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Department of Environmental Conservation  
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### VT DEC Solid Management Program Statement on Enforcement Discretion for the Bottle Bill

The following statement is issued in accordance with the Agency of Natural Resources COVID – 19 State of Emergency Enforcement and Compliance Guidance Document, dated March 31, 2020 (Guidance Document). The Guidance Document is available at [https://anr.vermont.gov/about\\_us/emergency-information](https://anr.vermont.gov/about_us/emergency-information). The exercise of enforcement discretion described in the following statement is contingent on affected projects meeting all applicable criteria of the Guidance Document.

For the reasons set forth below, the following message is provided relating to the Department of Environmental Conservation’s exercise of enforcement discretion during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Vermont’s bottle bill law (10 VSA §1523) requires retailers and redemption centers to redeem beverage containers subject to that bill. Vermont DEC recognizes the need 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.

The Agency is hereby exercising enforcement discretion pursuant to the Guidance Document for any instance of non-compliance relating to the implementation of the bottle bill by retailers and redemption centers which temporarily stop offering redemption services provided:

- a. The noncompliance does not present a significant threat to human health or the environment;
- b. The retailers and redemption centers come into compliance as soon as possible or enter into a schedule to return to compliance with the Agency.

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.

This exercise of enforcement discretion will end when the State of Emergency is lifted. Decisions about whether to close or stop redeeming during this time are solely at the discretion of the retailer/redemption center.

For questions about Vermont’s bottle bill, or this exercise in enforcement discretion, contact Becky Webber with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation at 802-522-3658, or [rebecca.webber@vermont.gov](mailto:rebecca.webber@vermont.gov).

