

### **Repak Annual Results Show Need for Compliance to Meet Growth in Recycling Demands**

- **603,000 tonnes of cardboard, glass, cans and other packaging recycled**
- **c64% of all used packaging recycled in 2006**
- **Nearly 3 million tonnes of used packaging recycled since 1997**
- **€22.6 million invested in packaging recycling as part of producer responsibility**
- **Collection infrastructure growing**
- **€45 million needed by 2011 to fund packaging recycling**
- **Household package recycling climbs by 24%**
- **New challenges ahead as costs expect to rise**

**Dublin; XX August, 2007:** Repak's annual results show while overall packaging recycling activity rose by 7%, the direct recycling costs rose by 26%. Reflecting the higher cost and growth of household packaging recovered. Over €23.7 million was collected by Repak from Irish companies in 2006 as part of their producer responsibility which is up 13% on 2005 figures. During the year Repak invested over €22.6 million of the funds raised from members in the recovery and recycling of packaging through funding household collection services, Bring Centres and commercial packaging recycling collections.

In total over 603,000 tonnes, up 7% from 2005 of glass, cardboard, plastic, paper and wood packaging was recycled during the year with 431,000 tonnes coming from the commercial sector and 173,000 tonnes from the domestic sector. While the overall total tonnage is up by 7%, the commercial sector increased by only 1% and the domestic sector increased by over 24%. Overall Repak is funding the recovery/recycling of 64% of all used packaging and since 1997 has diverted nearly 3 million tonnes of used packaging from landfill.

Membership revenue of Repak grew in 2006 by 13% with companies like Harvey Norman and many automobile companies such as Volvo, GM Motors (Opel) and Fiat. joining. This brings total membership of the producer responsibility scheme to 2,165 companies. Despite this growth Repak members only account for 61% of the total tonnes of packaging on the market despite funding 100% of all packaging recycling. While Repak did see an increase in funding from members, the increase does not support the increase in recycling activity with householder recycling on the increase by a significant 36% in 2006. Household packaging recycled tonnes accounted for 29% of total recovery activity and 70% of total expenditure, reflecting the higher costs of household packaging recovery versus commercially recovered packaging tonnes which accounted for 71% of recovered tonnes and only 30% of expenditure.

Commenting on its 2006 results, Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak says: “The significant increase in household recycling of last year of 24% confirms that ordinary people and their communities are committed to recycling provided they are supported with effective recycling infrastructure. Repak is pleased to have played its part in supporting this increase. We have also increased our membership, with an additional 268 companies bringing Repak’s total membership to 2,165 companies. Repak members contributed €23.7 million to supporting packaging recycling in 2006, an increase of €1.9 million on 2005.

Commenting on increasing operating costs and the future of packaging recycling, Mr Hetherington said “In order to meet future national recycling targets, more will need to be recycled from the domestic bin which will see costs rise significantly. This means industry will need to pay more but we believe the proposed reduction in the De Minimus threshold in the Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations (threshold for obligation) from 25 tonnes to 10 tonnes will play an important role in increasing compliance with the Regulations and spreading the burden of future cost increases across more businesses than Repak’s current 2,200 members.”

At the annual Repak Service Operators Conference held in April, members were told that by 2011 the annual funding of packaging recycling by Repak is forecast to rise to €45 million.

Since 1997 Repak has invested in excess of €118 million in supporting the recovery and recycling of nearly 3 million tonnes of used packaging. In its tenth year, membership and investment in package recycling has grown from under 15% in 1998 to over 60% in 2006.

Broken down by material the amount recycled last year equals:

- Glass, 111,283 tonnes, up a significant 12% on last year which represents approximately 76% of all glass placed on the Irish market. This reflects 19% of the total weight of material recycled for Repak in 2006.
- Metals (Steel and Aluminium), 51,547 tonnes representing 68% of packaging metals accounting for approximately 8.5% of total weight of waste packaging material.
- Cardboard and paper, 276,507 tonnes which is also up 12% over 2005, reflecting 83% of all paper and board packaging forecast to be on the market and accounting for 46% of the total weight of materials funded by the Repak Payment Scheme for Recycling.
- Wood, 111,047 tonnes of wood waste packaging were recovered and recycled, representing 86% of all wood packaging calculated to be on the ROI market.

83% of the waste packaging materials recovered and recycled were from glass, cardboard/paper and wood. This is in line with Repak’s strategy of targeting heavier weight and more cost-effective material types. 17% of material was from plastic and metals.

To ensure Repak’s ability to fund these significant increase in recycling impending legislation and the proposed reduction in the De Minimus need to be complied with.

**Ends**

**Press queries to:**

Eoin Kennedy (Slattery Communications) Tel: 01 634 2510

**Notes to Editor:**

- 603,000 tonnes of waste packaging recovered and recycled in 2006
- 3 million tonnes of used packing collected since 1997
- Membership income exceeded €23.7m in 2006
- 268 new members generate additional €1.9m in fee income
- €22.6m invested in recycling activity bringing total since 1998 to €118 million

**About Repak**

Repak is a not-for-profit voluntary member's based packaging recycling 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 packaging compliance scheme under the Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations 1997. Repak succeeded in reaching and exceeding Ireland's EU National Packaging Recovery and Recycling Targets of 25% of packaging waste in 2001 and 50% in 2005 and is well on their way to achieving their 2011 target of 60%.