

Inquiry - Improving Queensland's Container Refund Scheme

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I started collecting bottles and cans when the program began in NSW and we used to visit Tweed Heads every week. I switched to QLD when the program began here and started recording the quantities in April 2019. My progressive total is 86,712. I don't go out collecting them. I live 3.5k from where I worked up until October last year, and all these were picked up while walking to and from work.

I don't 'bin dive' residential bins, but I do collect from commercial and public bins where I can get access to them. I do now go out occasionally to collect them, but I stick to my regular route,

My first comment is where they come from. Most of them come from landfill bins, I don't find that many in recycling bins. Quite a few of the businesses I pass don't even have or put out recycling bins. All their rubbish is in a single landfill bin. And most of them are in sealed plastic bags, even the ones in recycling bins are often in bags, so they would miss out on being recycled anyway under the present restrictions. There is a serious lack of education or caring about what goes into the different bins, food scraps in recycling bins etc. It seems to be a major problem. In fact I'd suggest this is probably the biggest problem, apathy and a lack of knowledge.

Many public bins seem to be specifically designed to stop anyone from accessing them. I know for a fact that council and other public bins are emptied straight into landfill with no sorting so anyone doing the 'right thing' and putting empty cans into public bins isn't helping the situation.

I find the Containers for Change bag collection service brilliant. I used to drive to my local depot and spend ages waiting in line to redeem my collection, but now I just bag them up and book a weekly pickup. As someone now suffering from vision impairment this is a real blessing.

The 10c refund is pretty minimal, but it won't stop me from collecting. I do have a problem with full size wine and spirits bottles though, their size and weight means collecting more than 6 or so in one trip very difficult. Perhaps they are worth a bit more?

May I suggest you look into a system created by Wollongong Council? They have small open top plastic or metal baskets attached to public waste bins in parks etc. These make it easier for people to dispose of bottles and cans than even opening the bin, I'm sure they'd work here on beach and park bins. I've attached an image but not sure how it works.

Kind regards, Glen



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