

## **Ireland's Top Recyclers Receive Awards**

(02.10.03) Rush National School was amongst the winners of ten recycling awards at the second Repak Recycling Awards that were announced at a ceremony in the Berkeley Hotel. Minister Cullen presented the awards, which also included young recycler Liam Stewart, County Cavan who collected over 40,000 cans in his local village to fund a new wheelchair for John Glynn, a 15-year-old track racer who would like to represent Ireland in the next Paralympics.

A total of 33 nominations were short listed ranging from local authorities, waste contractors, schools, individuals and Repak members companies. The awards were developed to acknowledge and promote excellence in recycling as part of Repak National Recycling Week.

Rush National School, with the help of the principal and Environmental Teacher Mrs Donnelly, won the award for collecting approximately 60,000 cans through the Repak Cash for Cans scheme. The school got its green flag in 2003 and as part of their recycling project a 6th class student promotes Repak Cash for Cans with weekly announcements on local radio. The students of Rush National School have shown leadership, encouraging the whole community to become involved in recycling. The school opens up to the community on the first Tuesday of every month, accepting cardboard, paper, cards, newspapers and batteries. The residents in Rush do not have a dry recyclable kerbside collection so the school-recycling day is hugely beneficial. Schools Award - Repak Young Recycler of the Year 2002

The other eight results were: (full details of each winner at end of release)

1. Repak Member of the Year Award 2003 (large firms) HJ Heinz Frozen & Chilled Foods
2. Repak Member of the Year Award 2003 (small firms) Newmarket Co-operative
3. Repak Best Practice Member of the Year (small firms) Bostik Findley t/a Evode Industries
4. Repak Best Practice Member of the Year – large firms Green Isle Foods Ltd
5. Repak Contractor of the Year Award 2002 Reduce Reuse Recycle, Dublin
6. Repak Best Local Authority Recycling Initiative of 2002 Wicklow County Council – The Murrough Civic Amenity Site
7. Repak Local Authority of the Year Award 2002 Fingal County Council
8. Repak Partnership Award BWG Foods

Commenting on the announcement Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak said "The awards show that much can be achieved when proper reduction and recycling practices are put in place both in preventing the amount of packaging materials produced and also to recycle it once it is placed on the market. The role of business is especially important in recycling as commercial packaging waste produced accounts for 50% of all packaging waste. The efforts made impact greatly on Ireland's national recycling rates and must be combined with efforts made by consumers."

The winners in each category received an award made from recovered/recycled materials, created by Irish designer, Ronan Halpin. The materials included in the award are Glass, Plastic, Wood and Metal representing the primary packaging material types. The judges included external environmental experts Pdraig Larkin Director, Environmental Protection Agency, Mark Staunton, President, Chamber of Commerce of Ireland, Tony O'Brien, environmental commentator, Ciaran Fitzgerald of IBEC and Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak. The awards were presented by Martin

Cullen, Minister for the Environment and Local Government and were attended by over 250 people including Repak members, politicians, nominated local authorities and winning individuals.

The week Repak National Recycling Week runs until Sunday the 5th October. The theme for the week is "Start Recycling – Keep Recycling", and features a series of nationwide educational and promotional campaigns.

Some of the initiatives planned for this year's Repak National Recycling Week included:

- Repak Recycling Awards Ceremony on Thursday 2nd October
- Member activities nationwide
- Special Local Authority Initiatives such as leaflet drops and radio interviews
- Piparella Children's educational recycling Show

To assist and help consumers get into the recycling habit Repak, in conjunction with local authorities, have listed full details of BringBank locations nationwide on the Repak website <http://www.repak.ie/>. This information is available through the Lo Call number 1850 909999 operated between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Last year Repak recorded and funded the recycling of 323,000 tonnes of packaging waste, which is 36% up on the 2001 total. The 323,000 tonnes equates to nearly 40% of all packaging placed on the Irish Market. The organisation also reported a 50% increase in Repak membership last year to 1208, with the greatest increase coming from the Independent Retail sector, which saw an increase of nearly 400 new members in 2002.

Details on Awards Winners

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## **REPAK PARTNERSHIP AWARD**

### **BWG Foods**

BWG Foods have been awarded the Partnership award for their tremendous work in ensuring that their franchisees are compliant with the regulations wherever possible. Over 88% of their stores are now complaint and this is directly attributable to the energy and commitment of BWG foods to environmental matters.

## **REPAK MEMBER OF THE YEAR - LARGE FIRMS**

### **HJ Heinz Frozen & Chilled Foods**

HJ Heinz has come out on top as Best Member at this years Repak Awards ceremony in the Large Firms category. They have been awarded this accolade for their outstanding systems in recording and maintaining their packaging data, for continuing to take brave and valuable steps in redesigning and reengineering their packaging types and for delivering real returns in preventing, minimising and recycling their packaging. Resulting in a 25% reduction in weight on their finished goods (preventing 20 tonnes) by also reducing the thickness on their printed cartons they prevented 85 tonnes of paper. Meanwhile their recycling strategy diverted over 573 tonnes of cardboard, plastic and metal from landfill in 2002. This awards is also bestowed on them for continuing to educate and reward their own staff on all environmental matters and in doing so, help to protect their and our environment.

## **REPAK MEMBER OF THE YEAR - SMALL FIRMS**

### **Newmarket Co-operative**

Newmarket Co-operative have won this years Repak member of the Year for Small Firms. They have been recognised and rewarded for their outstanding efforts in developing systems, procedures and policies to capture their packaging data and for minimising, reusing and recycling whenever possible. In addition, considerable energy and resources was spent on preventing hundreds of tonnes being placed on the market by doing away with outer boxes and moving to IBC's instead of 25kg drums revolutionising their packaging methodology. They also recycled over 7 tonnes of Cardboard and plastic in 2002.

## **REPAK BEST PRACTICE MEMBER OF THE YEAR – LARGE FIRMS**

### **Green Isle Foods Ltd**

Green Isle Foods have achieved an extremely high rate of prevention and minimisation with many raw materials delivered in bulk. Since 1997 they have reduced the plastic packaging surrounding their Pizzas by over 50% and removed the cardboard outer case completely. They have achieved this by trialing lighter gauges and differing plastic types combined with automation of all plastic wrapping including pallet wrapping. All contaminated materials are sent to general waste but where possible as is the case with clean pizza cartons, they are kept on pallets and sent for recycling. In 2002 Green Isle Foods recycled 368 tonnes of packaging and have improved from a 70% overall recovery/recycling rate in 2001 to a 91% recovery/recycling rate in 2002. Green Isle Foods stood out in Best Practice and have shown leadership in innovation and motivation on site to achieve a level which is exemplary.

## **REPAK BEST PRACTICE MEMBER OF THE YEAR – SMALL FIRMS**

### **Bostik Findley t/a Evode Industries**

Bostik Findley Ltd. an adhesive manufacturer has been selected for the Best Practice Award 2003 because of the notable effort that they have made to prevent and minimise packaging where possible and to recycle all packaging waste streams. Bostik Findley has taken 141,000 25 kg bags out of the packaging waste stream in 2002 by moving to bulk receipt of raw materials. This has resulted in 14 tonnes of paper and 1 tonne of plastic being prevented in one year alone. Using innovative ideas generated by employees on the shop floor a further 2 tonnes of plastic and 2 tonnes of cardboard were prevented from going onto the market. This was achieved by generating a window in the outer containment box thereby using the internal label for identification purposes. In a difficult Industry Bostik Findley have shown great progress in a short space of time.

## **BEST WASTE CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR**

### **REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE**

Reduce Reuse Recycle state in their Environmental policy statement that their "mission is to fully integrate environmental stewardship into our Business by minimising waste disposal and maximising waste recycling and recovery for our customer waste" Among those customers is The Square Shopping Centre who have moved from " zero segregation to total segregation"\* thereby reducing their disposal to landfill by 70 tonne per month and Cadbury Ireland Ltd who " are achieving recycling levels of 55%"\*\*. Reduce Reuse Recycle have won the award for their willingness to work with their customers in devising imaginative and effective solutions to recycling packaging waste.

**Winner of Repak Local Authority of the Year Award 2003:  
Fingal County Council**

In 2002 Fingal County Council have been especially proactive in the three important areas of Enforcement of the Packaging Regulations, Recycling of Packaging Waste and Environmental Awareness. Fingal have carried out an extensive programme of Enforcement by working with local businesses to ensure compliance with the Packaging Regulations. Through this work Fingal have managed to direct more companies into compliance than any other local authority since 2001.

Through awareness, and the provision of the necessary infrastructure, Fingal have achieved the third highest rate of packaging recycling (per person) of all the 34 Local Authorities. They have been very involved and supportive of Repak Initiatives and have also carried out their own Waste Management Initiatives such as "Fingal Green Week" which was organised to coincide with European Green Week and the "Swords Local Business Waste Management Plan" in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce to help local business meet their recycling and legislative obligations.

Fingal County Council are deserving winners of this award, due to their dedication to work with local businesses and improve compliance with the packaging regulations and also for their commitment to the provision of recycling awareness and infrastructure to domestic users in their area.

**Winner of Repak Local authority initiative of the year 2003  
Wicklow County Council : For The Murrough Civic Amenity Site**

The Murrough Civic Amenity was awarded the best initiative award for its innovative approach to waste management, public information and education on the environment. The aims of the centre are to raise awareness of environmental and waste management issues, encourage active participation by individuals and the community in waste management and also to provide a "Drop-Off" centre for sustainable recycling. The Centre is the first of its kind in Ireland and has adopted practices operated in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The Local Authority believe that through recycling the public may be encouraged to manage waste further up the waste hierarchy through demonstration projects on reuse and reduction.

This Civic Amenity Site also boasts the collection of one of the widest ranges of recyclable material, including Spectacles, Phone Books, Cards, Calendars, Music CD's and Tapes. With over 1100 tonnes of material collected and recycled through the site, their approach to recycling through continued education and on-going workshops is clearly the key to this sites success.

**Schools Award - Repak Recycling Class of the Year Award 2002  
Rush National School,**

With the help of the principal and Environmental Teacher Mrs Donnelly, won the award for collecting approximately 60,000 cans through the Repak Cash for Cans scheme. The school got its green flag in 2003 and as part of their recycling project a 6th class student promotes Repak Cash for Cans with weekly announcements on local radio. The students of Rush National School have shown leadership, encouraging the whole community to become involved in recycling. The school opens up to the community on the first Tuesday of every month, accepting cardboard, paper, cards, newspapers and batteries. The residents in Rush do not have a dry recyclable kerbside collection so the school-recycling day is hugely beneficial.

## **Schools Award - Repak Young Recycler of the Year 2002**

### **Liam Stewart, County Cavan**

Liam collected approximately 40,000 cans from his local village for recycling. This equated to almost 270 bags of cans or 0.7 tonnes of aluminium. Since aluminium is a valuable resource, a Local Waste Contractor paid Liam 60c per bag of cans collected and the money raised by Liam was donated to the John Can fund. <> Liam Stewart founded John Can in 2002. The aim of the campaign is to collect aluminium cans through the Repak Cash for Cans scheme to fund a new wheelchair for John Glynn a 15-year-old track racer who would like to represent Ireland in the next Paralympics. Liam has also been involved in a number of other recycling initiatives including An Taisce Green Schools campaign, and National Spring Clean.

### **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.