

Driving Sustainability Together: EWG, Manhattan Beer and New York & Atlantic Railway



THE SCENARIO

Manhattan Beer & Beverage

Distributors needed a scalable way to move high volumes of imported beer into one of the country's most demanding consumer markets while responsibly managing the enormous volume of returned glass that came with it. EWG Glass Recovery & Recycle Corp. needed a cost-effective way to move processed glass cullet to distant manufacturing facilities. Together, the two companies turned a shared logistical challenge into a model for sustainable supply chain efficiency.

Serving a Dense Market

Manhattan Beer & Beverage Distributors is one of the largest beverage distributors in the country, serving one of the most densely populated consumer markets in the world. A substantial share of its portfolio—including major Mexican beer brands such as Corona, Modelo, and Pacifico—originates thousands of miles away. The long distances, heavy freight weights, and a chronic shortage of long-haul drivers made truck transportation an unreliable and costly option. Rail offered the pricing stability and operational flexibility the business required.



Manhattan Beer also faced a parallel challenge: managing the enormous volume of redeemed glass generated by its distribution business. Broken glass contaminates other recyclables; is costly to move by truck; and requires specialized processing before it can re-enter manufacturing, making it a logistical burden for distributors and municipalities alike.

A Natural Partnership

That challenge created a natural partnership between Manhattan Beer and EWG Glass Recovery & Recycle Corp., a Queens-based company that processes post-consumer glass into reusable cullet for bottle manufacturers across North America and also an NYA customer.

Before adopting rail, EWG operated entirely by truck, limiting its reach to customers within a viable trucking radius and constraining long-term growth.

For both Manhattan Beer and EWG, growth depended on solving the same core issue from opposite directions:

- Manhattan Beer needed a scalable, efficient way to move products into the region while responsibly managing returned glass.
- EWG needed a cost-effective transportation network capable of moving processed glass to distant manufacturing markets.

Both companies ultimately found that solution through rail.



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THE SOLUTION NYA became the critical transportation and logistics partner connecting the full lifecycle of beverage distribution and recycling, making significant investments to improve the rail infrastructure needed to implement the strategy.

The relationship created a uniquely circular supply chain:

1. Beer products arrive by rail at multiple points in the New York market. NYA delivers railcars to Manhattan Beer's Ridgewood, Queens distribution center.
2. Manhattan Beer distributes those products throughout the metropolitan market.
3. Returned glass bottles are collected and delivered to EWG facilities in Queens.
4. EWG processes, sorts, crushes, and cleans the glass into reusable cullet.
5. EWG loads the processed cullet into railcars for shipment to glass manufacturers throughout the eastern and central United States.

The result is a closed-loop transportation ecosystem in which rail supports both the inbound movement of consumer products and the outbound movement of recyclable commodities.

Rail as an Essential Supply Chain Solution

Rail transportation became foundational to Manhattan Beer's operating model.

Because much of the company's portfolio originates in Mexico, trucking alone would not provide an economically sustainable transportation solution. Rail allows Manhattan Beer and its suppliers to move high-volume, imported beer long distances efficiently while supporting competitive pricing in the consumer market.



NYA made investments to upgrade sidings at Manhattan Beer's facility, replacing 100# rail with 119# rail and installing 60 new ties. The upgrade facilitated safer and improved movement of modern rail cars, making NYA an essential partner in Manhattan Beer's supply chain.

"Our partnership with New York & Atlantic Railway aligned closely with Manhattan Beer's ongoing commitment to sustainability," said Mitchel Bergson, Executive Vice President of Manhattan Beer. "Building on our investments in CNG delivery trucks and environmentally conscious logistics practices, this collaboration helped us further reduce our environmental footprint while maintaining the reliable and efficient service our business depends on."

Transforming EWG Into a Rail-Served Recycling Operation

When EWG first approached NYA, the company had no prior experience with freight rail. NYA guided EWG through rail logistics, infrastructure, planning, and transload operations from the ground up. This included site selection and yard improvements.

"When we first talked with NYA about establishing rail service, the railroad was interested in how many cars we might move," says Louis Ventura, Operations Manager, EWG Glass Recovery and Recycle Corp.



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“Even though we didn’t know if we would become a large customer, the railroad worked hard to help us get started. As far as our rail supply chain is concerned, NYA has played a company-defining role for EWG.”

Initially, EWG considered loading railcars from a small rail location near Belmont Park that ultimately proved unsuitable for the scale of operation required. NYA instead helped guide EWG toward the underutilized Richmond Hill Yard in Queens.

At the time, Richmond Hill Yard was handling only minimal rail activity. Through a collaborative effort between NYA and EWG, the site was transformed into a productive transload facility capable of handling hundreds of railcars annually.

EWG made substantial long-term infrastructure investments to support rail operations, including:

- overhead conveyor systems
- concrete-supported rail infrastructure
- specialized hopper systems
- material handling equipment
- railcar loading systems
- additional crushing and sorting equipment

NYA made significant investments to rebuild approximately 1,000 feet of deteriorated track and improve the rail infrastructure serving the facility.

The level of investment demonstrated a long-term commitment to rail transportation. As described during project discussions, the installation represented “an absolute marriage with rail” and a durable growth strategy built around rail logistics that benefits EWG directly, and rail clients in the New York region overall.

Advanced Glass Processing Operations

EWG’s operations now support a sophisticated, multi-stage recycling and material recovery process.

Collected bottles are:

- sorted by color (flint, amber, and green glass)
- crushed and processed
- cleansed of contaminants such as labels and metal caps
- prepared for reuse in glass bottle manufacturing

Much of the processed cullet is shipped directly back into bottle manufacturing supply chains, helping support circular economy and extended producer responsibility (EPR) objectives long before those concepts became widespread industry terminology.

After processing, the cullet is trucked a short distance to the Richmond Hill rail operation, where NYA manages outbound shipments to three receivers across nine destinations nationwide via Class I connections—including CSX, Norfolk Southern, and western carriers.



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THE RESULTS *A Circular Rail-Based Supply Chain*

The Manhattan Beer / EWG / NYA partnership created a genuinely circular supply chain:

- Rail brings beverage products into the New York market.
- Recovered bottles are processed locally.
- Recycled glass is shipped back out by rail to become new bottles and industrial products.

The model proves that rail service can serve both ends of the supply chain, moving products in and out in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way.

Significant Growth Through Rail Access

Rail transformed EWG's business capabilities.

EWG's first rail shipments in 2015 totaled just five railcars.

Growth was rapid:

- 2016: approximately 270 railcars
- 2017: approximately 415 railcars
- 2018: approximately 421 railcars

Subsequent years: roughly 400+ railcars annually



Rail access enabled EWG to reach markets far beyond economically feasible trucking distances—including destinations in Virginia, Florida, Texas, and other regions across the country.

Over time, EWG expanded to dozens of destination points and forged relationships with numerous bottle manufacturers and recycling markets nationwide.

Sustainability and Reduced Truck Dependency

The partnership generated substantial environmental benefits and operational efficiencies:

- reduced long-haul truck traffic
- lowered transportation-related emissions
- improved fuel efficiency through rail transportation
- enhanced regional recycling capabilities
- reduced pressure on municipal recycling systems
- expanded reuse of post-consumer glass

"This partnership demonstrates the value freight rail can deliver across the entire supply chain," said Marlon Taylor, President of NYA. "By supporting Manhattan Beer's inbound logistics and enabling EWG's large-scale glass recovery operations, we helped build something that works for operational efficiency, sustainability, and long-term economic growth—which is a strong example of what rail can do when it connects the right partners."

