

Irish people urged to revive community spirit – all it takes is time!

Anti-litter initiative calls for volunteers to give time to clean up countryside

Football Association of Ireland supports 2010 campaign

26th February 2010: Communities all over Ireland have recently been hit hard by the damaging effects of winter flooding, snow and ice as well as the negativities of the current economic climate. The National Spring Clean, Ireland's largest anti-litter initiative, is urging people to help to revive their community spirit this spring by volunteering some time. The campaign, which runs throughout the month of April, is fully reliant on volunteers and free clean-up kits will be issued to those registering a clean-up.

The National Spring Clean campaign is organised by An Taisce and funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The Football Association of Ireland (FAI) has also committed to supporting this year's campaign by organising a number of clean-ups in communities around Ireland.

Speaking at the launch of the campaign, **John Gormley, TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government** said "The National Spring Clean campaign encourages people from all parts of the community to work together to create a cleaner environment. The initiative plays a vital role in improving quality of life by empowering people to take responsibility for, and have pride in, their local areas. It is encouraging to have large community groups, like the FAI. The initiative is totally reliant on people's willingness to give their time and energy to help to make a difference in their community and the results continue to be outstanding.

In 2009, more than 505,000 people volunteered to join with other members of their community to organise National Spring Clean events around the country where an estimated 1,596 tonnes of litter was collected and 35% of that waste was recycled.

Patricia Oliver, Chairperson of the National Spring Clean campaign said "There is no denying that things are tough for communities at the moment but the National Spring Clean campaign could provide the perfect vehicle for reviving the spirit of community around Ireland this spring. The initiative represents an all inclusive free community activity that allows people to come together for the better of their local environment. The campaign has grown from strength to strength since it began 12 years ago and we would hope that the people of Ireland will continue to support the campaign this year. We are delighted to have commitment from groups

such as the Gardaí and the FAI on board to join with other members of the community to organise a number of large clean-ups around the country.”

John Delaney, Chief Executive of the FAI said “The FAI is delighted to get involved in this year’s National Spring Clean campaign which will benefit communities the length and breadth of the country. With 3,000 clubs and an army of players and volunteers in every part of Ireland, the FAI looks forward to putting its weight behind this initiative and proving what team work can achieve.”

The National Spring Clean campaign is sponsored by Coca-Cola Bottlers Ireland and the Wrigley Company. It is also supported by Repak who supply colour coded refuse sacks for recycling the materials collected and Local Authorities who co-ordinate activity in their communities.

All those registering for the National Spring Clean campaign are issued with a FREE clean up kit which contains information, posters, colour coded refuse sacks for segregation of waste materials, protective gloves and tabards to keep participants clean. An Taisce will also liaise with local authorities to ensure that all materials collected will be picked up without charge.

To register for National Spring Clean call 01 4002220 or log on to the website at www.nationalspringclean.org. Follow National Spring Clean on Twitter @NationalSpringC

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