

## **Repak warns of Christmas Waste littering at Bring banks**

### **170 Million Recyclable Container Used over Christmas Period**

(28.12.04) Repak has warned against dumping at bring banks throughout the country as householders rush to recycle the 170 million used packaging containers that are produced at Christmas time. According to the organisation, leaving recyclable material, such as bottles, cans and cardboard, beside bring banks encourages general dumping and could effect the future placement of bring banks throughout the country.

With an expected increase of 30% in the amount of packaging produced at Christmas time, Repak is advising that recyclables left beside, rather than put in bring banks, create added difficulties for collectors and local authorities and may end up in landfill. The organisation also warned that 'recycling dumpers' face hefty fines for littering.

Darrell Crowe, Marketing Manager, Repak said added "In recent research a third of Irish adults claim that they often leave recycling on the ground when bring banks are full. More worrying we also discovered that one in four people did not believe that they are littering when they leave their bottles, cans and cardboard, on the ground beside full bring banks. The Christmas festivities mean we face a big increase in used packaging. This combined with people having additional time off means that there is added strain placed on the collection infrastructure. We are calling on recyclers not to be counter-productive by leaving recyclables beside bring banks. This effectively turns a valuable resource into waste as material dumped at these centres can frequently end up as landfill. If a bring bank is full either wait until it is serviced, visit one of the special Repak Green Christmas Centres or visit the nearest alternative bring bank. Full listings are available on [www.repak.ie](http://www.repak.ie) and [www.raceagainstwaste.ie](http://www.raceagainstwaste.ie)."

The issue has been highlighted recently by a number of county councils who have felt it necessary to install surveillance cameras at bring banks in certain locations, because of the increase in householders leaving bags of unsorted rubbish at the centres.

“Deliberate or misguided dumping at bring banks could also hamper placement of additional facilities as it raises complaints about their location. Ireland is currently only at half the European average of bring banks per head of population. Correct recycling is a win-win situation as environment benefits and householders can reduce their waste bills by up to 50%. If you are part of the 4% of Irish adults who claim to recycle nothing, make it a new year’s resolution to start recycling and keep recycling.”

He also added “Collectors such as Rehab are increasing the collection capacity by 50% over the holiday period and will be operating full collection services from Monday the 27<sup>th</sup> on. However, we urge people if they find their local bottle bank full to take their material to the nearest alternative site or bring it home with them rather than dump it on the ground and create a litter problem. By spreading the usual expected post Christmas increase, which sees us use over 170 million packaging containers, we can all ensure that the current bottle banks can meet this capacity.”

Over the Christmas period Race Against Waste and Repak have teamed together to set up a network of 80 special Green Christmas centres. It is estimated that over 80,000 tonnes of used packaging are produced over Christmas or

- 20 million wine bottles
- 48 million aluminium beer cans
- 35 million soft drinks cans
- 13 million beer bottles
- 45 million plastic drinks bottles
- 2.5 million spirit bottles

- 4 million cardboard sweet boxes
- 2.5 million cardboard toy boxes
- 4 million rolls of wrapping paper

The 80 Repak Green Christmas centres that have been set up throughout the country, accept a wider range of materials than normal and open for longer hours to make it as easy as possible to recycle. The initiative is supported by a nationwide advertising campaign which also promotes the existing network of almost 2,000 bring banks for the recycling of aluminium drink cans and glass bottles and jars, as well as the dry recycling household collections that service nearly 50% of all households in Ireland.

The campaign, running from the 22<sup>nd</sup> December to the 10<sup>th</sup> January, will see 80 Green Christmas Recycling Centres set-up throughout the country, to which householders can bring the excess cardboard, paper, glass, plastic and cans generated over the Christmas period to be recycled. The campaign is in its fourth year, having expanded from 1 participating local authority covering 11 recycling centres in 2001 to all local authorities in 2003. Full details of opening hours of the Green Christmas centres and materials handled are available at [www.repak.ie](http://www.repak.ie).

### **The 12 Days of Green Christmas**

Day 1 **Boxes** Buy separate boxes for storage of your used glass bottles and jars and cans, newspapers etc.

Day 2 **Compost Bin** Put a compost bin in your garden for kitchen vegetable waste and garden waste.

Day 3 **Organise Household Bins** Put three bins in the kitchen: one for recyclables; one for compostable vegetable waste; one for general waste. Organise for storage space in backgarden/room.

Day 4 **Check** for products with less packaging, use re-usable plates, cups and bags. Buy loose vegetables.

Day 5 **Find your nearest recycling centre** Check local paper or visit [www.repak.ie](http://www.repak.ie) for details of the nearest Repak Green Christmas centre or bring bank.

Day 6 **Christmas wrapping** Gather all the wrapping paper, cardboard boxes from presents into large bags for recycling or reuse.

Day 7 **Morning After** Gather up all plastic/glass bottles and aluminium cans in separate bags or bins.

Day 8 **Wash 'n' Squash** Rinse out bottle and cans, remove lids and squash plastic containers to save space.

Day 9 **Card Recycling** Collect all Christmas cards together, which can also be recycled.

Day 10 **Recycle used batteries** Collect up all the used batteries. Look up [www.repak.ie](http://www.repak.ie) to find your nearest recycling centre.

Day 11 **Christmas decorations** Take down decorations and tree.

Day 12 **Christmas tree Recycling** Bring Christmas tree to local Christmas tree recycling centre.

### **About Repak**

Repak is a not-for-profit members based compliance scheme established under a voluntary agreement between industry and the Department of the Environment and Local Government. It was established 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 EU national packaging recovery and recycling target of 25% of used packaging in 2001.

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