

Closure of Smurfit Mill is a Significant Blow for Recycling in Ireland

(18.01.05) The closure of the Smurfit Paper Mill in Dublin is a significant blow for recycling in Ireland, according to packaging recycling scheme Repak. The announcement further erodes Ireland's ability to recycle used packaging and removes the capacity to recycle 40,000 tonnes of paper and cardboard per year. This equates to approximately 10% of all used packaging collected for recycling or 20% of the 176,000 tonnes cardboard/paper packaging in Ireland in 2003, which will now have to be exported for recycling.

According to Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak "Our thoughts are firstly with the workers who have lost their jobs at one of the Republic of Ireland's last recycling facilities. This announcement further increases our reliance on overseas markets, which diminishes our control and increases the complexity and costs of recycling. The closure of Irish Glass and the Smurfit Paper Mill combined reduces our indigenous recycling capacity by approximately 90,000 tonnes per annum. However, Ireland is well positioned to meet the next round of EU packaging recycling targets and although we have few indigenous recyclers left, the collection and processing functions continue to grow in strength. The reality is that cardboard and paper collected will continue to be recycled but now unfortunately abroad."

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