

Repak Calls on Retailers to Encourage Customers to Help Tackle Christmas Packaging Waste Mountain

Repak, the industry funded waste packaging compliance scheme is calling on retailers to support this year's Repak Green Christmas campaign during December and January. Through a nationwide network of special Repak Green Christmas recycling centres the initiative aims to recycle over 6000 tonnes of the waste mountain of drinks cans, wine bottles, plastic bottles, cardboard and wrapping paper.

It is estimated that Irish retailers sell over 20 million wine bottles, 60 million aluminium beverage cans, 100 million plastic drinks bottles and over 1,000 tonnes of wrapping paper during the Christmas period.

Almost 35% of the 100 kilos of domestic waste that is produced per household over the Christmas period is packaging waste that could be recycled.

This year Repak are calling on Retailer members to support the campaign by alerting customers to the importance of recycling their packaging waste by placing posters in stores.

The nationwide green Christmas recycling centres, which will be advertised to consumers through TV, radio and print ads, have extended opening hours and will accept a wider range of materials than the normal bring banks. In addition the existing network of nearly 2,000 Bring Banks will help to facilitate the recycling of aluminium drinks cans, and glass bottles.

Repak has joined forces with the DoELHG and Local Authorities throughout the country to establish and promote the Green Christmas Recycling Centres to which householders can bring their cardboard, paper, glass, plastic and cans to be recycled. The campaign will run from 22nd December to 10th January. Full details of opening hours of the green Christmas centres and materials handled are available on www.repak.ie and will also be published in local press in the respective local authority areas.

In order to give customers a final reminder to recycle Repak will also be developing specially designed Christmas gift labels with a recycling message that can be put onto gift wrapping. The organisation will also be running a Christmas card recycling scheme with key retailers.

Commenting on the initiative Andrew Hetherington, C.E.O. of Repak, said "Retailers play a special role in the success of Repak Green Christmas as they are the final point of contact for this huge increase in packaging. We are asking retailers to promote the fact that these centres are available and that they make it as easy as possible for people to recycle with expanded opening hours and accepting a wider range of materials than normal. We have also invested in a nationwide education campaign to let people know what, how and where they can recycle. Considering we consume and produce an average of 16 wine bottles, 50 beverage cans, 83 PET plastic drinks bottles and almost 3 rolls of wrapping paper per household, the difference individual householders can make to reducing the waste mountain is immense. Irish households are proactive in recycling glass bottles and jars but we are also calling on them to remember to recycle the other materials such as drinks cans, beverage bottles, cardboard boxes and wrapping paper through the centres or their household dry recyclable collection system."

About Repak

Repak is a not-for-profit members based compliance 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 compliance scheme under the Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations 1997. Repak succeeded in reaching and exceeding Ireland's National Recycling Target of 25% of packaging waste in 2001.

Earlier this month Repak launched a school based, plastic bottle-recycling scheme, which will initially run through 14 schools in county Wicklow and aims to recycle 70,000 plastic bottles over the next school year. The organisation has also launched a TetraPak recycling initiative in Dublin, Cavan and Wicklow.