



## GROWLER ADVISORY

### WHAT CONSUMERS NEED TO KNOW

California Craft Brewers Association member breweries take great pride in the products they produce. It is of the utmost importance that the quality and integrity of the beer they produce is maintained from the time it leaves the brewery until it is consumed. The cleanliness, functionality and integrity of the refillable container is critical. Breweries may choose not to refill certain containers for a wide variety of important reasons including the following:

- **Cleanliness** of the container when it is brought in for refill, or the ability of the brewery to clean a container before refilling
- Inexpensive, **low quality containers** that do not seal properly or have questionable glass thickness and should not be reused
- Inability to comply with **label requirements** for refilling certain size containers may prevent breweries from being able to legally fill growlers
- The design of some **draft systems** or growler filling stations only accommodate a certain size and type of growler

Refilling growlers is a great way for consumers to sample beers from different breweries in an affordable & environmentally favorable way. For craft brewers, maintaining the quality of the beer up to point-of-consumption is the most important factor when filling any kind of packaging including growlers.

### BEST PRACTICES

The California Craft Brewers Association recommended the following Best Practices for refilling a growler supplied by a consumer and previously filled by another brewery:

- Every brewery should have a policy for refilling growlers. This should be made easily available to the consumer. It is ultimately in the best interest of the consumer to only refill growlers under specific pre-determined conditions. Breweries are never obligated to refill a used growler.
- The health and safety of customers as well as employees should be held in high regard at all times.
- Never refill a used growler if there is any doubt about the sanitation and cleanliness of the container!
- All information, logos or references to any brewery that previously filled the container should be obscured completely.
- Plastic or paper containers of any kind should not be filled. These materials cannot be cleaned properly and are likely to harbor bacteria.
- Use a neck hanger as an affixed label.
- Only use growlers that will maintain the integrity of the beer. Colored glass or double walled/insulated stainless growlers are highly recommended.

### LABELING

The Alcoholic Beverage Control code allows a beer manufacturer to fill any sealable container as long as specific guidelines are met. Growlers fall under the same category and regulations as any sealable container such as bottles, cans or kegs. Like all of these containers, growlers must have an affixed label and brand registration must have been submitted to the ABC. There are several other requirements that breweries must follow to legally fill growlers:

- The label branding on the container must be registered with the California Department of ABC
- The container must be sealable (to distinguish it from a glass of beer or other open container), which includes Screw top, cork, flip top, etc.
- Any and all information pertaining to another beer manufacturer other than the licensee filling/selling the container must be obscured. All text and logos from a previous brewery must be obscured.