

Diageo North America expands ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ partnership to increase glass recycling across strategic regions in the U.S.

- In 2023, this glass recycling program for businesses collected 2.2 million pounds of glass in Illinois.
- ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ is now launching in Kentucky to empower local businesses to help increase the region’s volume of recycled glass.

NEW YORK, Mar. 5, 2024 – Diageo North America announces 2.2 million pounds of glass collected in its first-year partnership with ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ in Illinois and is now expanding to the state of Kentucky. ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ is a campaign in collaboration with the [Glass Packaging Institute](#) and [GlassKing Recovery & Recycling](#), to encourage more bars, restaurants and local businesses to collect used glass bottles and improve regional recycling rates.

“‘Don’t Trash Glass’ is an exciting partnership that has shown a promising first year of impact to improve regional glass collection and advance circularity across our customer value chain in the Chicagoland area,” said **Jayant Kairam, Vice President, Society for Diageo North America**. “We believe that working collectively with local businesses and the hospitality sector will generate lasting solutions that support communities and advance our sustainable by design goals. It is why we are extremely excited about expanding our partnership and taking the program to Kentucky, home to some of our most iconic brands like Bulleit, Blade & Bow, and I.W. Harper.”

Initiatives like this have the potential to improve glass recycling rates in states. Per [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) statistics](#), the overall glass recycling rate in America is 31.3%. A more [recent analysis](#) indicates that Illinois and Kentucky are both below the national average. Through ‘Don’t Trash Glass’, Diageo North America has the goal to help increase glass recycling in both states where the company has multiple production facilities.

Investing and creating a more circular economy in American cities

The ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ pilot program launched in 2021 in the Greater Chicago area. A 2023 partnership with Diageo’s Smirnoff brand supported the collection of ready-to-recycle glass from bars, restaurants and local businesses. Once collected, bottles are stored temporarily to eventually be processed by regional glass suppliers, aiming to keep this material out of landfills.

“The ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ program was incredibly flexible to meet our needs,” said **Eric Rose, Partner, Bub City in Rosemont, IL**. “The service is seamless and turnkey, and we are thrilled to be able to have a positive environmental impact.”

In 2023 the program collected more than 2.2 million pounds of glass from more than 50 businesses. As ‘Don’t Trash Glass’ continues to grow the number of establishments participating in Illinois, more cities have joined the campaign including Evanston, Rosemont, and Waukegan.

“This partnership with Diageo North America has been critical to ensure we’re showing more local businesses how easy it is to recycle glass in their community,” said **Scott DeFife, President of the Glass Packaging Institute**. “Not only that, but we’re seeing more interest from more cities and local officials across the state of Illinois which demonstrates scaling the program is possible.”

According to a 2023 "[50 States of Recycling](#)" report, Kentucky has a 15% glass recycling rate. Packed with potential, the 'Don't Trash Glass' program is expected to start operating in the state this spring and support efforts to increase glass recycling in the region.

Since 2019, Diageo has invested nearly \$290 million in Kentucky and its operations support over 1,700 jobs in the state across the distribution, retail and hospitality sectors. Diageo actively participates in the thriving bourbon economy and operates multiple sites in Kentucky, including a first-of-its-kind carbon-neutral Bulleit distillery in Lebanon, the Bulleit Distilling Company and Visitor Experience in Shelbyville and Stitzel-Weller in Louisville.

"We are grateful to our partners Diageo, GPI, and are excited to welcome new partners as we grow," said **Rose King, Chief Operating Officer of GlassKing Recovery & Recycling**. "Don't Trash Glass is an initiative where partners can see the impact of their commitment on local businesses and the circularity of bottles."

Committed to introducing more sustainable packaging

Improving circularity and reducing waste are priorities for Diageo and its brands. The efforts from the 'Don't Trash Glass' program contribute to the company's commitment to increase recycled content and reimagine its iconic glass packaging –key pillars of Diageo's approach to sustainability outlined in its ten-year action plan, '[Society 2030: Spirit of Progress](#)'. Other initiatives to transform the company's packaging footprint in North America include:

- Reducing weight in Diageo's primary scotch portfolio by moving some of our bottles into standard, more lightweight formats.
- Last fiscal year, Diageo removed 141 million cartons from some of its Johnnie Walker and other scotch brands across the world. In North America, this effort began with Johnnie Walker Black, Johnnie Walker Double Black, Buchanan's Deluxe 12 YO and Buchanan's Master.
- Over the past several years, the company has removed over 600 tons of corrugated cardboard packaging by optimizing its carton dividers and shipping boxes in North America.

Read more about Diageo's approach to [reimagining the future of packaging](#). Find out more about Don't Trash Glass at <https://www.gpi.org/dont-trash-glass-program>.

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About Diageo North America

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands including Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, Bulleit and Buchanan's whiskies, Smirnoff, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Casamigos, DeLeon and Don Julio tequilas, Captain Morgan, Baileys, Tanqueray and Guinness.

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