

Mary Harney Officially Opens Repak Headquarters 400,000 Tonnes Recycled in 2003 €60m Invested Since Establishment

(10.05.04) Repak today marked the official opening of its landmark headquarters in the Red Cow Interchange Estate in Dublin by An Tánaiste, Mary Harney TD by reporting that it has recorded the recycling of in excess of 40% of the packaging placed on the Irish market in 2003.

Repak was established in 1997 and since then has grown from an organisation of 2 to currently employing 35 people in its 15,000 square feet building. During this time the organisation has grown the volume of used packaging recycled in Ireland from less than 100,000 tonnes or 13% in 1998 to over 400,000 tonnes or 40% in 2003 and now has over 1,800 member companies.

Marking the opening by the Tánaiste Repak has also reported that since its establishment it has invested over 60 million euro in the recycling of used packaging from a variety of different materials such as wood, metal, plastic and cardboard/paper.

Speaking at the opening Andrew Hetherington said "Since its establishment Repak has proven to be a success as the first true producer responsibility scheme in Ireland and will act as a role model for other similar schemes. The responsible voluntary approach taken by industry has met EU Targets and diverted thousands of tonnes from landfill and back into packaging products. However, unless proper enforcement is in place and law breaking companies who are not meeting their compliance obligations and who account for over 35% of the used packaging in the Irish waste stream are not made to pay, then the recycling of used packaging will not reach its full potential."

The Tánaiste stated that she was pleased to perform the official opening of the Repak offices, which are based in her constituency. She congratulated Repak on their achievements to date, and she acknowledged the success of the voluntary approach in this instance - where industry and Government work together to meet our obligations arising out of EU recovery targets for used packaging. The Tánaiste also acknowledged the need for greater focus on enforcement, and stated her support for a number of initiatives recently announced by her cabinet colleague, Martin Cullen TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

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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