

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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Retail crackdown on sale of unauthorised containers

An Environment Protection Authority (EPA) investigation has identified a number of suburban retailers who have been illegally selling drinks in non-compliant containers, flouting South Australia's container deposit legislation (CDL).

EPA Manager Investigations and Tactical Support, Stephen Barry said close to 10,000 unauthorised containers were seized recently from five small and independent supermarkets whose owners could face significant penalties.

"Some of these retailers have previously received warnings from the EPA for similar offences and now face penalties as high as \$4,000 or \$300 fines for each offence," Mr Barry said.

The EPA is responsible for managing CDL under the *Environment Protection Act 1993* where clearly marked and authorised containers sold in South Australia, can each be claimed for a 10 cent refund.

"Beverage suppliers add an extra cost to their product to cover the refund which can be redeemed at South Australian collection depots when the empty container is returned for recycling," Mr Barry said.

"The non-compliant containers that were seized by the EPA were all imported drinks where the added cost at their point-of-sale did not take place and with each of these not being labelled, rendering them ineligible for a 10 cent refund in South Australia."

Mr Barry said the five supermarket retailers will be prosecuted in the Environment Resources and Development Court.

"As South Australia approaches a 40-year history for its container deposit scheme, it is important to remind retailers of their responsibilities and reaffirm that penalties will apply to those who disregard this law," Mr Barry.

"This scheme has been very successful with an annual average return of around 80% which amounts to around 580 million empty containers that are recycled in South Australia each year," he said.

"These containers don't end up polluting our beaches, parks and roadways or end up in a landfill."

More information on the container deposit scheme is available on the EPA website or by contacting the Investigations and Tactical Support Branch through the EPA Hotline on (08) 8204 2004.

For further information please contact Chris Metevelis: 0439 137 641