

Irish Recyclers win the Gold Medal as they recycle enough packaging waste to fill the Beijing Olympic Stadium

Recycling Results for 2007 reveal:

- **643,000 tonnes used packaging recycled in 2007, enough to fill the entire Beijing Olympic Stadium**
- **Enough wood recycled to create a gymnastics balance beam stretching from Dublin to Beijing**
- **Enough metal recycled to create one giant hammer throw 24 metres in diameter**
- **124,000 tonnes of glass recycled the equivalent of 244 million glass bottles or enough wine to fill an Olympic sized swimming pool 80 times over**
- **Enough aluminium recycled to create over 2.4 million Olympic relay batons**
- **Household packaging recycling grew to 185,000 tonnes up from 173,000 tonnes last year, a 6.9% increase. This equates to 126 kilos per household or 44 kilos per person**
- **Repak income from packaging levies in 2007 was €27.1 million up €3.4 million or 14% up on 2006 income.**

Dublin; 05.08.08: With the 2008 Olympic Games just around the corner Repak reveal that Irish recyclers last year recycled enough packaging material to fill the entire Beijing Olympic Stadium. Irish consumers recycled enough wood to create a gymnastics balance beam over 8,000 km in length, nearly long enough to reach from here to Beijing. The gymnasts would not be the only athletes facing a challenge as consumers recycled enough steel to create a giant hammer throw

24 metres in diameter or enough to make 7.2 million shot puts. There would also be plenty of seating for everyone to view the spectacular events as there was enough plastic recycled to create 8.7 million plastic seats, enough to fill the Olympic stadium 900 times over. And everyone could show multitudes of support as there was enough paper recycled to create 2.2 billion paper flags. The new recycling statistics were released today by Repak and show a significant 6.9% increase on household recycling rates for 2007.

The results for 2007 showed an overall increase in recycling rates and some individual material types also saw significant increases:

- There was a **3%** increase in **paper and cardboard** up from 277,000~~XXX~~ to 286,000 tonnes, enough to create 3.7 billion cereal boxes. Paper/cardboard accounted for approximately 44% of all recycled packaging.
- A **12%** increase in **glass** recycling up to 124,600 tonnes or the equivalent of **244 million** glass bottles which would mean drinking enough wine to fill 80 Olympic sized swimming pools.
- A **12.6%** increase in **wood** recycling up to 125,100 tonnes or enough wood to help create **3.4 million steeple chases**.
- **Total plastic** recovered was 52,200 tonnes or the equivalent of 1 billion plastic bottles
- A **5.7%** increase in **metal** at **55,000 tonnes** or of the equivalent of 2.1 billion steel food cans

Commenting on the results for 2007, CEO of Repak, Andrew Hetherington said "It is great to see a continuing increase in the rate of recycling year on year and it shows that households around the country are making a considerable effort to recycle more. However, we need people to dig deeper and recycle more used packaging as well as working to reduce the amount of packaging on the market.

Last year there was an increase in the packaging levies raised by Repak. Repak income from packaging levies in 2007 was €27.1 million up €3.4 million or 14% on 2006 income. This was a mixture of increased packaging growth and increased fee income. Repak as part of our [packaging reduction program strategy](#) are working with industry bodies and the EPA to attempt to reduce the amount of packaging placed on the market. However, the consumer can also influence the industry by avoiding buying products that they feel are unduly over packaged and in turn place pressure on the industry to reduce packaging.”

Repak has invested over €145 million in supporting packaging recycling since it was established in 1997. Repak raised 27.1 million in packaging levies from its members in 2007, up €3.4 million or 14% up on the previous year. Repak now part fund nearly 1.03 million kerbside dry recycling collections reaching circa 70% of all households in Ireland. Total amount of packaging reported to the Repak scheme in 2006 was 630,000 tonnes versus 596,000 tonnes at the end of 2005, a growth of 5.7% in total tonnes reporting to the scheme by the year end 2007. The total tonnes recycled in 2007 represented a recycling rate of 102% of the total packaging placed on the market by Repak members.

Ends

For further Information please contact:

Una O' Murchu

Slattery Communications

01-6614055/086 1095 363

Notes to Editor:

Breakdown of tonnage per material and there tangible equivalents

Material	Total Recycled (tonnes)	Growth v previous year	Equivalent
Paper Cardboard	286,000	+3%	2.2 billion paper flags or 2.7 billion cereal boxes
Glass	124,000	+12%	244 million glass bottles
Metal	55,000	+5.7%	One Hammer throw 24metres in diameter
Plastic	52,000	–	8.7 million plastic stadium seats
Aluminium	3,200	–	2.4 million relay batons
Wood	125,000	12.6%	A balance beam reaching from Dublin to Beijing
	Tonnes	Growth	
Total Packaging recycled	643,000	+6.6%	152 kilos per person
Total Household Recycled	185,000	+6.9%	126 kilos per household or 44 kilos per person

