

Repak Grows Recycling Tonnages by 25% in 2003

- **47% of used packaging placed on the market recycled**
- **Organisation allocates over €15m to recycling in 2003**
- **25% increase in bring banks across the country**
- **48% increase in domestic packaging recycling rate**
- **C. 56 kilos of used packaging per household was recycled**

(Dublin, 09.07.04) Repak, the industry funded packaging waste compliance scheme, unveiled the packaging recycling results for 2003 showing that €15m was spent recycling 414,000 tonnes of used packaging. This equates to approximately 47% of all packaging placed on the Irish market which is 25% up on the 2002 figure and shows that Ireland is on course to meet 2005 EU packaging recycling targets of 50%.

The recycling rate by material type achieved was:

- Wood/other 85% (20% increase on 2002)
- Glass 67% approx (21% increase on 2002)
- Paper/Cardboard 45% approx (30% increase on 2002)
- Aluminium 17% approx (21% increase on 2002)
- Plastic 18% approx (30% increase on 2002)
- Steel 54% approx (22% increase on 2002)

Of the packaging materials recycled/recovered last year, the number one slot went to paper and cardboard (see appendix 1).

1. Paper Cardboard (43% of the total materials recycled or 176,000 tonnes)
2. Wood (21% or 88,000 tonnes)
3. Glass (18% or 75,000 tonnes)
4. Steel (9% or 38,000 tonnes)
5. Plastic (8% or 34,000 tonnes)

6. Aluminium (1% or 2,300 tonnes)

The organisation also reported that plastic bottle recycling rates saw significant progress last year with the rate increasing to 87%, which is in excess of 2,000 tonnes or nearly 56 million plastic bottles, as more local authorities included plastic bottles in their collections. Wood packaging continued to take the title with the highest recovery/recycling rate of 85%, while glass takes second place showing that 67% of glass placed on the market was recycled/recovered. This is an increase of 21% on 2003 despite the closure of the Irish Glass Bottle Co.

Packaging recycling from the domestic sector grew to 74,000 tonnes, up 48% on the previous year. This represents approximately 56 kilos per household. In 2003 Repak funded kerbsides grew by 31% servicing in excess of 320,000 households or approximately 1 in every four households.

In 2003 Repak paid €15.5m in direct recycling supports to local authorities and recycling contractors, bringing the total invested by Repak over the last five years to €40m. Membership revenue from 492 new members, grew by €2.3m (11.8% increase) to €15.1m helping to fund Repak's investment in the recovery and recycling of used packaging. New members included 90 major producers and over 400 members from the retail and the hospitality sectors. However, despite the growth in new membership income Repak still had an operating deficit of nearly €5.4m as expenditure grew to in excess of €20.5m. Despite growing tonnes, the Repak cost per tonne was €50/tonne down from a cost of €55/tonne in 2001.

Repak, in partnership with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, helped fund the placement of 430 new bring bank sites in 2003, representing an increase of 30% on last year's total. There are now over 1,800 bring bank sites in Ireland and this increase can potentially collect an extra

7,000 tonnes of domestically sourced used packaging. Repak are forecasting to place an additional 300 bring bank sites in 2004.

Commenting on the results Andrew Hetherington, CEO Repak said "We are delighted with the results, however, success comes at a price. As a result of large success in volumes recycled we have been operating in deficits for the last three years. 2004 will be critical for us to operate on a break-even basis. To help achieve this we need serious enforcement of the regulations from the DOEHLG and local authorities."

Other Topline Findings

Percentage increase on 2002 figures - Tonnages collected

| Material Type | Tonnage recovered/ recycled | Growth on 2002 (circa) | % split | % of total on Market |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| Wood/Other | 88,200 | +20% | 21% | 85% |
| Aluminium | 2,300 | +21% | 1% | 17% |
| Steel | 38,200 | +22% | 9% | 54% |
| OCC/(cardboard/paper) | 176,100 | +30% | 43% | 45% |
| Glass | 75,200 | +21% | 18% | 67% |
| Plastic | 34,000 | +30% | 8% | 18% |
| Total | 414,300 | +% | 100% | |

In 2003 Repak undertook a number of initiatives and educational programmes to generate greater awareness among Irish consumers of the need for recycling in Ireland, such as:

- Repak National Recycling Week
- Repak Recycling Awards
- Repak Green Christmas Campaign
- Repak Cash for Cans
- Sponsorship of An Taisce National Spring Clean, and Tidy Towns

Repak currently is one of the most cost effective packaging compliance schemes within Pro-Europe (an association of packaging compliance schemes in Europe).

About Repak

Repak is a not-for-profit members based packaging compliance scheme, currently Ireland's only producer responsibility scheme, which was established under a voluntary agreement between industry and the Department of the Environment and Local Government in 1997.

It was created as industry's response to the obligations placed on Ireland by the EU directive on Packaging Waste (94/62/EC) and is the only government approved compliance scheme under the Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations 1997. Repak succeeded in reaching and exceeding Ireland's national recycling target of 25% of used packaging in 2001, as set by the EU directive.

The organisation also performs an administrative role for the recycling of used farm film (silage cover) through the IFFPG.

Repak also runs a variety of educational initiatives such as Repak National Recycling Week in October, Repak Green Christmas, Repak Members' Conference. It is also a sponsor of An Taisce's National Spring Clean campaign, the Tidy Towns Competition and the schools based Repak Cash for Cans programme.

Last year Repak launched a trial plastic and beverage carton recycling scheme as part of a strategy to target traditionally more difficult material types. The

beverage carton scheme has now been extended to all households in Dublin with a kerbside/green wheelie bin collection scheme.

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Material Split for Packaging Recovered - 2003

