

“Working 9 to 5” – but where does all North Tipperary’s used coffee cups go?

Repak encourages North Tipperary householders to increase recycling on the workplace

- Repak launches Repak Recycling Week and focuses on recycling habits in the workplace
- Congratulations to North Tipperary who recycled 10,074 tonnes of packaging last year
- Taking all the packaging recycled in North Tipperary, households and businesses recycled the equivalent of 4,114,225 aluminium cans, 7,788,902 plastic bottles and 4,568 tonnes of cardboard

(24.09.10) Repak and North Tipperary County Council are calling on all business owners and employees to bring good recycling practices they have developed at home into the workplace as part of Repak Recycling Week which runs from October 4th to October 10th. In research 97% of all adult claim to recycle regularly in the household kitchen but this falls to 53% in the office kitchen/canteen. With 55% of those working, claiming to recycling more in the home than work.

Last year households and businesses in North Tipperary recycled the equivalent over 10,074 tonnes of used packaging, resulting in carbon equivalent savings of circa 10,122 tonnes. Ireland in 2009 achieved a packaging recycling rate of 65%. This was made of 434,000 tonnes (or 67%) of used packaging from industries back door and 210,000 tonnes (or 37%) from households, with half of the household packaging recycled coming from kerbside dry recycling bins.

As with every year, North Tipperary County Council are encouraging people to look after their waste line in the county by reducing, reusing and recycling during Repak’s National Recycling Week. *According to Environmental Officer, Deirdre Cox, "North Tipperary has always had a great track record when it comes to recycling; we all have reasonable good recycling habits in our homes, but what happens when we leave them. We are urging all work premises to think about their recycling systems and try to enforce a policy which encourages every employee to recycle responsibly. If we can get our workplace recycling to a higher standard it will make us even more successful in terms of packaging recycling.*

Some simple steps that people can take to make their office more environmentally friendly include:

- Elect a recycling or eco office champion who takes responsibility for recycling in the office.
- Ensure that your waste contractor is offering you a separate dry recyclables collection
- Install separate bins for dry recyclables at desks,

- Install/implement recycling bins around the office i.e in the kitchen/canteen and in bathrooms, meeting rooms, photocopy/print room and at water dispensers etc
- Put up posters to remind people to recycle in the work place and remind them of the different items that can be recycled from the different places. (or download these from Recyclemore.ie)
- Use reusable cups in your office kitchen along with re-useable plates and cutlery.
- Reuse incoming boxes for outgoing deliveries
- Proof-read documents and read emails on screen rather than printing them out

This Repak Recycling Week we are looking to encourage people to recycle more in the workplace by taking their good recycling habits from the household into the work place and recycle more by recycling from more areas of the office and by recycling often forgotten items such as:

From the kitchen/canteen recycle your used breakfast and lunch packaging such as:

- Food tins
- Cereal Boxes
- Milk, Juice and Soup Cartons
- Paper Sandwich bags and wrappers
- Plastic fruit or salad bowls (cleaned)
- Used Pizza Boxes (remove heavy food residue)
- Recycle used sauce and jam jars (rinsed)
- Recycle sandwich and bread paper wrappers

From your office/desk recycle your used

- Bottled water or smoothie drinks containers
- Take away coffee cups (rinsed)
- Drinks cans
- Used Magazines and paper

From the workplace bathroom/showers recycle your used

- Toilet roll cores
- Aerosol cans
- Soap dispenser bottles
- Shampoo and shower gel bottles
- Bleach/detergent bottles

From the Stationary/Photocopy room

- Recycle used photocopy paper boxes
- Recycle used stationary boxes from pens, paper clips or staples
- Recycle used printer cartridges
- Recycle your used wrapping paper.

"North Tipperary householders have really embraced recycling their used packaging in their homes and now we are asking people to take those good recycling practices outside of kitchen into other areas of the home and also into the workplace. Everyday we produce an amount of used packaging from disposable coffee cups in the morning to plastic bottles and sandwich containers at lunch. Simple things like washing, squashing and recycling milk containers and putting them in recyclable bins can make a huge difference." said Dr Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak.

Mr Hetherington also warned "In addition to positive staff morale and the positive contribution to the environment, businesses also need to be aware that if their staff dump used packaging in regular office waste bins they may be risking a fine. Organisations need to ensure they are compliant with Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations 2007 whereby no business is allowed to dump specified recyclable packaging."

WEEE Ireland will be setting up some additional centres around the country during Repak Recycling Week to encourage the recycling of anything with a plug or battery, such as toasters, kettles, radios and electric toothbrushes. They will also be reminding people that these items can be returned to their recycling centres for FREE. Check the Repak website www.repak.ie for details on the locations of these additional WEEE recycling centres and the Local Recycling centres.

Also as part of the Week, the Repak Recycling Awards will take place on the Thursday October 7th at The Convention Centre, Dublin. The awards recognise the efforts and ingenuity of Repak Members, from Industry Local Authorities and Collectors in the area of packaging prevention, reuse and recycling.

More information can be sort at www.recyclemore.ie

Top Ten Recycling packaging items from the workplace

1. Cereal Boxes
2. Milk/Juice Cartons
3. Sandwich paper bags
4. Take away coffee cups rinsed
5. Plastic clear fruit or salad bowls (rinsed)
6. Glass Jam or Sauce jars
7. Plastic Sandwich clams
8. Take away Pizza boxes (remove food residues)
9. Plastic cleaner and detergent bottles.
10. Soap or washing up liquid dispensers

Repak Recycling Week Tips:

1. Organise Household Bins.

Put three bins in the kitchen: one for recyclables; one for compostable vegetable waste; one for general waste. Organise a dedicated storage space in your back garden or kitchen. Most hardware stores like Woodies or B&Q sell a range of special recycling bins and, if you have space, it's worth investing and installing these into this dedicated area.

2. Recycling in the Bathroom

Many packaged items that are used in the bathroom can be readily accepted into the traditional plastic bottle and kerbside collection systems. Any plastic bottle marked with the symbol 1 or 2 in a triangle, usually on the bottom of the pack, can be accepted into traditional plastic bottle collection systems. It is not only in your own interest to fully empty all bottles and containers, but it also makes recycling the products easier.

3. Recycling in the Bedroom

Ideally, you should have two bins; one for general waste and one for recyclables. If space is an issue then maybe place a recyclable bin on the landing for use by all bedrooms. This will remind you and encourage you to segregate your recyclables from other general waste.

4. Packaging Thrift.

Check for products with less packaging and use re-usable plates, cups and bags. Buy vegetables loose. Put leftover turkey and ham into reusable lunch boxes or containers with lids instead of using non-recyclable aluminium foil or plastic film. A lot of companies have made great strides in reducing the amount of packaging they use in product. For example, did you know 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).

5. Find your nearest Recycling Centre or Bring Bank.

You may be surprised at the wide variety of materials they can accept and most have extended opening hours over Repak Recycle Week. Visit www.repak.ie or check your local paper or for further details.

6. Be Clean.

Wash 'n' squash Tetra Pak containers. Rinse out bottle and cans, remove lids and squash plastic containers to save space. Remember don't litter at bring banks. Take home any boxes or containers you used to bring materials to your local bring bank in.

7. Recycle from around the workplace

Take your household recycling habits with you into work and recycle more of your used packaging in work from your desk, the office kitchen/canteen, bathrooms and photocopy/print room.

8. Use Re-usable Bags.

Make sure to use reusable bags when visiting your Recycling Centre or Bring Bank, especially if you're wash 'n' squash your used packaging container. Often people use cardboard boxes, which can get soggy and unusable. Without realising, unfortunately, some people leave these beside Bring Bank and at Recycling Centres – this is littering and makes everyone's job harder.

9. Recycle used batteries.

Collect up all the used batteries. Consider purchasing a battery re-charger and rechargeable batteries for battery operated toys and gadgets. From the 26th of September all outlets that sell batteries will be required to provide receptacles in store for customers to return their used batteries for recycling. Alternatively look up www.repak.ie to find your nearest recycling centre that accept batteries.

About Repak

- Repak is a not for profit producer responsibility scheme for used packaging funded by packaging levies charged to participating members companies.
- Since 1997 Repak has invested €200 million in supporting packaging recycling in Ireland.
- In total Repak have diverted over 5.0 million tonnes of used packaging from landfill since 1998.
- Repak have helped grow packaging recycling from under 15% in 1998 to nearly 65% in 2009
- Ireland is now ranked 8th in terms of packaging recycling amongst the EU 27.

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