

Increased Recycling Rates Marred by Bring Bank Dumpers

- One in three adults admit to littering/dumping at bring banks
- 60% of people believe littering at bring banks is a problem (Up from 51% in 2004)
- Increase from 17% to 27% of adults who claim to recycle between 40-60% of their waste.
- Non-recyclers drops from 14% to 6%

(03.10.05) 60% of Irish adults believe that littering at bring banks is a problem according to research carried out by Repak to mark the beginning of the 5th Repak Recycling Week which takes place from October 3rd to October 9th. The research, undertaken by Millward Brown IMS, amongst a nationally representative sample 1,200 adults also uncovered a growing discontent with dumpers at bring banks with 64% of all adults believe those littering at bring banks should be prosecuted. While awareness of recycling facilities is at an all time high at 90% for local bring banks, a high percentage of people continue to litter bring banks with 30% of all adults openly admitting to leaving their recyclables on the ground at bring banks and recycling centres.

Commenting Andrew Hetherington, CEO Repak said “The number of people who create litter at bring banks is unacceptably high and public opinion is against them. However, this research also suggests that a high proportion of people who leave recyclable materials at bring banks do not see themselves as contributing to the problem. This is evidence by the fact that 83% of people who admitted to leaving recyclables on the ground, agreed that this was a real problem, and 57% of those who do so should be prosecuted. People need to understand that if you leave material at a bring bank, regardless of whether it is full or not, that you are officially ‘dumping’ and a litter bug. We urge them to bring the material home or visit one of the other 2,000 bring banks as they are jeopardising the development and expansion of existing and new facilities by such negative behaviour. In addition they are adding to the difficulties of collection as staff have to segregate the dumped materials, which adds to the costs and servicing times of sites.”

However, the survey painted a positive picture of the take up of recycling with 51% claiming to recycle between 20 and 60% of their waste versus 40% the previous year. 15% of adults claim to achieve a rate of between 60 and 80%. Encouragingly the number of people who claim to recycle nothing has dropped from 14% last year to only 6% of adults who claim to dump all their household waste.

The changing Irish attitude to recycling and the increased demand on current recycling facilities is starting to put strain on the current recycling infrastructure with 63% of adults believing bring banks are not emptied often enough. In addition almost half claim they are running out of space in their recycling bins after two weeks which is up from 34% in 2004.

Recycling of materials across all packaging types reported an increase with glass topping the lists.

Glass containers	82% versus 62%
Aluminium cans	70% versus 63%
Steel food cans	59% versus 46%
Cardboard packaging	69% versus 52%
Plastic bottles	72% versus 53%
Beverage cartons	63% versus 46%
Paper	72% versus 54%

Commenting on some of the other issues raised in the study Mr. Hetherington added “Although the research indicates that 82% of people believe that there should be litter bins at local bring banks/recycling centres, it is important to realise that the placement of additional litter bins at bottle banks only attracts further littering of the area. The answer is for recyclers to use re-usable bags or boxes and to help encourage and facilitate this we are distributing over 50,000 reusable recycling bags for free through recycling centres around the country, with the support of Rehab Recycling. I urge people not to be a ‘Dumb Bring Bank Dumper’.”

Repak Recycling Week

The Repak Recycling Week awareness week takes place from October 3rd to the 9th and this year is offering the opportunity to win a Toyota Prius with Hybrid Synergy Drive ® Technology for the efforts by texting a password found at recycling centres throughout the country. A listing with full details of participating local authority recycling centres can be found on www.repak.ie. This information will also be available through the local number 1850 909999 operated between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

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 Target of 25% of packaging waste in 2001 and is well on the way to achieving our 2005 EU packaging recovery target of 50%.

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