

BOTTLES from page 1A

Customers can also sign up for a BottleDrop account at the store kiosk, and print bag tag labels with QR codes linking the bags to their accounts. Then they simply tag their bags, fill them with empty Oregon 10-cent refund containers, and drop them off at the new BottleDrop network drop location. Their containers are counted and credited to their BottleDrop accounts within seven days.

BottleDrop is operated by the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative (OBRC), which introduced the Green Bag program in 2010 as a convenient and efficient redemption option for Oregonians. The program has grown each year, with Oregonians returning 8.3 million Green and Blue Bags in 2020.

According to Oregon State Rep. Boomer Wright, "Redeeming cans and bottles just got a lot easier on the Central Coast. Oregon's Bot-

tle Bill continues to get some of the best outcomes in the world, in part because of convenient options like the Green Bag program. I'm tremendously excited to see the BottleDrop network expanding to our area."

Oregon State Sen. Dick Anderson also expressed excitement.

"This option is very popular everywhere it's available, and it makes redeeming cans and bottles fast and easy," he said. "This location will also open the area up to the Blue Bag program, which helps nonprofits engage their supporters and supercharge their fundraising through ongoing can



COURTESY PHOTO

On May 21, State Rep. Boomer Wright loads the first Green Bag into the Florence Fred Meyer BottleDrop Bag Drop location for bulk recycling of redeemable bottles and cans.

and bottle donations." Oregonians who have a BottleDrop account can purchase approved 20-gallon Green Bags for a small fee. They also receive printed

bag tag labels with QR codes linking their bags to their accounts. They fill the 20-gallon bags with redeemable bottles and cans and drop them at any approved Green Bag drop location. BottleDrop will count the contents and credit the account within seven days. There are different ways account holders can spend their redemption funds:

- Save for education with an Oregon 529 account; or,
 - Donate to a charity of your choice through BottleDrop Give.
- Customers can get started with the Green Bag program on BottleDrop's website, by downloading the mobile app via the App Store and Google Play or by signing up at the BottleDrop kiosk inside the Fred Meyer Florence.
- OBRC is a statewide, not-for-profit cooperative, formed by the beverage distributors, manufacturers and grocers. OBRC helps keep Oregon beautiful by providing outstanding services to partners, distributors, retailers and the public for the recovery, reuse and recycling of beverage containers.
 - Through OBRC's BottleDrop Redemption Centers and container pickup service for more than 2,500 retail partners, the co-op recycles around 3 billion beverage containers annually. To learn more, visit BottleDropCenters.com or OBRC.com.
 - Withdraw for cash at the Fred Meyer Florence or any BottleDrop kiosk;
 - Make them go 20% further by spending them at the Fred Meyer Florence through the BottleDrop Plus program;

UPDATE from page 1A

According to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said, "Vaccines protect you, and they protect everyone around you. It's going to take all of us working together to make sure enough Oregonians are vaccinated to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and end this pandemic."

On May 11, Brown announced that counties that vaccinate at least 65% of their residents 16 or older with at least one dose and submit documentation on how they will close equity gaps in their vaccination efforts are eligible to move to the lower risk level of community spread of COVID-19.

On May 21, five counties were able to shift to this lower risk after vaccination efforts, including Benton, Deschutes, Hood River, Lincoln and Washington counties.

When Oregon achieves a first dose 70% statewide vaccination rate for residents 16 or older, according to the OHA, the state will lift all risk

level health and safety restrictions. Some restrictions based on CDC guidance for use of masks and physical distancing may remain in place.

To increase vaccinations, Brown has announced two separate motivators. The first is a \$1 Million "Take Your Shot Oregon" Vaccination Campaign, where all vaccinated Oregonians 12 and older are eligible for cash prizes or scholarships.

Oregonians 18 and older will have the chance to win \$1 million or one of 36 \$10,000 prizes, with one winner in each county in Oregon. Oregonians age 12 to 17 will have a chance to win one of five \$100,000 Oregon College Savings Plan scholarships. All Oregonians who have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by the draw date will be entered to win.

"Vaccines are the best tool we have to protect ourselves and our loved ones from COVID-19, and our fastest way to end this pandemic,"

said Governor Kate Brown. "The Take Your Shot Oregon Campaign is a way to thank Oregonians for stepping up and keeping our communities safe. It's never been easier to get a vaccine, so don't miss your shot to enter!"

The campaign is a collaboration between the Oregon Health Authority, the Oregon Lottery, and the Oregon State Treasury, and is funded with \$1.86 million in federal Coronavirus Relief Act dollars. With the help of the Oregon Lottery, the Oregon Health Authority will draw names for winners in each category.

The drawing will take place on June 28, with names announced the following week. The cut off for names being added to the vaccine database is midnight on June 27.

The second motivation encouraged by the state is an effort to add vaccinated sections are large events, such as for upcoming Portland Trail Blazers games.

"When fans left the Moda

Center last March, it was one of the first signs this pandemic was about to change our lives in ways we hadn't previously imagined," said Brown. "Vaccines are the key to our return to normal life. It is a testament to the way Oregonians have united to battle this virus and get vaccinated in large numbers that, this week, the Rip City faithful can return to give our Trail Blazers the legendary home court advantage they deserve."

OHA will update health and safety guidance for lower risk counties this week to reflect the following changes, allowing the option for vaccinated sections for businesses, venues and faith institutions.

OHA's new guidance includes the following:

- Individuals in Oregon are no longer required to wear a face mask or physically distance, whether indoors or outdoors, two weeks after their final COVID-19 vaccination dose. A "fully vaccinated individual" is a person

who has received both doses of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine or one dose of a single-dose vaccine and at least 14 days have passed since the individual's final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

- Fully vaccinated individuals are required to continue wearing a mask and observe physical distancing on public transportation and in schools, hospitals and clinics, homeless shelters, youth and adult correctional facilities and long-term care facilities.
- Businesses, employers and faith institutions can choose to no longer require masks and physical distancing for fully vaccinated individuals or continue to require masks and physical distancing in their locations for all individuals, regardless of vaccination status.
- If a business, employer or faith institution chooses to no longer require masks and physical distancing, the business, employer or faith institution must require visitors to show proof of vaccination and review the proof

of vaccination. In that case, a business would need to have a policy for checking the vaccination status of customers and employees if they are not wearing masks. Fully vaccinated individuals would need to provide proof they'd been vaccinated if they want to remove face coverings and not observe physical distancing guidelines.

In addition, state health experts announced that face coverings are no longer required outdoors, regardless of vaccination status. OHA strongly recommends that people who are not vaccinated and people who are at high risk of severe COVID-19 disease continue to wear face coverings and physically distance in outdoor crowded areas and large gatherings.

People can learn more about the virus, and how to get vaccinated, at covid-vaccine.oregon.gov; coronavirus.oregon.gov/Pages/living-with-covid-19.aspx; all4oregon.org; lane-county.org/coronavirus; and lanecounty.org/vaxclinics.

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