



## **2019 Depot Exit Interview Survey Final Report**

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Prepared for:

Beverage Container Management Board

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## **Executive Summary**

The Beverage Container Management Board (BCMB) surveyed 15 Rural and Urban depots within the vicinity of Edmonton. The survey provided insight into depot customer demographics, details of the depot experience, satisfaction with the depot experience, awareness of branding and signage, customer behaviours and views related to depot, and a more focussed look to Rural clientele. In total, 995 surveys with depot customers were completed.

In alignment with previous years, customers continue to be highly satisfied with their experience in the depot and the time it takes to receive services, with the majority of customers giving the highest possible satisfaction rating. When asked if they, hypothetically, would continue to recycle in the absence of a monetary deposit, opinions diverged markedly.

Excellent and efficient service was valued by customers, however the most common reason for choosing a particular depot was proximity. Most visits were concluded within 20 minutes with an average refund of approximately \$40.

Only about half of the customers surveyed were aware that all the depots are regulated, but about 50% of those felt that this regulation was important. Roughly one-third of customers noticed the “Depot” logo during their visit. Over half of customers indicated they would use a quick-drop service if available, with most preferring cash pick up in such a scenario.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The Beverage Container Management Board (BCMB) has conducted an exit survey annually since 2013. The survey provides valuable information to understand customer perception around depots and customer behaviour, and to identify areas of improvement. The success of the BCMB rests on the public returning empty beverage containers to depots; as a result, it is crucial to gauge customer perception and behaviour to understand how to promote their uptake of the system and increase beverage container return rates.

The 2019 Depot Exit Interview Survey covered the Rural and Urban area surrounding Edmonton. Although individual Rural depots have been included in past studies, this year marked a wide-scale effort to gain data and insight from Rural locations.

The survey provided insight into the following key areas:

- ▶ ***Depot customer demographics:*** sex and region (determined by postal code)
- ▶ ***details of their depot experience:*** total refund amount and the total amount of time spent in the depot, from when they enter the depot to when they exit with their refund
- ▶ ***satisfaction with their depot experience:*** satisfaction with time spent in the depot, satisfaction with their overall experience with the depot, reasons for choosing the depot, aspects of the depot they like that make them want to return, and areas for improvement for the depot
- ▶ ***sought an understanding of environmentally relevant questions:*** how far would depot customers travel to get to depot, what would they do with beverage containers if depots were inaccessible
- ▶ ***awareness of depot branding and signage:*** awareness of the depot logo and of signage displaying refund amount for various container sizes
- ▶ ***customer behaviour and views related to depots:*** whether the visit to the depot was part of a series of errands, who controls the recycling in the household, how they first learned to take containers back to the depot, whether they have brought back containers that were not accepted, and their awareness of the fact that depots in Alberta are regulated

Section 2.0 describes the methodology used to complete the surveys in detail, Section 3.0 analyzes the results of the survey, and Section 4.0 concludes the report.

## 2.0 Methodology

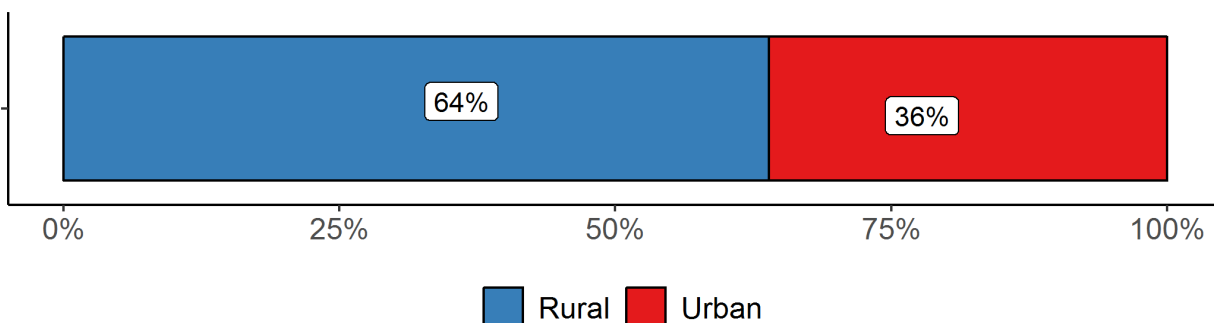
Sixty (60) completed surveys were initially targeted at each of 20 depots (N = 1200 total), in alignment with practice in previous years. A strategic shift in focus to primarily Rural rather than Metro and Urban depots, dictated important shifts in methodology. In contrast to previous years which targeted completion of all surveys in one day, this year's exit surveys took place over the course of two months. Surveys were conducted at three to five locations surrounding Edmonton on each Saturday from July 20, 2019 to August 24, 2019.

Initial project targets were shifted by consensus between PRA and the BCMB to account for logistical changes during the project. A reduction in the number of participating depots from 20 to 15, led to increased targets of 80 completed surveys at each location to maintain overall sample size. However, given that Rural depots averaged 35 completed surveys per day over the course of the project, those targets would have required significantly more resources than initially planned (see Table 1). In light of the primary focus on insights from Rural locations, an agreement was reached to devote available resources towards preferentially over-sampling Rural depots rather than targeting overall N size.

Table 1. Field operations summary statistics.				
Classification	Days surveyed	Completed surveys	Percent	Mean completions per day
Rural	18	636	64%	35
Urban	7	359	36%	51
Total	25	995	100%	40

In total, 995 customers were surveyed, including 636 (64%) in Rural locations and 359 (36%) at Urban locations (Figure 1). Table 2 lists each depot and the survey completions for each.

Figure 1. Ratio of Urban and Rural depot survey completions.



<b>Table 2. Depots surveyed.</b>					
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Depot</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Number of days surveyed</b>	<b>Completed surveys</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Rural	Blackfalds Bottle Depot	Blackfalds	2	105	11%
Rural	Blue Heron Bottle Depot	Athabasca	2	70	7%
Rural	Hay Lakes Bottle Depot	Hay Lakes	2	35	4%
Rural	Mayerthorpe Bottle Depot	Mayerthorpe	2	44	4%
Rural	Onoway Bottle Depot	Onoway	2	72	7%
Rural	Pick Me Bottle Depot & Pop Shoppe	Devon	2	105	11%
Rural	Ponoka Bottle Depot	Ponoka	2	71	7%
Rural	St. Paul Bottle Depot	St. Paul	2	67	7%
Rural	Westlock Bottle Depot	Westlock	2	67	7%
Urban	Fort Saskatchewan Bottle Depot	Fort Saskatchewan	1	31	3%
Urban	Leduc Bottle Depot	Leduc	1	45	5%
Urban	Spruce Grove Bottle Depot	Spruce Grove	1	45	5%
Urban	Stony Plain Bottle Depot	Stony Plain	1	54	5%
Urban	Universal Bottle Depot	Camrose	2	117	12%
Urban	Wetaskiwin Bottle Depot Ltd.	Wetaskiwin	1	67	7%
<b>Total</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>100%</b>

Each day a depot was surveyed, a single interviewer conducted surveys at that location for the entire day, or until the targeted number of surveys were completed (although that never happened in practice). The survey interview protocol was as follows:

- ▶ Interviewers set up at the entrance of each depot as they opened with clipboards, pen and paper surveys, and a sign indicating they would be administering depot surveys.
- ▶ Interviewers asked customers if they would like to complete a short (less than five-minute) survey about the depot as they approached the depot. If they participated, customers were provided a \$5 gift certificate to Tim Horton's.
- ▶ If the customer agreed to participate, the interviewer wrote down the time that the customer was entering the depot and the sex of the customer. They then instructed the customer to come back to see them to complete the survey after they had completed their business in the depot. Interviewers asked each customer for their name, wrote it down on a separate Post-it note, and attached it to their survey (this was simply to keep track of which survey they needed to give back to the customer when they returned).



- ▶ When each customer returned to their interviewer after finishing in the depot, interviewers wrote the time they exited the depot on their survey before handing it over with a pen for the customer to complete.
- ▶ When customers completed the surveys, interviewers provided a \$5 gift card to Tim Horton's.
- ▶ Finally, interviewers removed and disposed of the Post-it notes to maintain anonymity and stored the completed surveys for later data entry.

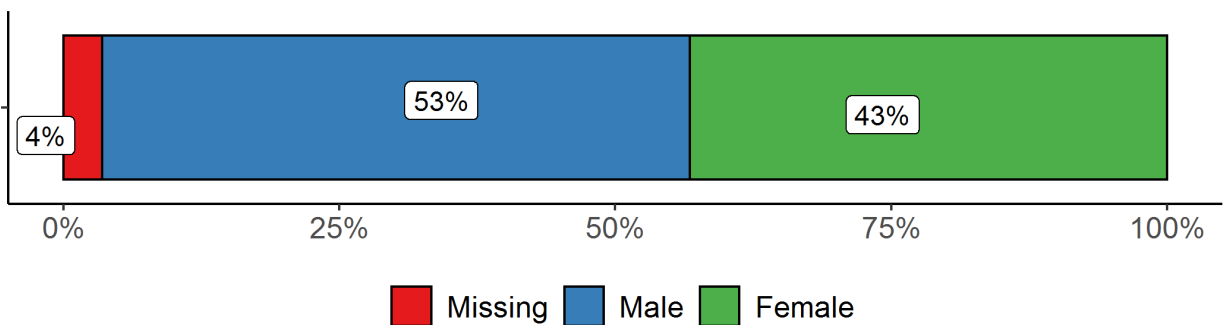
### 3.0 Results

This section presents the results of all survey questions, including depot customer demographics, details of the depot experience, satisfaction with the depot experience, awareness of branding and signage, customer recycling and depot use, and customer thoughts about a “quick-drop” service.

#### 3.1 Depot customer demographics

Depot customers were more frequently male (53%) than female (43%) (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Customer sex. n = (995).**



**Note:** Due to rounding, values may not sum to 100%

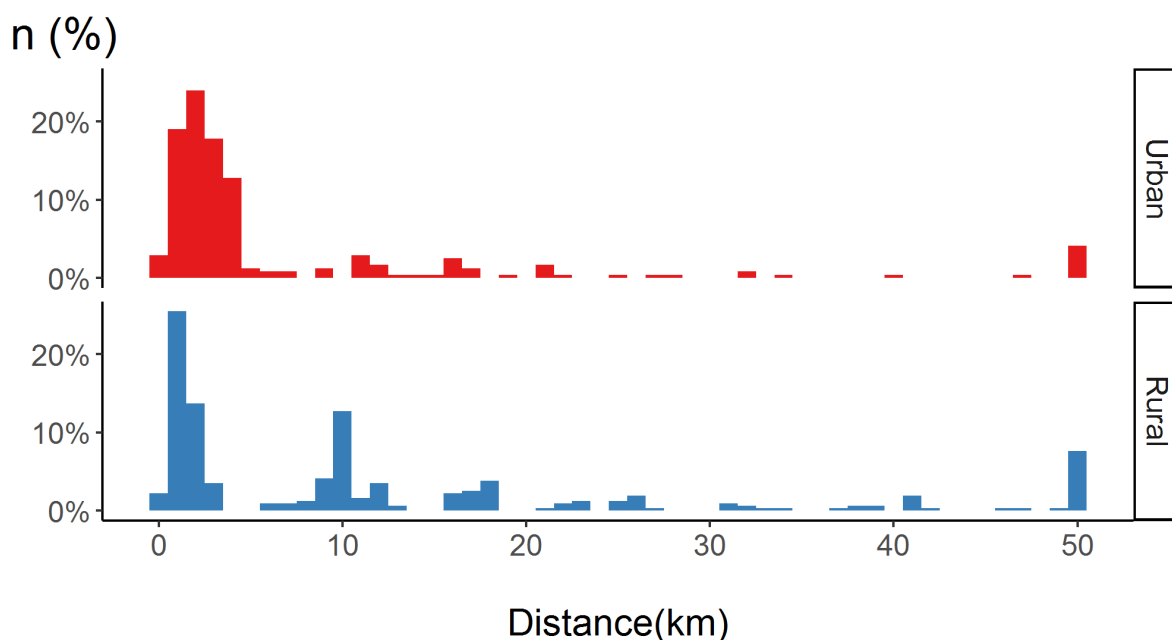
Most customers (82%) provided a postal code. Using the Google Maps Application Programming Interface, an approximate calculation of the distance customers travelled to reach a depot was carried out under the assumption they travelled to the depot from their home.

Table 3 displays summary statistics for distance from the depot visited to the customers home. Large individual values can skew the arithmetic mean, making it a poor estimate of “typical” value. We therefore provide the median values (the middle value) and ranges throughout to provide a clearer picture of typical responses.

Table 3. Distance to depot summary statistics (km).					
Classification	Median	Mode	Mean	Max	n
Rural	9	10	22	573	460
Urban	3	16	25	3,462	359
Note: High maximum distances were verified as belonging to valid postal codes out of province.					

Rural customers are travelling farther distances to reach the depot, approximately six kilometers more on average. The distribution of distances by depot classification is shown in Figure 3. For both Urban and Rural depots, the most common distances are below five kilometers. However, the Rural distribution is more strongly multi-modal, with another large clustering around 10 kilometers.

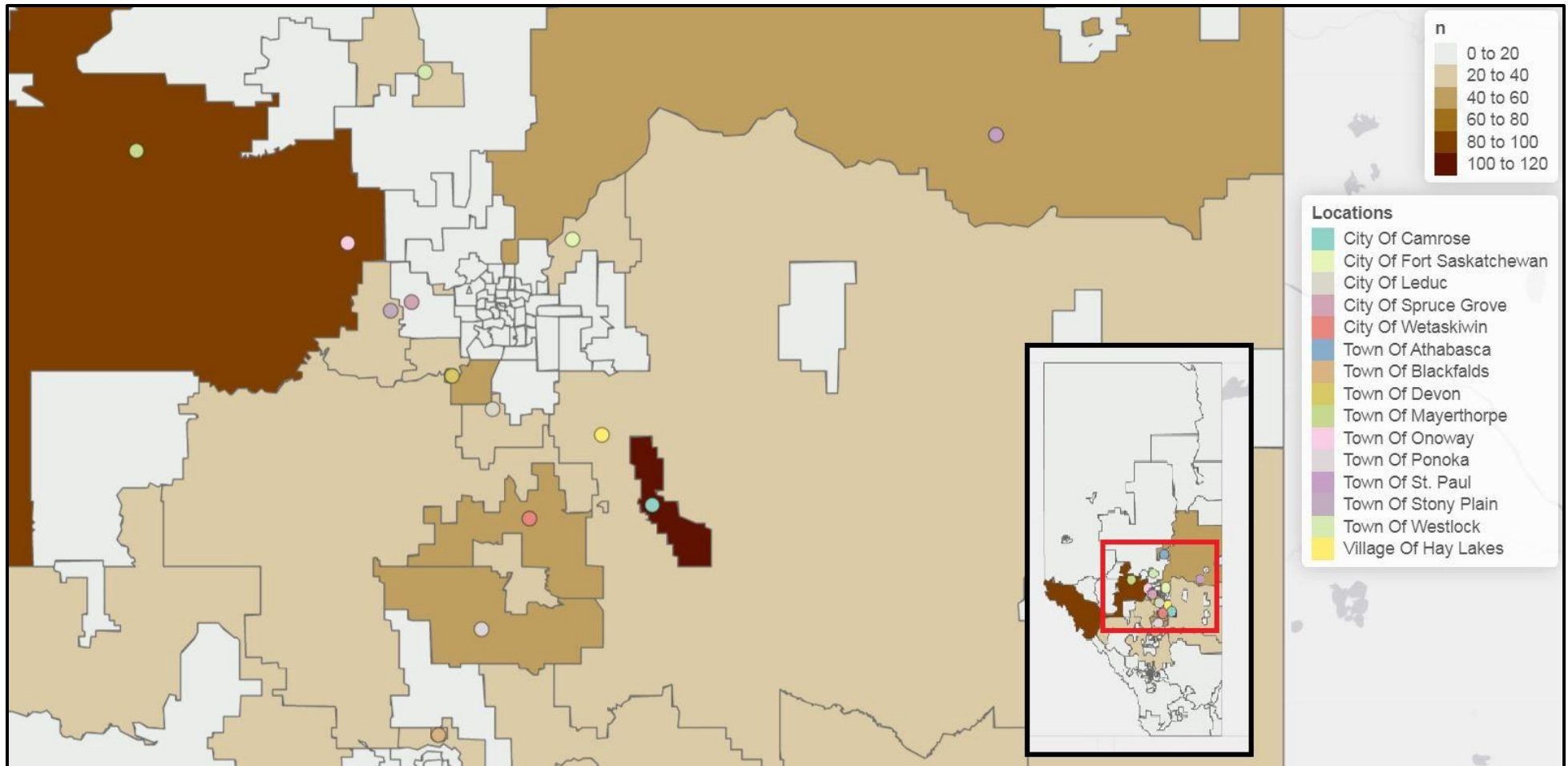
**Figure 3. Distribution of distances to depot by classification. n = (819).**



The map below shows (Figure 4) the geographic distribution of customers surveyed, as well as the position of all depots surveyed. The regions on the map below represent forward sortation areas<sup>1</sup> (FSA) and are shaded proportionally to the number of customers who reported living in those areas.

<sup>1</sup> FSAs comprise the first three characters of a Canadian postal code.

Figure 4. Map of depot location and survey completions by forward sortation area.



### **3.2 Customer experience at the depot**

The majority of customers were in the depot for ten minutes or less (54%) and nearly all exited within 30 minutes (Table 4). However, approximately seven percent of customers stay in the depot for more than 30 minutes.

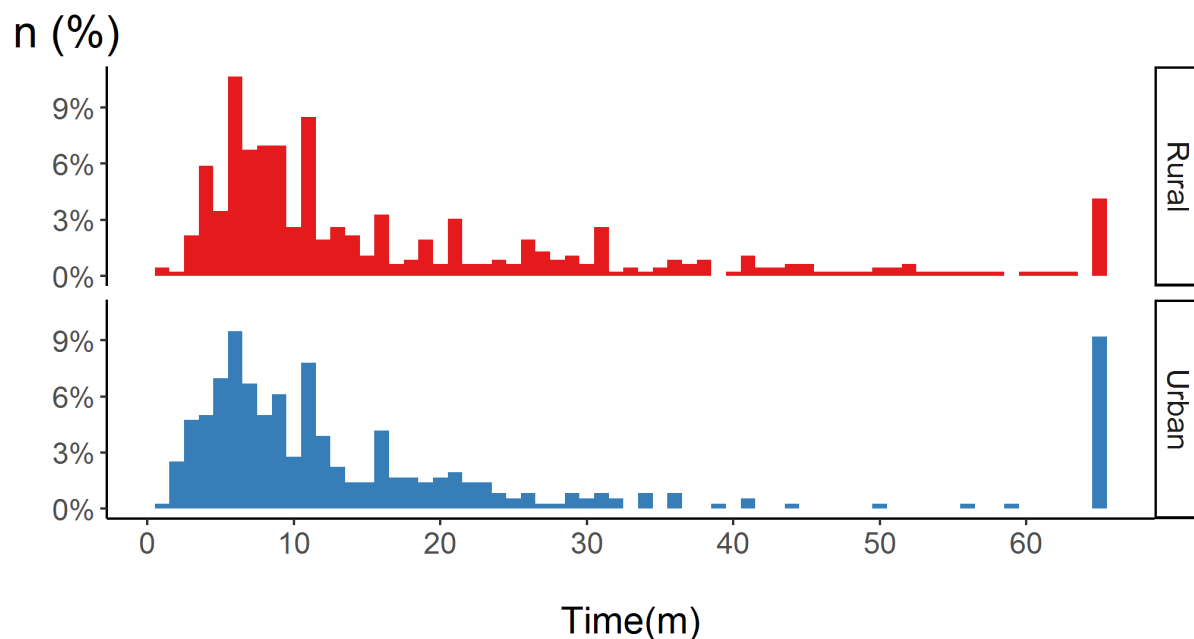
<b>Table 4. Time in depot summary statistics (m).</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Under 1 minute	3	< 1%
1 to 5 minutes	236	24%
11 to 20 minutes	211	21%
21 to 30 minutes	98	10%
6 to 10 minutes	294	30%
Over 30 minutes	73	7%
No response	80	8%
Total	995	100%
Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.		

Customers at Rural locations tended to stay in the depot slightly longer on average than Urban locations (Table 5). The amount of time spent in a depot varied substantially from customer to customer, with a minimum time of one minute in a depot and a maximum time of 130 minutes.

<b>Table 5. Time in depot summary statistics by classification (m).</b>					
<b>Classification</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Urban	326	11	8	Under 1 minute	93
Rural	589	15	10	Under 1 minute	130
Total	915	14	10	Under 1 minute	130

The full distribution of times by classification is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Distribution of time in depot by classification. n = (819).



The total refund cited by respondents ranged from a minimum of \$1 to a maximum of \$795. Refunds for Urban and Rural customers were approximately equivalent (Table 6).

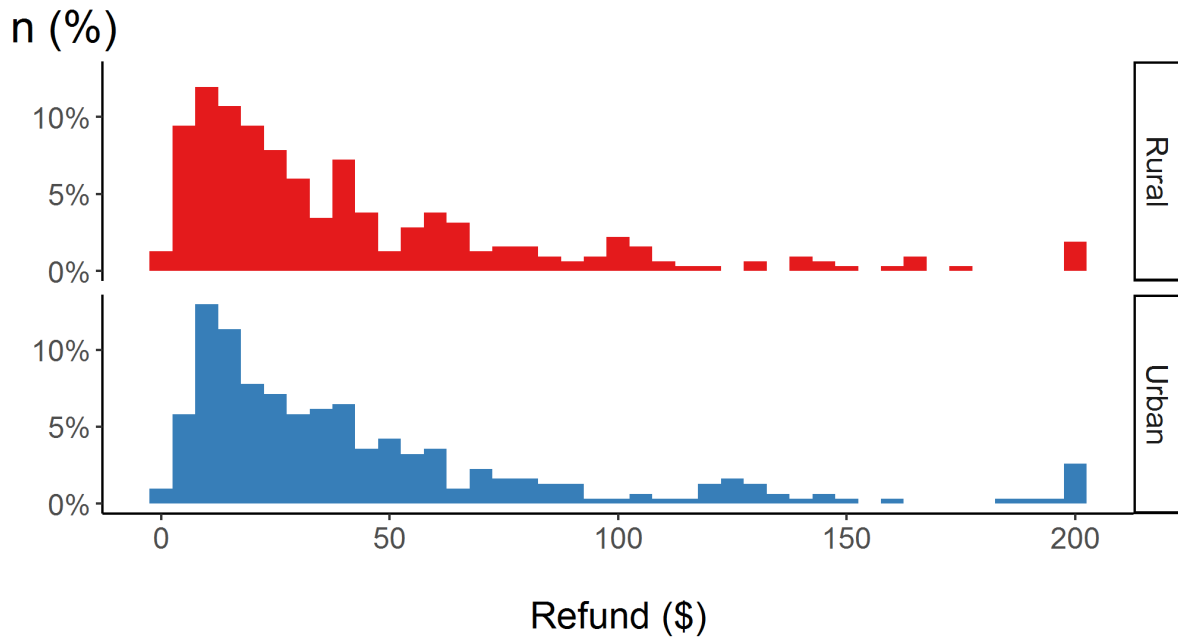
Table 6. Refund summary statistics (\$).					
Classification	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Urban	309	49	31	1	655
Rural	476	44	27	Less than 1	795
Total	785	46	29	Less than 1	795

Half of customers (48%) received a refund to \$21 dollars or more (Table 7).

Table 7. Refund distribution.	
Amount	Percent
\$41.00 and over	28%
\$21.00 to \$40.99	20%
\$11.00 to \$20.99	16%
\$6.00 to \$10.99	9%
Under \$6.00	5%
No response	21%

Both Rural and Urban depots had few customers seeking refunds lower than \$10. The distribution then reaches its maximum at approximately \$15, then declines steadily (Figure 6).

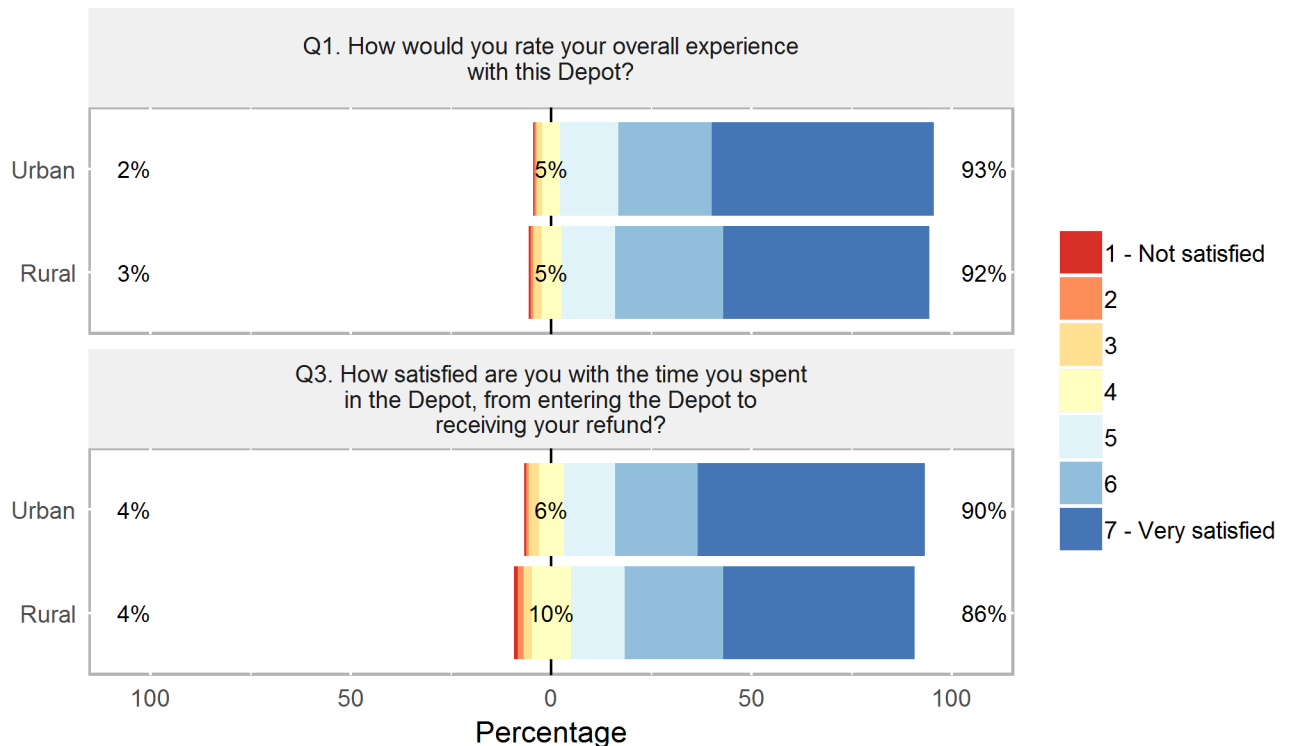
**Figure 6. Distribution of refunds by classification.**



### 3.3 Customer satisfaction

This section addressed customer satisfaction through a number of measures. Customers reported very high levels of satisfaction with their depot experiences. Customers rated their experiences with the depot on a scale from 1 (not satisfied) to 7 (very satisfied). Both Rural and Urban customers were very satisfied with their overall experiences as well as the timeliness of the time spent on the depot. Four percent or less expressed dissatisfaction in all cases and 86% or more expressed positive satisfaction (Figure 7).

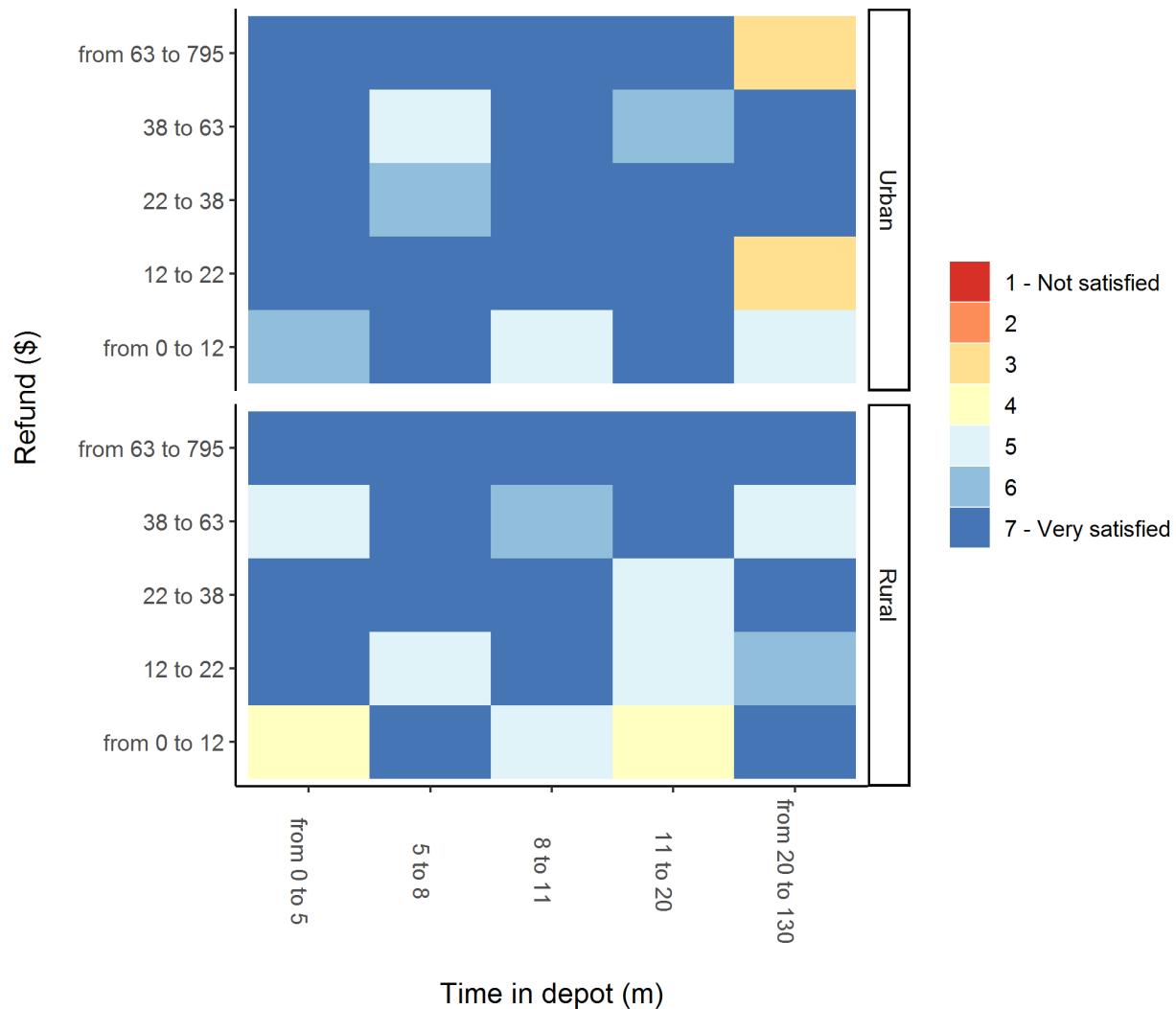
**Figure 7. Customer satisfaction.**



**Note:** Percentages within the plot represent negative, neutral, and positive satisfaction levels from left to right, respectively.

Figure 8 illustrates the relationship between the length of time customers spent in the depot, the average refund received, and the average satisfaction rating with their time spent in the depot by classification of depot. The continuous variables of time in minutes and refund in dollars were divided into equal percentile intervals, forming a two-way histogram (also known as tile plot). The frequency of satisfaction ratings occurring at each combination of refund and time is indicated by the colour of each bin. Predictably, ratings are consistently high in the top quadrant of each graph, where individuals have received a large refund in a small amount of time. Although ratings stay consistency high, they fall most for Urban customers when faced with the longest waits (20 to 130 minutes) while they dip lowest from Rural customer receiving low refunds (1 to 12 dollar).

**Figure 8. Customer satisfaction by time in depot and refund amount.**

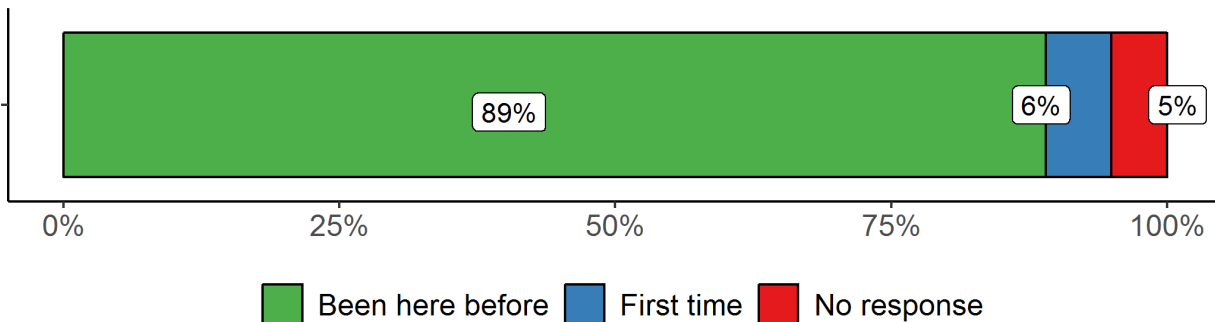




### 3.4 Brand awareness

Only a very small proportion of people (6%) indicated that it was their first visit to a depot (Figure 9). Due to the cyclical nature of depot visits and longer distances between depots in Rural areas it seems probable that some customers deal almost exclusively with their local depot. This possibility gains support from customer comments found in Table 9, for example, ‘Always come here’ and ‘Only depot in the area’.

Figure 9. Q5. Is this your first time at this depot location, or have you been here before? n = (995).



Comments about the depots were quite positive. Customers cited fast, efficient service as one of the key features that made them want to return (Table 8). In addition to speed and courtesy, a convenient location was commonly mentioned as an important reason to choose that depot (Table 9).

Table 8. Q6. What do you like about this Depot that would make you return? Please explain.

Response	Urban	Rural	Total
Great staff - friendly / courteous / kind / helpful	34%	35%	35%
Fast / efficient service / short lineups	40%	29%	33%
Location / close to depot / convenient	23%	34%	30%
Easy process / organized / they help sort	10%	7%	8%
Good service / general satisfaction	9%	7%	8%
Clean / hand washing station / no smell	5%	6%	6%
Accurate refunds / honest	4%	5%	5%
Easy access - drive through / walk-in options / spacious / parking	7%	2%	4%
Hours	1%	3%	2%
Nothing / not returning	2%	2%	2%
Professional / experienced / effective	1%	1%	1%
A change to recycle / get rid of empties / money	2%	1%	1%
Supporting a good cause	1%	1%	1%
Electronic systems - computer / cash machine	1%	< 1%	< 1%
Habit / always come here	1%	< 1%	< 1%
Other	2%	1%	1%
Don't know		< 1%	< 1%
No response	3%	5%	4%

<b>Table 9. Q8. Why did you choose to come to this location today? Please explain.</b>			
<b>Response</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>
Closest / only depot in area	22%	15%	18%
Location (in the area / accessible / handy)	13%	14%	14%
Return / sell / get rid of bottles	9%	7%	8%
Always come here / habit	7%	4%	5%
Convenience - had time / drive thru / easy / parking	4%	5%	4%
Fast / quick / efficient	5%	4%	4%
Great service / the best service	6%	3%	4%
Good staff - friendly / helpful / courteous	3%	4%	3%
Close to business / errands / campground	1%	3%	3%
Needed money	2%	1%	2%
Clean	2%	1%	1%
Support the community / support the cause	1%	1%	1%
Honest / accurate / fair	1%	1%	1%
Recommendation of others / came with others / Google review	2%		1%
New location / try somewhere different	0%	1%	< 1%
Other	1%	1%	1%
Don't know		< 1%	0%
No response	3%	3%	3%

When asked for suggestions on how to improve the depot, about a quarter of the people felt that no additional improvements were necessary. The suggestions were quite diverse, suggesting that at a minimum there is likely no clear problem that remains unaddressed. The general theme of the suggestions was incremental service improvements such as adding additional staff or faster service (Table 10).

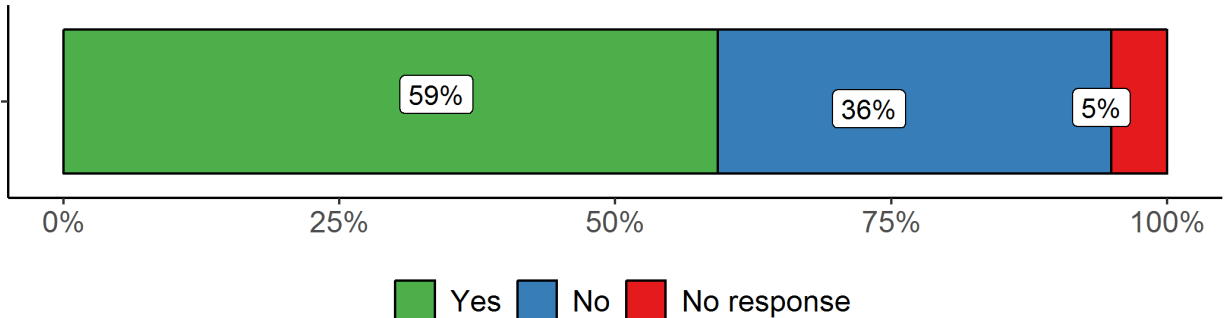
<b>Table 10. Q7. How could this depot improve? Please explain.</b>			
<b>Response</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>
More employees / staff	3%	8%	6%
Longer hours - open later / earlier / on Sunday	4%	5%	4%
Bigger space / size issues	5%	4%	4%
Faster speed of service / shorter line ups	3%	5%	4%
Cleaner / empty garbage cans frequently	5%	4%	4%
More lines / stations / windows / stalls / lanes / bays available	4%	4%	4%
Accuracy / better counts	4%	2%	3%
Esthetics / amenities - lighting / music / pop machines	1%	3%	2%
Better entrance - auto door / ramps / steps	3%	1%	2%
Better parking / more parking	3%	1%	2%
Improve smell - better ventilation / use Febreze	1%	1%	1%
Increase accepted products / blue bin for bags	2%	1%	1%
Better hand wash station / hand sanitizer	3%	1%	1%
Friendlier service / better customer service	1%	1%	1%
Better signage	1%	1%	1%
More money / better refund	< 1%	1%	1%
Better / more carts	1%	< 1%	< 1%
Bug / wasp control	1%		< 1%
Don't know	8%	5%	6%
No response	22%	31%	28%
Other	3%	2%	2%

When asked how they first learned how to return beverage containers, half of respondents indicated that they learned in childhood, were taught by family, or had learned years ago. This suggests that container recycling is embedded in the culture of Alberta (Table 11). Very little variance is evident between the experiences of Urban or Rural customers.

<b>Table 11. Q11. How did you first learn to take containers back to a depot? Please explain.</b>			
<b>Response</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>
Taught by family / parents / home	24%	21%	22%
As a child	16%	22%	20%
Decades ago / years ago	11%	9%	10%
Advertising (containers / billboards / TV / flyers)	6%	6%	6%
Suggestions from friends / neighbours / colleagues	4%	4%	4%
Word of mouth / common knowledge	3%	5%	4%
School (environmental studies / kindergarten)	4%	4%	4%
When you had to pay the deposit / to get deposit back	3%	4%	4%
Wanted money / need money / saving	4%	3%	3%
Proximity - saw it / drove by it / live here	3%	3%	3%
Internet / online / Google / Facebook	4%	2%	3%
Chore or task done to earn spending money	1%	2%	2%
Desire to recycle	2%	2%	2%
When I moved to Alberta	1%	2%	1%
Environmental initiatives / recycling programs / bottle drives	1%	1%	1%
Help the environment	1%	0%	1%
When Alberta started to recycle	< 1%	1%	1%
Other	2%	2%	2%
Don't know / can't recall	4%	3%	3%
No response	6%	8%	7%

Only about a quarter (26%) of surveyed customers indicated that they had not seen the BCMB logo (Figure 10).

**Figure 10. Q12. Do you recall seeing the depot logo? n = (995).**



The most commonly reported location for the logo was at the depots themselves or other exterior walls. Advertisements in all form of media were reported, and a small number of people asserted (3%) the logo could be seen everywhere (Table 12).

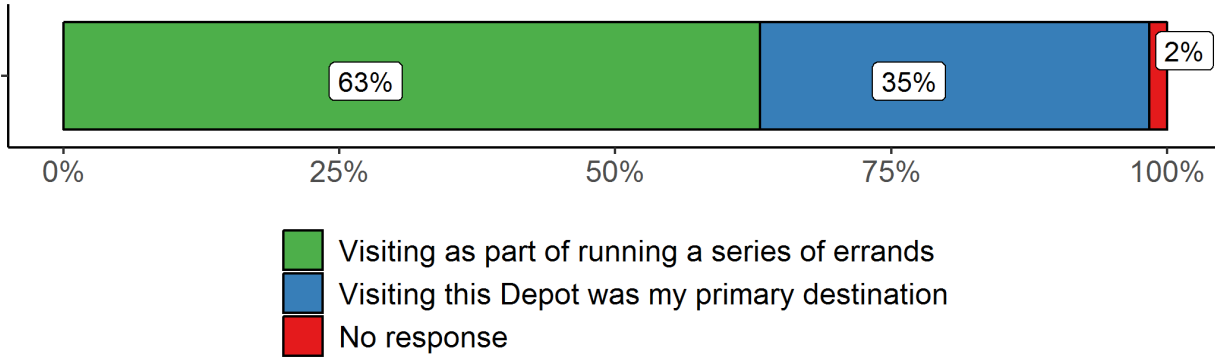
Table 12. Q12A. Where customers say they saw the BCMB logo.			
Response	Urban	Rural	Total
Outside of depot(s) (includes other depots)	24%	24%	24%
At depot(s) (unspecified)	13%	16%	15%
Outdoor signs / billboards / bus bench	3%	11%	8%
Inside the depot (walls / windows / charts / cashier desk)	4%	9%	7%
Advertisements - newspaper / flyers / TV	7%	6%	6%
Signs / signage (unspecified)	4%	6%	5%
Trucks / vehicles	4%	5%	4%
Door / entrance	2%	5%	4%
Everywhere	2%	4%	3%
Old locations / other depots	3%	1%	1%
Online / website	2%	1%	1%
Recycling bins / containers	2%	< 1%	1%
Other	7%	3%	4%
Don't know	6%	2%	3%
No response	20%	15%	16%

### 3.5 Customer preferences and behaviours

This section compiles the information on customer behaviours and preferences.

About a third of customers (35%) went to the depot as their only destination (Figure 11).

**Figure 11. Q9A. Which of the following best describes your visit to this depot today? n = (995).**

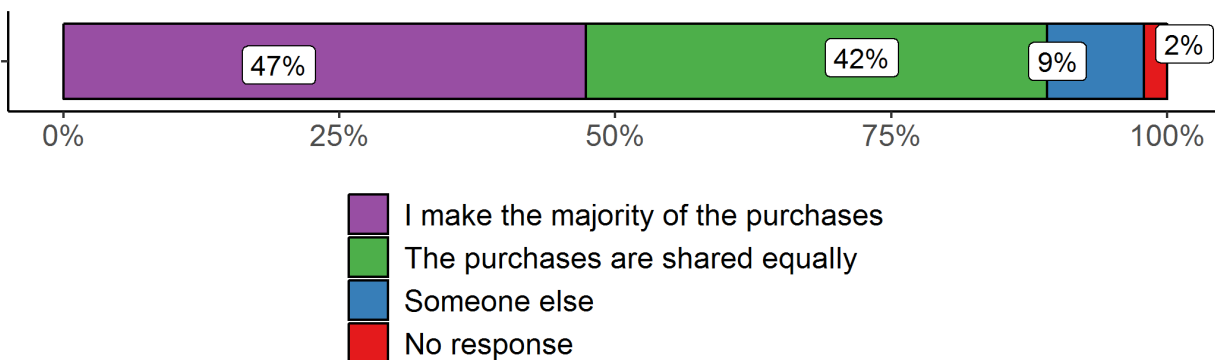


There was variability in the individual numbers (with some reporting as many as 15 stops) but a very consistent average of 3 emerged in the dataset (Table 13).

Table 13. Q9A. How many stops do you plan on making during this trip?					
Depot location	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Urban	209	3	3	0	15
Rural	357	3	3	0	12
Total	566	3	3	0	15

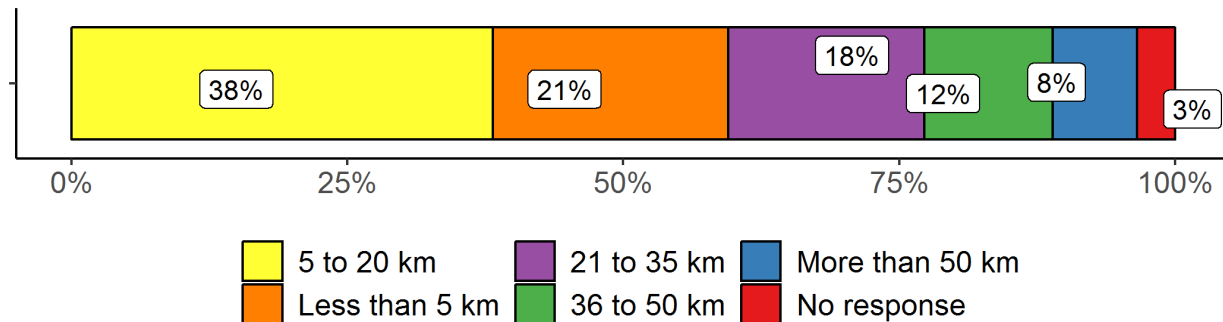
About half of the people surveyed indicated that they were the majority purchasers of beverages for their household (47%) (Figure 12. )

**Figure 12. Q10. Who generally makes the beverage purchases in your household? n = (995).**



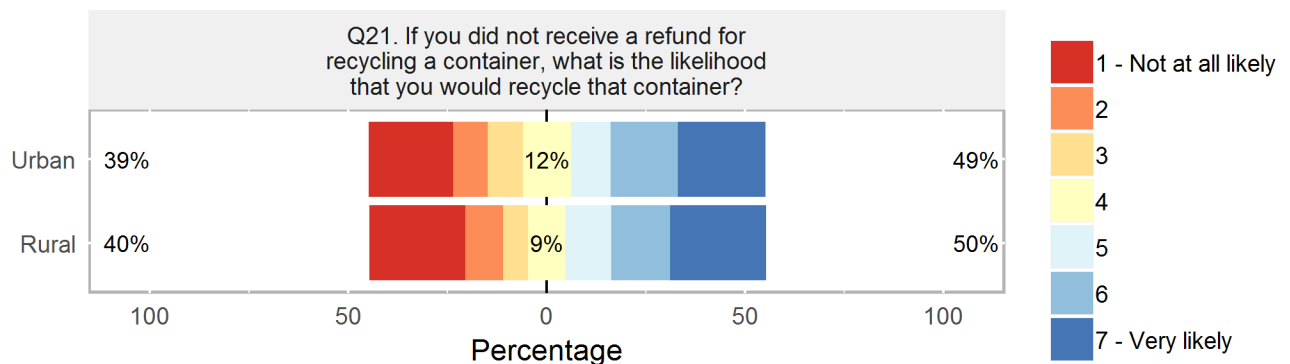
The median distance to a depot from a customer's home was less than 10 km (Table 3). Aligning with that, half (49%) of respondents indicated they would choose to travel less than 20 km to return beverage containers. The decrease in those numbers is gradual, with about a third willing to travel between 20 and 50 km and the remaining 8% willing to travel more than 50 km (Figure 13).

**Figure 13. Q16. Please indicate how far you would be willing to travel to return your beverage containers to a depot. n = (995).**



Opinions were diverse and relatively polarized on the question of whether or not a respondent would seek out recycling without the recycling refund. In both Urban and Rural depots, a small amount of individuals (< 12%) were neutral on the matter, with the remainder splitting relatively evenly to the opposing positions (Figure 14).

**Figure 14. Customer's likelihood of recycling without a refund. n = (995).**

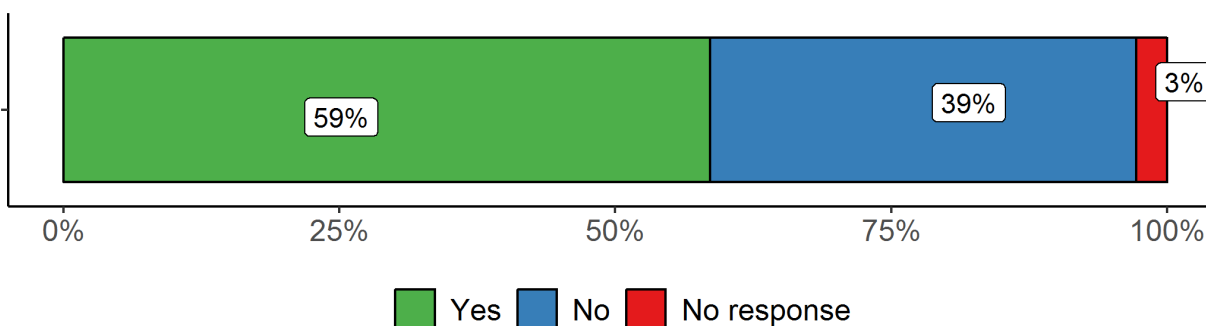


Although a majority of people (66%) reported that they would recycle their beverage containers elsewhere if a depot were unavailable in their community, many also indicated they would throw them in the garbage (10%) or did not know what they would do (Table 14).

<b>Table 14. Q15A. If you did not have a depot in your local community, or a close neighbouring community, what would you do with your beverage containers?</b>			
<b>Response</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>
Recycle them somewhere else	66%	66%	66%
Throw them in the garbage	10%	10%	10%
Donate them / charitable donation	3%	5%	4%
Drive to another community depot	1%	3%	2%
Other	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	17%	15%	16%
No response	3%	3%	3%

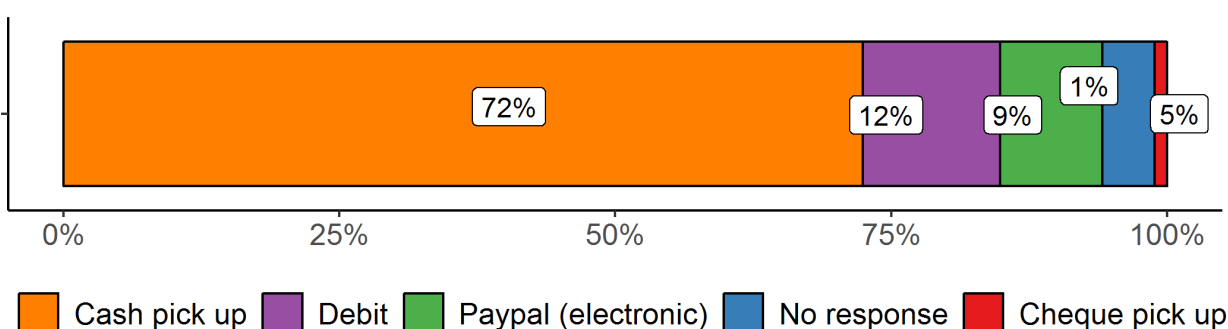
More than half of customers (59%) said they would use a container drop off service, while 39% said they would not.

**Figure 15. Q13. If a service was offered where you could drop off your containers without waiting in line and collect your money later, would you use this service? n = (995).**



Those who reported willingness to use a drop off service strongly preferred cash pick up (72% of respondents) while cheque pickup was the least preferred of the remaining options (1%) (Figure 16).

**Figure 16. Q13A. If yes, what would your preferred form of payment be? n = (530).**



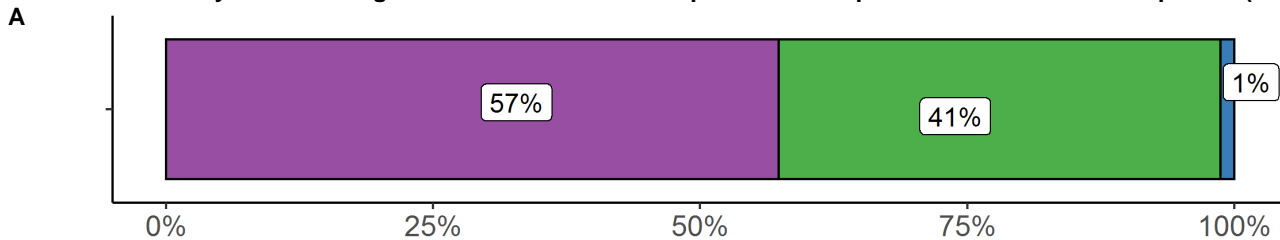


**Figure 17. Questions 14A through 14D.**

Question 14 of the survey was four interlocked questions, shown below in sequence from A to D:

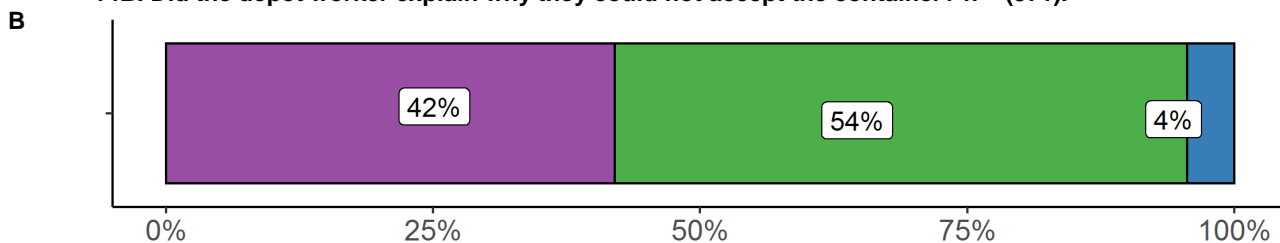
The initiating question (A) was asked of all customers who completed a survey, and enquired whether they had ever experienced a container not being accepted by the depot.

**14A. Have you ever brought back a container to a depot that the depot worker would not accept? n = (995).**



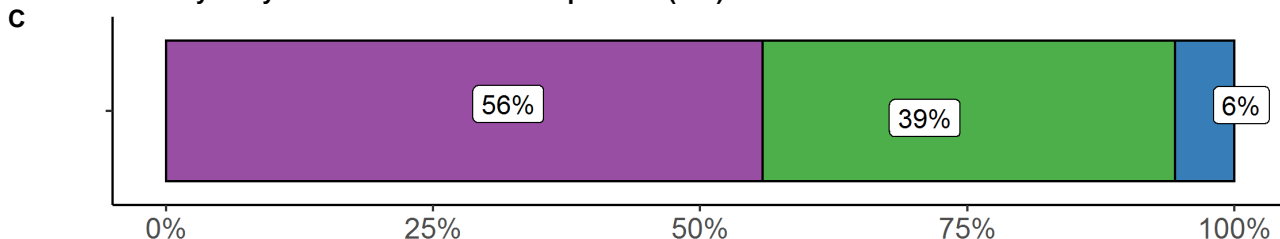
Of the 995 customers who were asked question 14A, 57% indicated that they had been refused. Those 571 customers were asked to answer 14B, following up on whether the reason for the refusal was made clear to them.

**14B. Did the depot worker explain why they could not accept the container? n = (571).**



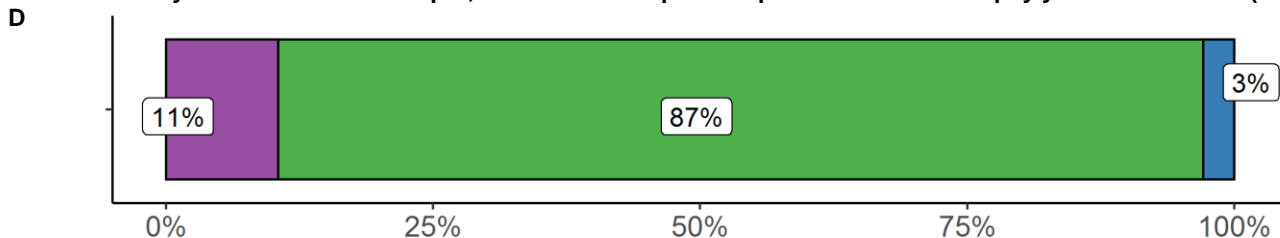
Of the 571 customers, just under half (42%) indicated that an explanation was provided. The subset of customers who answered *no*, an explanation was not provided, (54% of those asked) were asked if they attempted to take it to another depot (14C).

**14C. Did you try to take it to a different depot? n = (306).**



A final follow-up question was asked of the 304 customers who indicated that they had tried to take the container to another depot (14D).

**14D. If you took to another depot, did the other depot accept the container and pay you a refund? n = (171).**



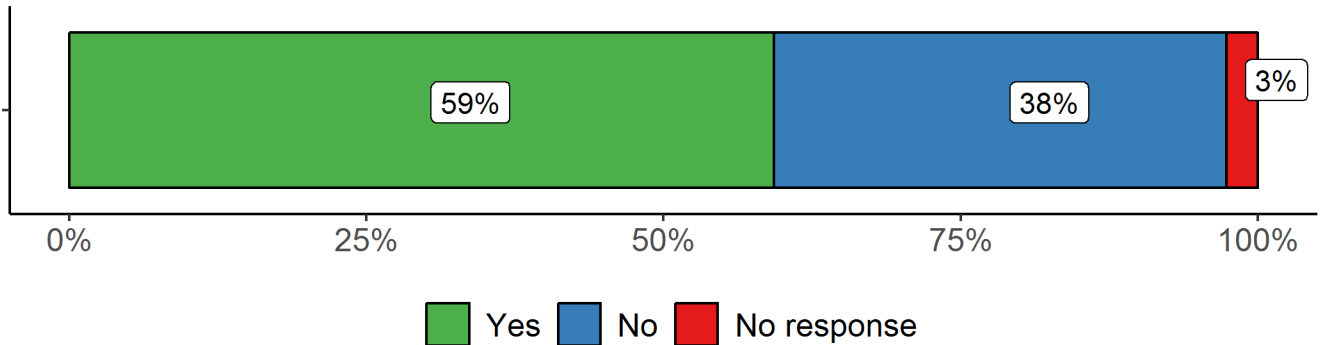
Yes No No response

Only 11% of customers indicated that they had received a refund for a container that had previously been refused. Just under half of the customers indicating that they had been refused a refund on a container were provided with an explanation for the refusal at that point. Of those not provided an explanation, over half attempted to return it at another location. However, only 11% of customers, somewhat less than two-thirds of those who tried, received a refund. This pattern demonstrates that a significant number of customers will persist in attempting to return a refused container if they received no explanation as to why. The majority of those are not successful at obtaining a refund, which raises questions, such as whether customer expectations are being well managed or if operational time for depot staff is potentially being wasted.

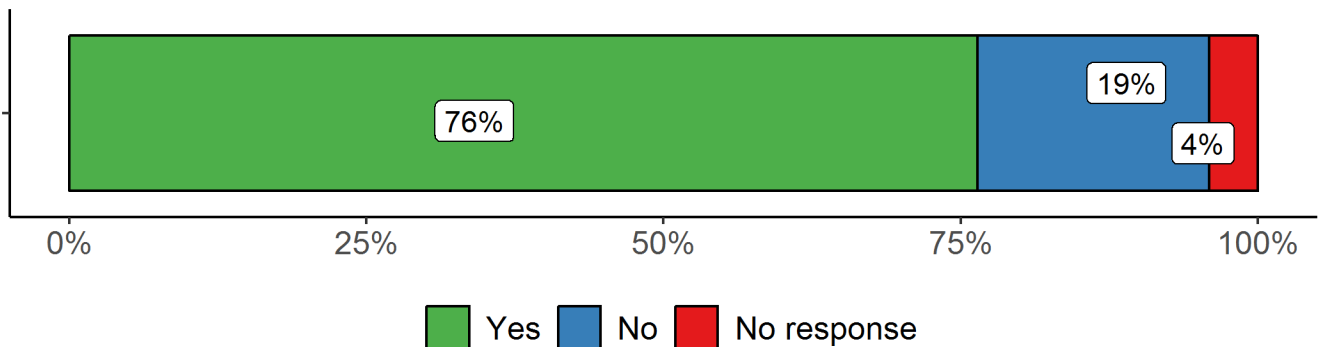
Taken together, Figure 18 and

Figure 19 suggest that it is not uncommon for individuals to be provided with refunds for beverage containers which had no label, given that 59% of people attempted to do so and 76% reported being successful.

**Figure 18. Q17A. Have you ever tried to return a beverage container to a depot that did not have a label on it? n = (995).**

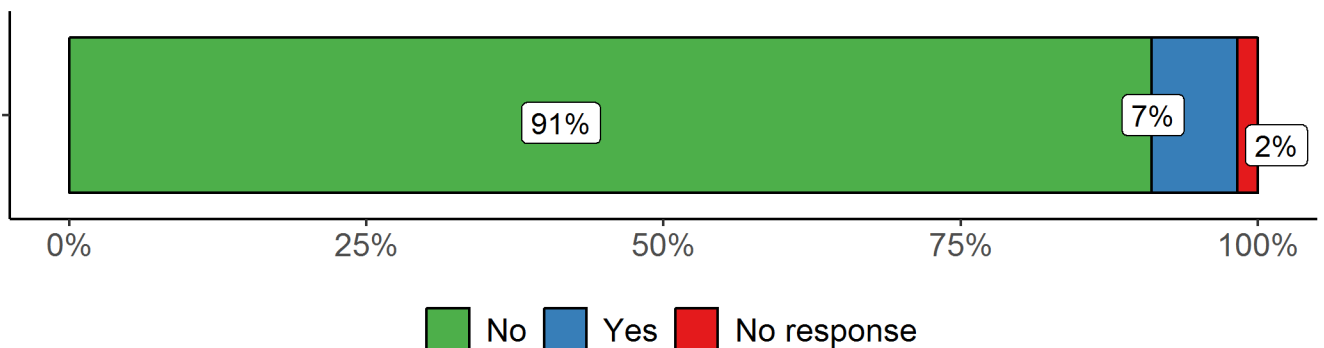


**Figure 19. Q17B. Did you get a refund for that container? n = (590).**



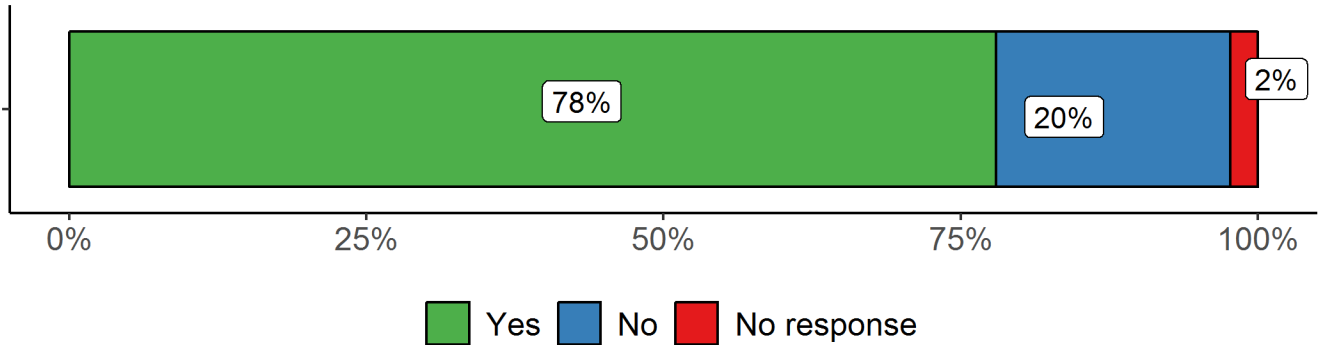
Almost no one (7%) reported difficulties separating containers that can be refunded from those that cannot (Figure 20).

**Figure 20. Q18. Do you find it difficult to separate containers that can be refunded from those that cannot be refunded? n = (995).**

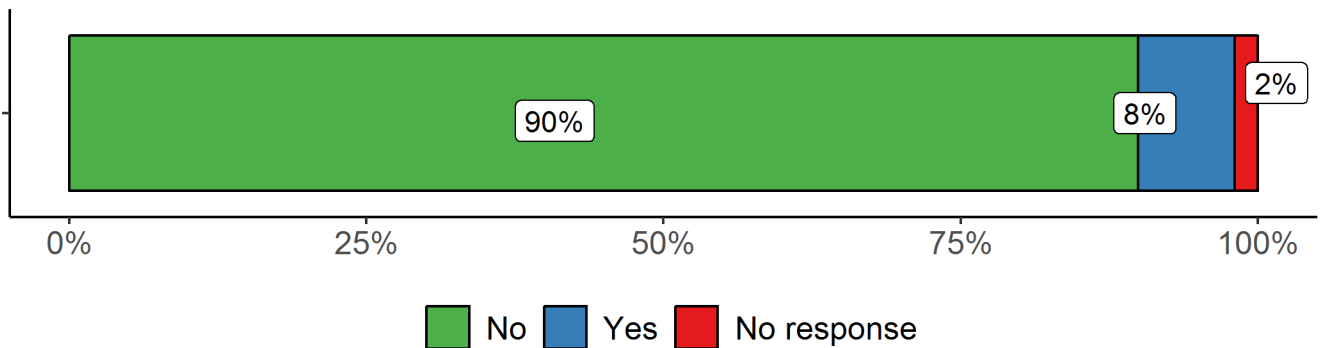


There seems to be strong support for broadening the scope of containers for which a deposit could be charged, with 78% of respondents in favour of the idea (Figure 19).

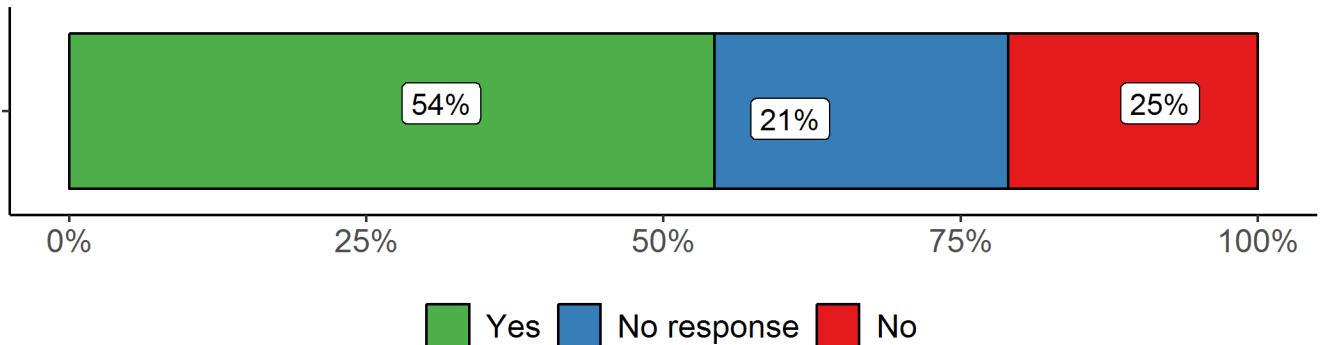
**Figure 21. Q19. Would you like to see a deposit placed on more types of containers so that you could bring them back to a depot to be recycled? n = (995).**



**Figure 22. Q20A. Have you ever been frustrated with a depot for not accepting a container you tried to bring back? n = (995).**



**Figure 23. Q20C. Did you pay a deposit on that container when you purchased it? n = (81).**



## 4.0 Regulation

Half of respondents were aware that the depots are regulated (Figure 24) and the same proportion reported that it mattered to them (Figure 25).

Figure 24. Q22. Did you know that all depots in Alberta are regulated? n = (995).

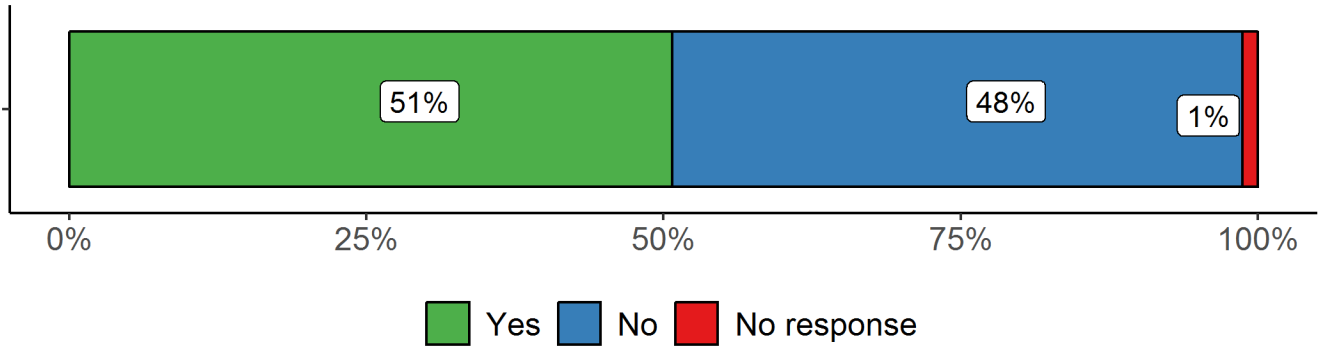
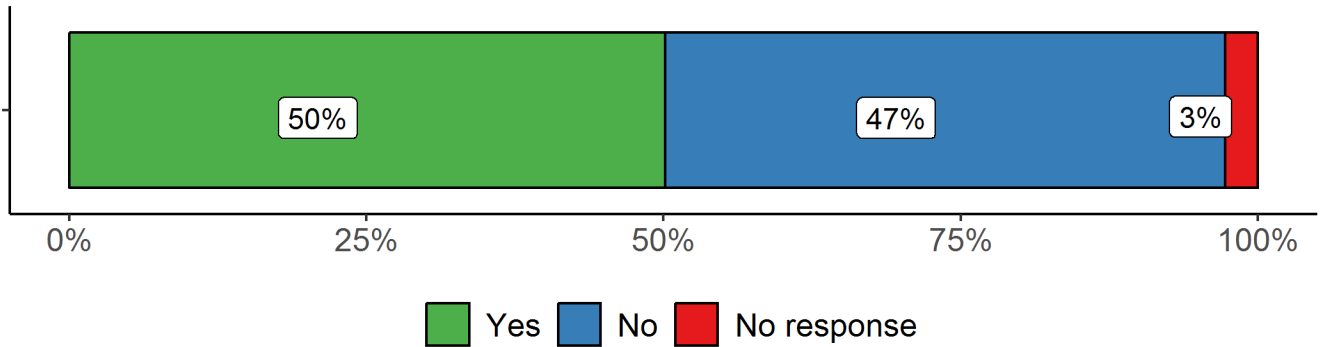


Figure 25. Q23. Does it make a difference to you whether the depots are regulated? n = (995).



## **5.0 Conclusion**

Although there was variation in the customers' depot experiences in terms of the time spent during their visit and the refund size, the vast majority of customers were in the depot for less than 20 minutes and received a refund of \$40 or less.

When asked why they chose the particular depot location to return their beverage containers, by far the most common explanation was that the depot was close to the customer's home. Overall, customers were highly satisfied with their time spent in the depots and their overall experience with the depot. When explaining the reason for their satisfaction, most cited the locations of the depots, followed by fast and efficient service, and friendly staff. Only about four out of ten customers provided some suggestions for improvement. These suggestions varied widely, with the most common suggestions related to making more parking available and additional lines / stations / windows / stalls / lanes / bays to return beverage containers. Other suggestions included improving cleanliness, increasing space, extending hours, and increasing speed of service.

Customers indicated high levels of awareness of depot branding, with well over half indicating they recalled seeing the depot logo. Most customers indicated that they saw the logo outside the depots, such as on the side of the building or in the parking lot.

The survey provided the following insights into customer behaviour and views related to depots:

- ▶ When asked who generally makes the beverage purchases in their household, most customers indicated that they make the majority of the purchases or the purchases are shared equally among others in the household, with only 9% indicating it was someone else.
- ▶ By far, the most common ways that customers learned to take containers back to depots were being taught by family and learning as a child.
- ▶ About half of customers indicated that they have brought containers back to a depot that the depot worker would not accept. In the just under half of these cases, the depot worker explained to the customer why they would not accept the container.
- ▶ Half of the customers surveyed were aware that depots in Alberta are regulated and a little over half indicated that it does make a difference to them whether depots are regulated.

## **Appendix A: 2019 Depot Exit Interview Survey**

## SURVEYOR USE ONLY

Depot Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Time in: \_\_\_\_\_

Time out: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

*All the information you provide to us will be used in aggregate and is being collected by the Beverage Container Management Board to strengthen Alberta's beverage container recycling industry.*  
*All data collection, storage, and processing will comply with the Canadian Privacy Act.*

1. How would you rate your overall experience with this Depot?

(Please circle the appropriate number)

Not Satisfied				Very Satisfied			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

2. Would you mind sharing your postal code for statistical purposes? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How satisfied are you with the amount time you spent in the Depot, from entering the Depot to receiving your refund?

(Please circle the appropriate number)

Not Satisfied				Very Satisfied			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

4. We'd like to know what your refund was, would you be willing to share it? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is this your first time at this Depot location, or have you been here before?

(Please circle the appropriate answer)

First time  
Been here before

6. What do you like about this Depot that would make you return? Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

7. How could this Depot improve? Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Why did you choose to come to this location today (Depot)? Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Which of the following best describes your visit to this Depot today?

(Please circle the appropriate answer)

Visiting as part of running a series of errands  
Visiting this Depot was my primary destination

→ If a series of errands, how many stops do you plan on making during this trip? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Who generally makes the beverage purchases in your household?

(Please circle the appropriate answer)

I make the majority of the purchases  
The purchases are shared equally  
Someone else

11. How did you first learn to take containers back to a Depot? Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you recall seeing the Depot logo (shown to the right)?

(Please circle the appropriate answer)

→ If YES, please explain where you noticed the Depot logo: \_\_\_\_\_



Yes  
No

13. If a service was offered where you could drop off your containers without waiting in line and collect your money later, would you use this service?

(Please circle the appropriate answer)

Yes  
No

→ If YES, what would your preferred form of payment be?

(Please circle the appropriate answer)

Cash pick up   Cheque pick up   Debit   PayPal (electronic)

14. Have you ever brought back a container to a Depot that the Depot worker would not accept? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If **YES**, did the Depot worker explain why they could not accept the container? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If **NO**, did you try to take it to a different Depot? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If you took to another Depot, did the other Depot accept the container and pay you a refund? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

15. If you did not have a Depot in your local community, or a close neighbouring community, what would you do with your beverage containers? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If **OTHER**, please describe \_\_\_\_\_

16. Please indicate how far you would be willing to travel to return your beverage containers to a Depot? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

Less than 5 km   5 to 20 km   21 to 35 km   36 to 50 km   More than 50 km

17. Have you ever tried to return a beverage container to a Depot that did not have a label on it? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If **YES**, did you get a refund for that container? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If you **DID NOT GET A REFUND** for the container, do you recall what happened with this container? Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you find it difficult to separate containers that can be refunded from those that cannot be refunded? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

19. Would you like to see a deposit placed on more types of containers so that you could bring them back to a Depot to be recycled? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

20. Have you ever been frustrated with a Depot for not accepting a container you tried to bring back? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

→ If **YES**, can you give us an example of a container that caused the frustration? \_\_\_\_\_

→ Did you pay a deposit on that container when you purchased it? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

21. If you did not receive a refund for recycling a container, what is the likelihood that you would recycle that container? *(Please circle the appropriate number)*

Not at all likely					Very likely		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

22. Did you know that all Depots in Alberta are regulated? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

23. Does it make a difference to you whether Depots are regulated? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

**We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey.  
Please return your completed questionnaire to the surveyor.**