

## **Repak launch packaging prevention program with booklet highlighting best practice case studies**

- **Minister welcomes showcase of best practice in Irish industry**
- **Repak calls for more packaging innovation to help reach Ireland's 2011 EU target**
- **1 million gigajoules of energy could be saved with 3% reduction in packaging usage**
- **64% of packaging recycled in 2005**

Ireland's first packaging innovation booklet, "Prevent and Save", was launched today to showcase best practice and encourage Irish industry to be more innovative when packaging its products. The booklet was launched by Repak, the used packaging recycling scheme, along with claims that a reduction of just 3% of packaging material could prevent over 25,000 tonnes of packaging waste reaching the market and could save the equivalent of one million gigajoules of energy every year. This is the equivalent energy that 50,000 Irish homes would use in electricity every year. It is also the same energy used by all soccer players and referees playing in 142 World Cup tournaments (that's 9,104 soccer matches!).

As well as resulting in considerable cost and energy savings for companies, this 3% reduction in the amount of packaging used at the source of production, which Repak believes is a realistic target for companies to aim for, could proportionally prevent the following amount of material reaching the Irish market:

- 3,138 tonnes of steel which is the equivalent of almost 24 million food cans
- 554 tonnes of aluminium which is the equivalent of 33 million aluminium drinks cans
- 9,619 tonnes of cardboard and paper and 4,339 tonnes of wood which is the equivalent of over a quarter of a million trees or almost six hundred hectares of conifer forest
- 3,620 tonnes of glass which is the equivalent of almost 10 million wine bottles
- 6,553 tonnes of plastics, the equivalent of 157 million 1.5 litre PET plastic drinks bottles.

The "Prevent and Save" booklet, launched at Repak's annual Members' Conference, showcases interesting, creative and innovative packaging prevention case studies such as the coreless toilet tissue roll. It also details how the steel in baked bean cans now weigh today only 53% of what it did on the 1970's dinner table (210g versus 113g for the same amount of beans). Other case studies show how drinks companies have light-weighted plastic and glass bottles and reduced the amount of cardboard packaging used for the supply of a broadband modem product (*for details see notes to editor*).

Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak, said, "This booklet is laying down clear markers regarding the use of packaging in today's society. The role of packaging cannot be underestimated - packaging has brought about many changes in our life (in particular reducing food wastage). It's over-packaging we are all concerned about. Now that we are achieving high packaging recycling rates it is time for Repak to further promote packaging reduction strategies. Repak's waste prevention program aims to assist Irish businesses with positive and practical ways to reduce packaging. The program includes publications, seminars, best practice initiatives, and our Repak Recycling Awards all of which promote and highlight best practice in light-weighting, reducing and eliminating their packaging production. We believe that this, coupled with our fees, which financially incentivise less packaging, will aggressively drive packaging reduction strategies.

"As we've seen today, by minimising the amount of packaging, companies have retained the essential quality of the products but also reaped both environmental and monetary savings from this innovation. This is the mature approach to packaging goods and is an approach we want more companies to continue to follow."

Repak also reviewed its annual results at today's Repak Members' Conference at Croke Park discussing how industry, funded through Repak, met and exceeded the 2005 EU used packaging recycling target (50%) by an impressive 14% (64%).

Henri Merisonnes, CEO, FOST Plus also spoke at the conference. He discussed the packaging recovery/recycling performance in Belgium where it has now achieved a recovery rate of 93%. In his presentation, he outlined the history of packaging recycling and associated costs in Belgium, comparing these to Ireland and what lies ahead. He insisted that packaging recycling was not an Olympic discipline where world records had to be broken and warned that as the amount of packaging recycled continued to increase, the cost to recycle these additional materials would also result in substantial cost increases.

Phillip Ward, Director of Waste Minimisation, WRAP (Waste Resource and Action Program) in the UK presented on its objectives of waste minimisation, which targets reductions in both packaging and food waste. On its packaging prevention program it has allocated stg£4.2 million to packaging prevention studies seeking reduction targets of 500,000 tonnes of packaging waste from these funded programs. Its overall objective is to achieve absolute reductions in packaging waste by 2010.

Dick Roche T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government speaking at Repak's Conference welcomed the Prevent and Save booklet and said, "It is gratifying to see that so many companies understand the value of waste prevention and minimisation. They understand at a business level the value of reduced consumption of resources. Less packaging can mean less cost and more competitive advantage. It's the original win-win solution – help the environment and help your business. Congratulations to Repak and all the companies involved."

**ends**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **Casestudy highlights**

#### **Daiego Baileys**

Daiego Baileys prevents almost 53 tonnes of cardboard (over 900 trees) and 378 tonnes of glass (1.2 million glass bottles) every year thanks to the innovative industrial design of its new bottle introduced in 2004.

#### **eircom**

With broadband sales increasing significantly, eircom investigated ways to reduce the packaging of its broadband product without reducing its effectiveness but all to meet the increasing demands for the product. It prevent a staggering 15 tonnes of cardboard reaching the market (over 250 trees) by reducing the amount of cardboard required by 15%. It used one material instead of two and also reduced the amount of ink used.

### **Georgia-Pacific**

By developing a 'coreless' toilet roll, Georgia-Pacific reduced the cardboard packaging by 100%. As well as using 100% recycled paper, by improving pallet utilisation and reducing packaging film, it reduced primary packaging by 76%.

### **Tetra Pak**

Tetra Pak developed a new stronger but lighter inner plastic coating for its beverage cartons resulting in the weight of all its product reducing by 3% and also saving 4% on the Gross Energy Requirement of producing it.

### **C&C**

a) By redesigning the way it transports 9 x 2 Litre packs of 7Up, C&C removed cardboard required by 100% and the amount of plastic shrink wrap required by almost 31%. This means, every year, 290 tonnes (or almost 5,000 trees) of cardboard is prevented from reaching the market and 68 tonnes of shrink wrap.

b) By changing the Ritz PVC sleeve to a PET sleeve, C&C introduced a more recyclable product (PET) and reduced the polymer usage by 6.4%.

### **Coca Cola Bottlers Ireland**

Coca-Cola Bottlers Ireland made its 500ml bottle 0.5g lighter (2% lighter) and as a result prevents 53 tonnes of plastic (the equivalent of almost 2 million bottles) reaching the Irish market every year.

### **Unilever**

In 2005, Unilever produced lighter Persil washing powder packs and reduced the amount of chemical waste per wash by concentration. It reduced both the packaging per pack by 6% and the packaging per wash by 6%.

### **GlaxoSmithKline**

By lightweighting its Lucozade PET bottle and installing new equipment to allow it to move from standard cardboard packaging trays to a simple flat board, GlaxoSmithKline reduced the amount of PET plastic used by 14% and cardboard used by a very significant 40%.

### **Batchelors**

Batchelors saved the amount of tin, steel and energy needed to produce its cans of peas and beans achieving lighter packaging and the energy cost of producing them.

### **ICI Dulux Paints**

A new packaging minimisation initiative resulted in secondary packaging being reduced by 90% by eliminating cardboard cartons used to pack five litre plastic containers. Other changes in pallet packaging and optimisation, increased pallet capacity by 4% and reduced overall packaging per pallet by 43%.

### **Novartis Animal Health Ireland Ltd.**

By reducing the cardboard packaging associated with one litre units of Poron S.P., the company reduced paper packaging by 40% by removing inner cartons and by reducing the shipping case quantity from ten to six units.

## **Recent History of Packaging Innovation**

Consumer choice has expanded dramatically in recent years; between the 1960s and 1990s the number of product lines in the average supermarket rose from 2,000 to 18,000, although this did not increase the total weight of packaging used by a household. New technology, new materials, demographic changes and changing consumer needs all contribute to an 'optimisation' of resources - doing more with less. For example, a metal drinks can uses less than half the weight of tinfoil used 30 years ago.

## Background to packaging reduction

| Packaging                          | Material     | 1970 | 1990 | Reduction |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------|------|-----------|
| Wine Bottle 0.75 litre             | Glass        | 450g | 350g | -22%      |
| Beer Bottle 0.25 litre             | Glass        | 210g | 130g | -32%      |
| Metal Food Can 425 ml              | Steel        | 210g | 154g | -27%      |
| PET bottles                        | PET          | 66g  | 42g  | -36%      |
| Beverage Carton Tetra Brik 1 litre | Paper and PE | 31g  | 25g  | -18%      |

### Energy and Packaging Production

"The Average household buys goods packed in 190 kg of packaging, using 7GJ energy each year. Packaging is typically 9% of the weight of the packaged product and uses 8% of the energy for producing and delivering all products to the household." Source: INCPEN : Towards Greener Households, Products, Packaging and Energy.

### About Repak

Repak is a not-for-profit voluntary members 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 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.

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