

Repak recycling awards promote and encourage excellence in packaging prevention and recycling

(04.10.07) Re-useable packaging, compostable, flexible food packaging, zero waste to landfill, fixed packaging reduction targets and geo thermal heating systems are just some of the initiatives that have been commended in this year's 6th Annual Repak Awards. This year was the first year that Repak awarded an Excellence award which was won by Tesco through "The Tesco Strategy" where they aim to be the first Irish retailer to reach 100% recycling of packaging and store waste by 2010 and to reduce strategy to reduce their own label packaging by 25% by 2010. Other winners included Alcan Packaging Dublin Ltd for the Repak Best Practice Award and H.J. Heinz Co. who received the accolade for the Best Prevention Initiative Award. The awards took place in the Four Seasons Hotel in Dublin on Thursday night, the 4th October and were presented by Nationwide presenter Mary Kennedy.

Tesco were awarded Repak's newest honour, The Repak Excellence Award by virtue of their strong leadership in the protection of the environment through its strategy to minimise its carbon footprint and address crucial environmental concerns through recycling, packaging reduction and sustainable energy use. The Tesco environmental strategy, launched in 2007, sets a target of being the first Irish retailer to reach 100% recycling of packaging and store waste by 2010. The move will see more than 24,000 tonnes of waste recycled each year. The strategy also seeks to increase the recycability of their packaging which includes ideas like compostable packaging that would be available on a number of organic fresh products. Secondary cardboard and plastic packaging will be replaced by re-usable green crates. Tesco already have 250,000 re usable plastic crates in circulation each week preventing nearly 20 million cardboard boxes per annum. Packaging on own label brand products will be reduced by 25% by the target

date of 2010. This initiative sets a benchmark for other retail chains and outlets and sends valuable messages to its consumers.

H.J. Heinz was presented with Best Prevention Initiative Award thanks to the launch of three Packaging Prevention Initiatives. Weights of plastic trays were reduced, corrugate cases were replaced with shrink-wrap and plastic drums were replaced with returnable containers. These initiatives resulted in savings of 67 tonnes of plastic and 42 tonnes of cardboard. By reducing this much waste the company is not only helping the environment but also making massive cost reductions.

Alcan Packaging Dublin, specialists in the printing of food flexible packaging took the Repak Best Practice Award. Alcan, through a continuous and measured process have examined all aspects of their production to ensure that no more packaging than necessary is used and that all packaging that can be recovered is segregated and sent for recycling. However, it is the development of a compostable flexible plastic food packaging for the breakfast cereal market that marked Alcan Packaging Dublin as leaders in best practice in packaging waste management.

Louth County Council was honoured as Repak Local Authority of the Year and Cork County Council was awarded Local initiative of the year for their Bandon Civic Amenity Site. O' Reilly's Centra Foodmarket, Bunclody, Co. Wexford managed to recycle 77% of its waste in 2006 reducing its waste management bill by 42% which made them worthy winners of the Best practice award in the independent retail sector. The best practice accolade in the hospitality sector was presented to Fitzgerald's Woodland House Hotel in Adare, Co. Limerick while Lakeland Dairies won Repak Member of the Year by reducing its landfill from 717 tonnes to 28 tonnes, a massive 97% reduction. The small recovery operator of the year award went to Clean Ireland refuse and Recycling in County Clare while

the large recovery operator of the year honour was handed to Panda Waste Services who are better known for their recent entry into the domestic Dublin waste market. Repak continued to acknowledge recycling among the youth by naming Aglish NS in Cappoquin, Co. Waterford Recycling School of the year. St. Catherine's College Armagh won young recyclers of the year (junior section) for their project: "Green Christmas and Recycle Light." The senior young recyclers of the year section was one by Scoil Mhuire, Athy, Co. Kildare for their project highlighting waste management entitled: "Help stop excess waste and make people aware of recycling facilities in our area."

The 2007 results were: (full details at end of release)

1. Repak Member of the year Award

Winner: Lakeland Dairies

2. Repak Best Packaging Waste Prevention Initiative (sponsored by the EPA)

Winner: H.J. Heinz Co.

3. Repak Best Practice Award Large Company (Sponsored by the EPA)

Winner: Alcan Packaging Dublin Ltd

4. Repak Best Practice Award Independent Retail Sector

Winner: O'Reillys Centra Foodmarket, Bunclody, Co. Wexford

5. Repak Best Practice Award Hospitality (Sponsored by REHAB)

Winner: Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel – Adare, Co. Limerick

6. Repak Local Authority of the Year (Sponsored by Rehab)

Winner: Louth County Council

7. Repak Local Authority Initiative of the Year (Sponsored by RPS)

Winner: Cork County – Bandon Civic Amenity site.

8. Repak Recovery Operator of the Year Large Company (sponsored by Bank of Ireland)

Winner: Panda Waste Services, Dublin

9. Repak Recovery Operator of the Year Small/Medium Company (sponsored by Tetra Pak)

Winner: Clean Ireland Refuse and Recycling, Kilrush, Co. Clare

10. Repak, in Association with An Taisce, Recycling School of the Year
Winner: Aghlish NS, Cappoquin, Co. Waterford

11. Repak Excellence Award
Winner: Tesco Ireland

12. Repak, in association with Eco Unesco, Young Recyclers of the year- junior
Winner: St. Catherine's College, Armagh

13. Repak, in association with Eco Unesco, Young Recyclers of the year- Senior
Winner: Scoil Mhuire, Athy, Co. Kildare.

Commenting on the announcement Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak, said, "The Repak Recycling Awards are imperative at highlighting the importance of recycling and also the exemplar work in packaging reduction which does not always get highlighted. What most people don't realise is that there are resounding benefits to recycling and prevention/reduction of packaging. Not only is recycling beneficial for the environment, it also greatly reduces costs and it improves the green reputation of the organization. Ireland is constantly increasing their recycling levels and with schools also being recognised in the awards, the future looks bright for recycling in Ireland".

The winners in each category received an award made from recovered/recycled materials, created by Irish designer, Ronan Halpin. The judges included Brian Meaney of the EPA, Avine MacNally of the SFA and David Pearce who represented Chambers Ireland. Other expert judges external to the industry included Hugh Stephens of Enterprise Ireland and Colette O'Connor, Shelflife Magazine. With Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak also giving his expert opinion. The awards were presented at a gala dinner attended by Mr John Gormley TD, Minister for the Environment and Local Government and were attended by over 350 delegates including Repak members, politicians, nominated local authorities and waste contractors.

The Awards are part of Repak Recycling Week which runs until the 8th of October. The theme for this year's recycling week is "Keep Recycling – let's get it sorted", and features a series of nationwide educational and promotional campaigns. A number of initiatives have taken place around the country including a "Bling my Bring Bank" project where Bring Banks were decorated and placed in various hotspots in Dublin City Centre. Repak also decided to go cyber this year with a Bebo page (www.repakrecycling.bebo.com), a YouTube site (www.youtube.com/repakrecycling) and its very own blog site (<http://www.repakrecycling.blogspot.com/>) which give Repak a virtual presence and allow more interaction with a larger audience.

Full Details on Awards Winners

1. Repak Excellence Award

Winner: Tesco Ireland

Tesco Ireland has demonstrated strong leadership in the protection of the environment through its strategy to minimise its carbon footprint and address crucial environmental concerns through recycling, packaging reduction and sustainable energy use.

The Tesco strategy, launched in 2007, sets a target of being the first Irish retailer to reach 100% recycling of packaging and store waste by 2010. The move will see more than 24,000 tonnes of waste recycled each year. Compostable packaging will be available on a number of organic fresh products. Secondary cardboard and plastic packaging will be replaced by re-usable green crates, Tescos already use 250,000 re-usable trays per week which save the equivalent of 20 million cardboards every year. Packaging on own label brand products will be reduced by 25% by the target date.

In-store energy consumption will be reduced by 50% and Energy Champions will be appointed to all stores, while state-of-the art automated recycling machines will be introduced to the store network.

Tesco are showing that major retailers can care both for the environment and for consumers needs in a highly practical way, and are the first winners of the Repak Excellence Award

2. Repak Member of the year Award

Winner: Lakeland Dairies

Now Ireland's second largest dairy processing co-operative, Lakeland Dairies is a market led, innovation focussed manufacturer of superior quality dairy derived products for clients throughout the world.

Lakeland is an exemplary member of Repak insofar as they are meticulous in their attention to the detailed requirements of membership. On the packaging front, they have developed cutting edge technology in the manner in which they go about the specifying and procurement of packaging materials. Every facet of the packaging function is scrutinised to assess its potential for prevention, minimisation, and ultimately, cost savings. Recycling of packaging waste at the Killeshandra headquarters and at their other sites had been developed to a fine art and in the five year period, 2001 to 2006, waste to landfill has been reduced from 717 tonnes to 28 tonnes, a 25 fold reduction. Unbelievably, no waste has been sent to landfill as yet in this calendar year.

3. Repak Best Packaging Waste Prevention Initiative

Winner: H.J. Heinz Co.

Heinz has been operating in Ireland since 1993 and now employs more than 400 staff with annual sales of £55 million from a range of prepared frozen meals. Heinz are no strangers to the Repak awards and won the Repak Best Member of the Year Award in 2003 and were shortlisted on two other occasions. In 2006 Heinz launched three Packaging Prevention Initiatives.

Weights of plastic trays were reduced, corrugate cases were replaced with shrinkwrap and plastic drums were replaced with returnable containers. These initiatives resulted in savings of 67 tonnes of plastic and 42 tonnes of cardboard. It is clear that Heinz understands the importance of Packaging Prevention and is committed to implementing suitable initiatives wherever possible.

4. Repak Best Practice Award Large Company

Winner: Alcan Packaging Dublin Ltd

Alcan Packaging Dublin, specialists in the printing of food flexible packaging, has operated in Finglas for over 50 years and have achieved international standards such as ISO14001, 18001 and 9001.

Alcan have dramatically reduced the amount of packaging waste arising on site resulting in a fivefold decrease in plastic sent to landfill. Alcan through a continuous and measured process have examined all aspects of their production to ensure that no more packaging than necessary is used and that all packaging

that can be recovered is segregated and sent for recycling. However, it is the development of a compostable flexible plastic food packaging for the breakfast cereal market that marked Alcan Packaging Dublin as leaders in best practice in packaging waste management. Repak Member of the Year in 2005, Alcan continue to show commitment to the environment and their locality and are worthy recipients of this year's Repak best practice award

5. Repak Best Practice Award Independent Retail Sector

Winner: O'Reillys Centra Foodmarket, Bunclody, Co. Wexford

Joe O'Reilly's relatively small Centra Supermarket in the picturesque Co. Wexford town of Bunclody is a real eye-opener in terms of attention to detail when it comes to waste management. Joe's secret to success lies in his waste co-ordinator, Joe Guinan who has raised the task of packaging prevention, minimisation and recycling almost to an art form.

A well trained staff of 15 pursues a programme of zero tolerance towards wastes that arise in the business. This first time entrant has achieved the extremely high recycling rate of 77% in 2006 and in doing so has reduced the waste management bill by 42%. This is one retailer who has made the connection between good waste management practices and cost avoidance in this extremely tight margin business.

6. Repak Best Practice Award Hospitality

Winner: Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel – Adare, Co. Limerick

Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel is busy family run hotel in Adare, Co.Limerick. The Hotel has 92 bedrooms, a restaurant, bar bistro, extensive banqueting facilities and a health and leisure spa. The hotel provides the feeling of a "home away from home" with a relaxed ambience and the warm welcome of the staff and the Fitzgerald Family.

The Hotel has an excellent waste management structure in place that involves all the staff and prides itself in going beyond its statutory obligations.

This comprehensive approach has seen Fitzgerald's Woodland Hotel build on previous success when it was a finalist in this sector. They have introduced a range of impressive waste prevention initiatives, including receiving food deliveries in bulk, switching to refillable containers and many examples of clever reuse.

7. Repak Local Authority of the Year (Sponsored by Rehab)

Winner: Louth County Council

Louth are a previous finalist in this category and this year again scored highly in all categories. In 2006 they opened their second Civic Amenity Site.

This ensures that the two main centres of population, Drogheda and Dundalk, both have this service. Extensive involvement with various community groups has enabled the Environment Department to run many successful initiatives. Louth were very active in enforcement of the packaging regulations in 2006 and this led to successful prosecutions

8. Repak Local Authority Initiative of the Year (Sponsored by RPS) Winner: Cork County Council – Bandon Civic Amenity Centre

Bandon Civic Amenity Facility commenced accepting recyclable materials on December 2005. The facility has proved very popular; in the first year almost 80,000 people used the facility, with the average usage of the facility being over 6000 per month. Bandon has a catchment area of 12,000 Householders. The popularity of the site is due to the range of material accepted including difficult material such as Polystyrene Packaging & Aerosol Cans. The facility has a number of unique features both at construction and operation phases. Geo thermal heating system has been installed in the site office. The site has a spacious layout and the local authority bale materials on site. Thus reducing transport costs and making material more attractive to processors. Green waste is also accepted and composted on site.

9. Repak Recovery Operator of the Year Large Company Winner: Panda Waster Services, Dublin

Established in 1973, Panda Waste has grown to become one of Ireland's most innovative recycling companies. The purchase of the company by Eamon Waters in 1990 brought about great change, growing from a 2 truck operation with no premises to a company with 3 facilities with a €50 million turnover.

In 2006 Panda waste entered the domestic sector in Dublin. Their aim is to be a leader in recycling hence their massive efforts in educating a broad customer base on the economic and environmental value of recycling. Proof of their innovation has been the improved green bin collection into which customers can place not only cardboard and paper but also plastics and glass.

In 2007 Smurfit's Recycling, Ballymount, Dublin was acquired to facilitate the company's planned expansion into the recovery of dry recyclables and packaging.

10. Repak Recovery Operator of the Year Small/Medium Company

Winner: Clean Ireland Refuse and Recycling, Kilrush, Co. Clare

Clean Ireland Refuse and Recycling is based near Kilrush in County Clare. The company was founded in 1990 by brothers Micheal & John O Donoghue. The company collects both Commercial and Domestic waste. The installation of a Material Recovery Facility has enabled the company to provide a Dry Recyclable collection to its 25,000 domestic customers.

In addition the company has contracts with Local authorities to service both Bring Banks and Civic Amenity Sites. A recently commissioned Wood Chipper has expanded the capacity to handle commercial waste.

11. Repak, in Association with An Taisce, Recycling School of the Year Winner: Aglish NS, Cappoquin, Co. Waterford

Aglish NS is 4 teacher school with approximately 60 students. Principal Ronan Culloo and the rest of the school have been awarded the Green Flag an impressive 3 times and are currently working to receive their fourth this school year!

The school are avid recyclers who also give bags of shredded paper to local greyhound owners for bedding, and any tattered towels and old clothes are given to local mechanics and agricultural contractors for oiling machines and engines.

All of the artwork in the school is created from recycled materials.

The schools daily "Wash and Squash" campaign means each individual is responsible for their own recycling. All the while, the Green Schools committee are busily monitoring all activities ensuring good practises are upheld.

12. Repak Excellence Award Winner: Tesco Ireland

Tesco Ireland has demonstrated strong leadership in the protection of the environment through its strategy to minimise its carbon footprint and address crucial environmental concerns through recycling, packaging reduction and sustainable energy use.

The Tesco strategy, launched in 2007, sets a target of being the first Irish retailer to reach 100% recycling of packaging and store waste by 2010. The move will see more than 24,000 tonnes of waste recycled each year. Compostable packaging will be available on a number of organic fresh products. Secondary cardboard and plastic packaging will be replaced by re-usable green

crates. Packaging on own label brand products will be reduced by 25% by the target date.

In-store energy consumption will be reduced by 50% and Energy Champions will be appointed to all stores, while state-of-the art automated recycling machines will be introduced to the store network.

Tesco are showing that major retailers can care both for the environment and for consumers needs in a highly practical way, and are the first winners of the Repak Excellence Award

13. Repak, in association with Eco Unesco, Young Recyclers of the year- junior

Winner: St. Catherine's College, Armagh

This Group of young people brainstormed what environmental issues were of concern to them and chose waste as their project. The group used internet and contacted local recycling centres for information. They carried out a questionnaire and organised a guest speaker to deliver a speech on the topic after Easter.

As part of their actions the group organised posters, competitions, built a recycled Christmas Tree with Christmas lights made from recycled materials. They also used their school website to display information, set up displays in their school and made e-cards.

During a highly successful open night at their school they raised awareness about reducing, reusing and recycling.

14. Repak, in association with Eco Unesco, Young Recyclers of the year- Senior

Winner: Scoil Mhuire, Athy, Co. Kildare.

As part of this year's Youth Eco Awards, Scoil Mhuire chose waste management as they believed it to be a growing concern for the planet. They carried out research on the topic on the internet, books and through programmes such as Eco Eye. They also paid a visit to their local civic amenity centre where they received more information on waste issues.

The group then planned their actions and designed an awareness programme through a poster campaign in their school, news articles in the local press and by visiting the local primary school.

As a result of their campaign the group has seen a reduction in paper wastage in their school and have also carried on the campaign in their homes.