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New BottleDrop Redemption Center Opens in McMinnville

The new location will expand BottleDrop's Green & Blue Bag programs in Yamhill County

McMinnville, Ore. -- The [Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative](#) (OBRC), parent organization to [BottleDrop](#), today announced the opening of its brand new BottleDrop Redemption Center at 1250 NE Lafayette Ave. in McMinnville. This new facility will allow area residents to return up to 350 beverage containers per day, participate in the popular [Green Bag program](#), and will make fundraising opportunities easier for local nonprofits through the [Blue Bag program](#). The redemption center will also feature OBRC's rapid, state-of-the-art bulk counting device, the Stream Count AI, which uses advanced technology to instantly count container returns, reducing lines and saving time for customers.

Local leaders have long advocated to bring the BottleDrop network to the community. City Councilor Zack Geary first reached out to OBRC in 2020 to push for a BottleDrop Redemption Center in McMinnville. "Combining far better recycling outcomes with peak consumer convenience means a win for the environment, and precious time saved for our residents," Geary said. "It's exciting to see the most modern technology and the most convenient container return options right here in McMinnville. The Green Bag program is incredibly easy for consumers, and the Blue Bag program for nonprofits is a fundraising powerhouse."



*City Councilor Zack Geary drops off inaugural Blue Bag for McMinnville Education Foundation
(Photo available in digital assets folder [here](#))*

There are currently 7,681 Green Bag account holders within 10 miles of the new Redemption Center's location. In the past year, they dropped off nearly 100,000 bags, receiving over \$671,000 in refunds, despite the closest drop off locations being in Newberg and Salem.

The location of the facility was suggested by Ashley Watkins, Yamhill County's Solid Waste Coordinator. Watkins first reached out to OBRC in 2019, in an effort to help boost recycling outcomes and enhance convenience for county residents. When she learned about the facility requirements for a BottleDrop Redemption Center she researched options and shared them with OBRC, ultimately finding the successful location. "At Yamhill County we are always looking for ways to make recycling as easy and convenient as possible for our residents," Watkins said. "I was happy to put our local knowledge to work and help OBRC find a great location to bring these easy return options to the community."

Oregon's Bottle Bill continues to be one of the state's most successful environmental legacies. The national average recycling rate for beverage containers hovers around 35%. By comparison, Oregon's redemption rate in 2022 was 85.5%, the highest in the nation. Last year, over 900,000 BottleDrop account holders dropped off more than 11.4 million Green and Blue Bags in Oregon, and OBRC [announced its one-millionth account](#) holder last month.

"McMinnville has been a longtime expansion priority for the BottleDrop network," said Eric Chambers, vice president of strategy and outreach at OBRC. "This facility represents a partnership with the local community, retailers, and the beverage industry and we're thrilled to deploy cutting-edge technology at the facility to make redeeming containers easy and save people time."

The BottleDrop Redemption Center in McMinnville will become the primary return pathway for OR 10-cent beverage containers in the community. When a full-service Redemption Center opens, the grocery stores nearby have their container take-back requirement eliminated or reduced, depending on their distance from the Redemption Center. There's a benefit for consumers, who are able to return up to 350 containers per person, per day at the Redemption Center, up from the previous limit of 144 containers per person, per day at large retailers, and consumers also gain easy access to the Green Bag program.

"We are always happy to see BottleDrop Redemption Centers open in communities across Oregon," said Bill Caldwell, owner of McKay's Markets and Chair of the Northwest Grocery Association Board of Directors. "These facilities are great for consumers, great for nearby retailers, and great for the environment, as they help boost Oregon's nation-leading recycling rates."

Additionally, 37 different local nonprofits in the area have raised over \$80,000 in just the past year through BottleDrop Give's Blue Bag program. The new facility in McMinnville will make it more convenient than ever for area residents and nonprofits to redeem their bottles and cans through the Green and Blue Bag programs.

"The McMinnville High School band has been using BottleDrop as a fundraiser for more than 4 years. It has been a great source of income for our band program, raising over \$20,000 to help supplement the marching band, winter percussion, and winter guard programs," said Jamie

Akers, Mac Band Parent Organization member. “Parents have been driving monthly, sometimes weekly, to deliver bags to Forest Grove, Salem, Newberg, Wilsonville. The band organization will benefit greatly from having a BottleDrop in McMinnville.”

How does BottleDrop’s Green Bag system work?

BottleDrop account holders purchase designated bags for a small fee and print bag tag stickers with QR codes linking their bags to their accounts at the kiosks located on site at all bag drop locations. Customers then fill the bags with redeemable bottles and cans and drop them off at any BottleDrop location statewide. BottleDrop will count the containers and credit the account within seven days, and often much faster. There are a number of convenient ways account holders can spend their redemption funds:

- Withdraw them for cash
- Get an extra 20% by using their funds to shop with store credit at participating retailers through the [BottleDrop Plus program](#);
- [Save for education](#) by linking their BottleDrop Account with an Oregon College Savings Plan Account; or,
- Donate to a charity of their choice through [BottleDrop Give](#).

New customers can sign up for a BottleDrop account [online](#), through the [mobile app](#) (search for “BottleDrop Account” in the App Store or on Google Play), or through the BottleDrop kiosk located inside the McMinnville Redemption Center. Green Bags are also available for purchase and customers can print their bag tag stickers at the Center’s BottleDrop kiosk as well.

Push Plus to get 20% More

BottleDrop account holders can get even more from their refunds through the Plus program. By pushing Plus at the in-store kiosk at participating retail locations, account holders can get 20% more back on their bottle and can returns to shop with in-store credit. This program is available to all new and existing customers, and nearly 200,000 Oregonians took advantage of the program in 2022.

Innovation at the heart of BottleDrop

The Stream Count AI rapid bulk container counter, developed by OBRC here in Oregon, will significantly increase the speed and efficiency of container counting, saving significant time for customers. The process begins when customers empty their containers onto a conveyor belt, which uses artificial intelligence and a neural network to instantly recognize, count, and credit containers. Customers receive a voucher at the end of the transaction and can redeem it for cash immediately. The facility will also be outfitted with reverse vending machines for customers who prefer to redeem containers one-at-a-time.

For more information: Visit [BottleDrop.com](#)

About BottleDrop and the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative

The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative is the industry steward of Oregon’s nationally recognized beverage container redemption system and the operator of the BottleDrop network. A not-for-profit cooperative that recycles around 2 billion containers every year, OBRC believes in empowering people to redeem every container easily, efficiently, and effectively, ensuring that no resource is wasted. To learn more, visit [BottleDrop.com](#) or [OBRC.com](#).