

Conn. expands bottle bill to include bottled water

March 4 -- Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell signed a law, March 3, expanding the state's bottle bill to include bottled water as part of a larger deficit mitigation bill.

Starting April 1, all noncarbonated beverage containers must indicate a refund value of 5 cents. The state defines noncarbonated beverages as water, flavored water, nutritionally enhanced water or any other beverage identified as a type of water. Beer, malt beverages, mineral water, soda and other carbonated drinks already are covered under the state's bottle bill.

The law excludes containers containing 3 or more liters and those made from high-density polyethylene. Small manufacturers that bottle and sell fewer than 250,000 20-ounce or smaller containers of noncarbonated beverages a year can apply to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for an exemption.

The state hopes to receive an additional \$13 million in unredeemed deposits annually by expanding the bottle bill, which it implemented in 1980. On Jan. 15, Rell signed House Bill 5095 into law, which allows the state to seize the unclaimed 5-cent deposits previously kept by beverage wholesalers to make up for the 1.5- to 2-cent handling fee they pay to retailers for each bottle or can collected.

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