s because Oregon’s Bottle Bill is an advanced form of Extended Producer Responsibility, where OBRC serves as the statewide not-for-profit operational steward on behalf of the beverage industry, and we invest the value of unclaimed refunds directly into the operation and expansion of the network. Additionally, beverage distributors make significant financial contributions to cover the remaining costs of the program.

### 2022 Annual Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Budget Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting, Administration &amp; Compliance</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>$5.84M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewardship Initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail Services &amp; Transportation</td>
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<td>Material Processing at Statewide Plants</td>
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<tr>
<td>BottleDrop Centers &amp; Green Bag Program</td>
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<td>BottleDrop Express &amp; Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BottleDrop Refillables</td>
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<td>$610,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The entire value of unclaimed refunds is fully invested in the operation of the redemption system.*

*Additional funds in the operating budget come from fees paid by OBRC members, retailers and other system revenues.

1Pie chart percentages and data reviewed by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC).

2Budget and redemption data for 2022 in this report is preliminary. OBRC is committed to accurate and transparent accounting and files an official report with the OLCC as required by Oregon’s Bottle Bill in June of each calendar year. OBRC does not include the value of scrap material sold in its operating budget.
**Innovation + Convenience = Success**

A range of easy return options and thousands of return points help Oregon’s system deliver excellent results each year. Through OBRC’s network, customers have easy access to their dimes, and Oregonians enjoy outstanding recycling outcomes. Convenience and results, the Oregon way.

**WE GET A LOT MORE BACK**

Around 88% of beverages sold in Oregon are redeemable, and the redemption rate is regularly between 80-90%. Nationally, the beverage container recycling average is around 35%.

**CLEANER MATERIAL MEANS BETTER RECYCLING**

Beverage containers have their own recycling pathway in Oregon, making them cleaner and easier to recycle. Unlike curbside, this means they can remain Grade-A materials and be recycled into food-grade packaging again.

**WE KEEP THINGS CLOSE TO HOME**

Not all recycling is the same. While there are plenty of stories about recyclable material being shipped overseas or ending up in a landfill, because of our Bottle Bill and OBRC’s system, Oregonians can have confidence that:

- Our beverage containers are being recycled.
- Glass and plastic are recycled right here in Oregon.
- All recycling takes place in the U.S.

**ON THE HORIZON: 2023 GOALS**

- Open Yamhill County’s first full-service BottleDrop Redemption Center in McMinnville.
- Secure property for a future full-service BottleDrop Redemption Center in The Dalles.
- Expand access to the BottleDrop network by partnering with retailers to make Green and Blue Bag drop doors available for the first time in The Dalles, Brookings, Lebanon, Pendleton, Woodburn and Lake Oswego, and expand drop door access in Ashland, Eugene, Oregon City and Portland.
- Hit $1 million contributed to Oregon College Savings Plan and Oregon ABLE accounts through BottleDrop account transfers.
- Serve as a great partner for BottleDrop Give nonprofits, continuing to grow the Give network of nonprofits, increase funds raised and make positive community impacts through the program.
- Reach 1 million BottleDrop account holders for the first time.
- Continue to work with programs across the country (and the world) to help them improve by exporting Oregon’s creative solutions beyond our borders.
- Continue to improve the BottleDrop app by rolling out new functionality to enable direct fund transfers from the app and BottleDrop Plus integration to allow the creation of electronic Plus vouchers in the app.
- Build on the success of BottleDrop Refillables and roll out improved labeling technology, making bottle washing and reuse much easier.
- Continue to serve as a major statewide employer, providing a range of jobs across Oregon as part of the growing green economy.
At OBRC, we empower people to ensure no resource is wasted with every container they redeem. Oregonians can be proud of their Bottle Bill, which consistently produces one of the nation’s highest redemption rates. While container return volume has doubled in just the past six years, and the system recently faced a disruptive global pandemic, OBRC has been consistent in delivering convenience for consumers and best-in-class recycling outcomes. When there’s no existing solution, OBRC invents one. We are innovators, finding ways to be easier, faster, better and cost-efficient. And when we find the answer, we bring it to the world.