

Recycling a Good Cause

- Recycling over Repak National Recycling Week could help fight poverty
- Repak National Recycling Week running from October 4th to October 10th

(30.09.04) The Society of St. Vincent de Paul could benefit by thousands of euro if householders throughout Ireland get recycling during the 4th Repak National Recycling Week, which runs from Monday October 4th to Sunday October 10th.

This year Repak will make a cash donation to the charity according to the extra amount of used household packaging that is recycled during the month of October. For every extra tonne of used packaging recycled in October Repak will donate €15 per tonne to SVP. The money donated will be used to help in the Society's vital work.

"This is a simple way for people to make a difference to the environment while at the same time helping those who are most disadvantaged in our society, but we need people to actively recycle to reach this target. If every house in Ireland recycled an extra 2 aluminium cans, 1 steel can, 3 beverage containers, 3 cereal boxes, 3 glass bottles and 1 plastic bottle, the underprivileged in Ireland could benefit by up to €25,000. By taking care with used packaging that is normally dumped you will be helping us maintain our valuable services for families, young people, the homeless and the elderly", said Columba Faulkner, National Secretary, Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Repak and the St. Vincent de Paul are targeting an additional 1,500 tonnes of used packaging over the month of October, which is a household equivalent to an extra

- 5 glass bottles per household

Or

- 3 beverage containers
- 3 cereal boxes
- 3 glass bottles/jars
- 1 plastic bottle

Last year over 6,500 tonnes of packaging was recycled during the Repak National Recycling Week campaign in October which was made up of:

- 14.4 millions aluminium cans
- 6.4 million steel cans
- 1.4 million beverage cartons
- 32 million cereal boxes (equivalent)
- 14.5 million glass bottles
- 5 million plastic bottles

This year the organisation is targeting to recycle 8,000 tonnes of used packaging during the campaign period.

Andrew Hetherington, CEO Repak, said “Only 10% of used packaging in the average household bin is recycled. This is a huge opportunity for households to cut the amount of waste that goes to landfill and help a good cause but we need people to take action. By looking at what they dump and simply putting used packaging into recycling bins, the St. Vincent de Paul and the environment will benefit. In addition, recycling makes a huge amount of sense to the household waste charge bill. With the introduction of pay by use/pay by weight next year, taking the recyclables out of your household bin will help reduce your future waste bill.”

This is the fourth Repak National Recycling Week and is designed to get Irish householders to start the recycling habit by visiting their local bring bank/recycling centres or properly using their household recycling collections. The theme of the week is “Start Recycling – Keep Recycling”, and features a series of nationwide educational and promotional campaigns, in addition to a nationwide advertising campaign.

This year over 3.8 million Avonmore and Premier Dairies Tetra Pak milk cartons will be branded with on-pack carton recycling messages encouraging consumers to recycle their used packaging during the week. Posters and point of sale items will also be distributed to Repak member shops and stores nationwide. Also Repak have mailed over 3,300 primary schools nationally with special recycling activity packs to highlight the week in schools.

As part of the Week, the 3rd Repak Recycling Awards will take place on Thursday 7th October. The awards recognise the efforts and ingenuity of schools, individuals, local authorities, recovery operators and Repak members, in the areas of packaging prevention, reuse and recycling.

Nationwide Repak members’ activities will be supported with special local authorities initiatives during the week.

Last year, the Repak National Recycling Week campaign contributed to growing household packaging recycling rates over the month by a staggering 48% increase on the previous year's figures, which was partly attributed to the growth in collection infrastructure in 2003.

Recycling Hints and Tips

1. Segregate your waste. Organise Household Bins. Put three bins in the kitchen one for recyclables, one for compostable vegetable waste, one for general waste.
2. Clean and squash. Clean out cans and flatten. Rinse and squash cartons. Flatten cardboard boxes. Wash out bottles to avoid flies and wasps being attracted to sugary residue.
3. Find your nearest recycling centre. Log onto www.repak.ie for details of your nearest recycling centre or bring bank.
4. Glass. When recycling glass remember to colour segregate. Store up all your glass in a plastic reusable storage box. Choose a dedicated storage area inside or outside your house for when you next visit your recycling centre/bring bank. Remember to bring your recyclable glass with you next time you are visiting the supermarket.
5. Don't forget about other materials. Remember to recycle all cardboard boxes e.g. cereal, tissue, ready made meals etc. Remember you can recycle aluminum food trays from takeaways etc. if they are cleaned and rinsed.
6. You can recycle plastic. While not all kerbsides will accept plastic bottles locate your nearest plastic bottle recycling facility by visiting www.repak.ie
7. Check for products with less packaging, use re-usable plate and cups and bags. Buy vegetables loose.
8. Visit your nearest recycling centre or bring bank at least once during Repak National Recycling Week for materials not accepted in your green bin. Use a reusable container such as plastic box for bottles or reusable shopping bag for collecting and bringing your material to a bring bank.
9. Do not litter at bring banks. Take home any boxes or containers you used to bring materials to your local bring bank in.
10. Start home composting: log onto your local authority website and purchase a home composter for composting your kitchen and garden waste. Many local authorities also provide a booklet with these on how to start home composting.
11. Make a resolution. Start recycling and keep recycling. Get everyone involved by assigning tasks to each member of the family or organise a duty roster.

ENDS

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 the Repak National Recycling Week in October, the Repak Green Christmas and the Repak National 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.

Repak membership fees are used to subsidise the collection of used packaging in Ireland through the network of 2,000 bring banks, over 50 recycling centres and household kerbside collection schemes which reach in excess of one in four (over 350,000) Irish households. Last year Repak members contributed over €15 million to directly fund the recovery of 414,000 tonnes of used packaging; 47% of all packaging placed on the Irish market.

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