



Connecticut receives \$8.9M from 'nickel-per-nip program.' How much did your town get?

Tim Harfmann

2 months ago

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WATERBURY, Conn. (WTNH) — Over the last two years, Connecticut cities and towns have gotten five cents back for every bottle of liquor they sell through the “nickel-per-nip” program, according to a Three Tiers for Connecticut report.

The itty, bitty liquor bottles are having a significant impact on municipalities. Since the program started two years ago, it's been overflowing with cash — \$8.9 million, to be exact — for cities and towns that sell 50ml “nip” containers.

“[I’m] not surprised at all,” said Larry Cafero, the executive director of Wine & Spirits Wholesalers Inc. “It is something we had predicted from the very beginning. There were doubters out there that we would sell that many nips. We sell about 65 million nips a year here in the state of Connecticut.”



Cafero said the five-cent surcharge is necessary because the containers can contaminate roadways and waterways.

“Unfortunately, nips are part of that litter,” Cafero said. “We want to help the municipalities clean that stuff up.”

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He said the program doesn’t nickel and dime you. The goal is simple — reduce litter. The money from the surcharge goes directly to municipalities, specifically for environmental purposes, like hiring a recycling coordinator, buying street sweepers and trash bins and partnering with cleanup groups.

The table below lists the allocation of payments to some Connecticut municipalities for April 1, 2023, to Sept. 30, 2023. A complete list can be found [here](#).

BRIDGEPORT	\$79,506.45
BRISTOL	\$57,182.45
DANBURY	\$43,446.60
EAST HARTFORD	\$38,243.75
GROTON	\$42,598.45
HARTFORD	\$81,422.60
MANCHESTER	\$63,998.05
MERIDEN	\$49,394.45
MIDDLETOWN	\$32,268.20
MILFORD	\$35,943.45
NEW BRITAIN	\$64,866.80
NEW HAVEN	\$104,580.00
NEW LONDON	\$36,143.60
NORWALK	\$38,882.95

STAMFORD

\$38,424.50

WATERBURY

\$72,497.80

Prasad Maganti, owner of the Empire Wine & Liquors locations in Waterbury and Wallingford, says nips account for 15% of his sales, and he wishes customers would bring the empties back to his store.

“Usually, we are selling 200 nips a day,” Maganti said. “On the weekend sale, Friday and Saturday, it’s around 350 [nips per day].”

“That’s a lot of money, first of all,” said Sarah King of Waterbury. “But I’m glad that it’s going to a better cause.”

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