

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 18, 2020

Contact:

Josh Kelly, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

802-522-5897, josh.kelly@vermont.gov

COVID-19 and Redemption of Vermont's Bottle Bill Containers

MONTPELIER - Due to the anticipated spread of the COVID-19 virus and the current state of emergency declared by Governor Phil Scott, effective immediately the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will temporarily stop pursuing enforcement action against retailers or redemption centers who fail to redeem beverage containers subject to Vermont's bottle bill law (10 VSA §1523).

Vermont DEC has taken this step in allowing retailers and redemption centers to temporarily stop redemption services to reduce unnecessary person-to-person contact and possible virus transmission and to let grocers to focus on restocking food shelves and other needed work to assure availability of groceries.

This temporary period will end on **April 30, 2020** unless extended by DEC. Decisions about whether to close or stop redeeming during this time are solely at the discretion of the retailer/redemption center.

DEC recommends residents check with redemption centers before bringing containers to redeem. If your retailer has closed or chosen not to accept beverage containers during this period, you can delay redemption until locations re-open for normal business. Or, you can place redemption containers in your regular "blue bin" recycling; all unclaimed deposits will go to the Vermont Clean Water Fund. All deposit containers will continue to retain their redemption value.

We ask all Vermonters to take necessary precautions to keep themselves and their community members safe. For further information on COVID-19 in Vermont, and Vermont's response, visit <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>.

For questions about Vermont's bottle bill, or this pause in enforcement, contact Becky Webber with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation at 802-522-3658, or rebecca.webber@vermont.gov.