

What Does a High-performing DRS Look Like?

DRSs — bottle bills — have a long history of success in this country and, when optimized around high-performing principles, are a critical tool in the shift to a more environmentally responsible, circular economy. For the first time, industry players from across the supply chain came together in partnership with Reloop North America to support an independent study of how DRS can be improved and optimized to play an even greater role in the future. Below, we present hard numbers that show how to improve DRS in five Northeastern states, what those improvements will cost, and what their impact will be.



Redemption vs. Recycling rate

These two terms sound the same but have a distinction that makes a difference when it comes to DRSs.

- **Redemption rate** is the number of returned DRS containers divided by the total sales of DRS containers sold.²⁷
- **Recycling rate** for beverage containers is the number of containers collected through DRS plus those collected from curbside services (minus a process loss percentage) divided by the total number of containers lost in processing.

High-performing DRS have a 90% redemption rate or higher, meaning that 90% of beverage containers sold are reclaimed through the system. However, the recycling rate for all materials can be higher because there are other ways of collecting recyclable materials such as curbside recycling.