



**The National Waste Prevention Programme**

**Third Annual Report 2006/07**

**Presented to**

**the Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government**

**November 2007**

## Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the following for assisting in the ongoing development and implementation of the National Waste Prevention Programme:

- The Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government for providing finance and ongoing support and advice;
- All members of the National Waste Prevention Committee who have voluntarily provided their time and collective knowledge enthusiastically to the programme;
- The Board of the EPA for providing ongoing encouragement and support;
- The Core Prevention Team: Mr Brian Meaney, Ms Cairíona Collins, Ms Fiona McCoolle, Mr Martin Doyle, Ms Odile Le Bolloch, Ms Jennifer Cope, Mr David Dodd, Dr Isabelle Kurz, Mr Keiron Phillips, Ms Jane Kenneally, Mr Michael McDonagh, Ms Celine Horner and Ms Deirdre Murphy for their dedicated professionalism in devising, developing and implementing the projects described in this report;
- All other stakeholders, organisations and persons who helped in any way with this important initiative.

To all of the above, my most sincere thanks.

Gerry Byrne, BA (Mod), PhD, MBA.  
(Chairman, National Waste Prevention Committee)

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## 1. Executive Summary

Waste prevention is an important strategic activity for Ireland to engage with in order to ensure sustainable, competitive growth into the future. It is anticipated that amendments contained in the Proposal for a Revision to the Waste Framework Directive, which is currently being negotiated by the European Parliament and Council, will require all Member States to develop and implement waste prevention programmes. In the Agreed Programme for Government 2007, there is a statement that *inter alia* “the Government will establish new ambitious waste management targets for maximum prevention, re-use, recycling and modern waste treatment.” The ultimate objectives of waste prevention are to achieve verifiable results in reversing current trends in waste production, stabilising waste arisings and decoupling waste generation from economic growth by maximising resource use efficiency. These objectives will require concerted effort at all levels of society deploying appropriate resources in the years ahead to ensure their accomplishment.

Commitment to a National Waste Prevention Programme (NWPP) was first made in the Government policy document “*Preventing and Recycling Waste - Delivering Change*” published in March 2002. The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government announced initial funding of €2 million from the Environment Fund to start a broad waste prevention initiative in April 2004. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was nominated to develop and lead the National Waste Prevention Programme. A Core Prevention Team, appointed from experienced staff already working in the waste management area within the EPA, has been working since then on the wide variety of waste prevention and related projects as outlined in this report. The Core Prevention Team is also responsible for complementary work on the annual National Waste Reports and the implementation monitoring/review of the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. To date, almost €5 million from the Environment Fund has been expended or committed to these projects.

A National Waste Prevention Committee, formed in 2004 at the invitation of the Minister, is continuing to oversee the development and implementation of the programme. It is chaired by the EPA and comprises a wide range of stakeholders from industry, commerce, agriculture, local authorities, non-governmental organisations and Government Departments (see Appendix A). Terms of Reference were established for the committee (see Appendix B) that includes the work done previously by the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan Implementation Committee. Members of the committee provide valued assistance with Steering and Tender Selection Groups for many of the National Waste Prevention Programme projects in addition to providing important strategic input to the main Committee meetings. The Agenda and Minutes of all Committee meetings held to date are posted on the NWPP webpages (see <http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/resource/prevent/nwpp/about/>).

The National Waste Prevention Programme seeks to build on the success of existing and previous initiatives aimed at promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. The objective as stated in the policy is to establish an ambitious and well-resourced programme to deliver substantive results on waste prevention and minimisation across both hazardous and non-hazardous waste arisings.

Figure 1 gives a diagrammatic representation of some of the influencing relationships involved. Extensive contacts are being made on an ongoing basis with all relevant stakeholder organisations in order to learn from their experiences and to involve them in the development of complementary waste prevention/resource efficiency projects, as appropriate.

This report provides an overview of the progress made in 2006/7 on a wide variety of integrated projects focussing on waste prevention during the third year of the programme. In the period under review, the national Local Authority Prevention Demonstration grant scheme was further expanded to enable more prevention projects to be implemented locally across the country. A Green Business Initiative has been substantially developed including web-based resource efficiency/Waste Audits that were progressed through engagement with the EU/Life HAZRED and Race Against Waste projects. The team has worked closely with Repak to develop and launch a Packaging Waste Prevention Programme. An Taisce has been grant aided to deliver a new Green Homes pilot project in schools. Certified Training in Waste Prevention for business and public authorities has continued to be promoted. The National Waste Report for 2005 was published and a revised waste prevention webpage was developed. All prevention projects need to have ongoing regard to the conservation not just of material resources, but also of water and energy as well. Similarly, projects need to have regard to the urgent need to prevent or divert biodegradable waste from land-fill as provided for in the National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste.

The review of the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan has continued incorporating a special emphasis on prevention. Extensive work has been completed on implementing complementary legislation in relation to Polychlorinated Bi-phenyls, Persistent Organic Pollutants, Ozone Depleting Substances, Deco-paints and Solvents Regulations (including significant prevention aspects). Continued progress has been made on a number of Producer Responsibility Initiatives including enforcement of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Regulations which incorporate statutory reuse and eco-design requirements, respectively.

Finally, the strategic future direction for the waste prevention programme is outlined. In the years to come, it is anticipated that these nascent waste prevention projects, in conjunction with other integrated national waste management initiatives, will yield important results. This will require that appropriate resources are available and that relevant stakeholders respond to the challenges. The current exploratory projects would need to be scaled-up considerably before an impact would be seen on national waste arising figures. The Core Prevention Team will continue to work with all relevant players to promote the ongoing development of a culture of waste prevention in Irish society.



Figure 1 – Relationships of influence between the National Waste Prevention Programme and other Stakeholders

## 2. Overview of Waste Prevention

### NWPP Outline Work Plan 2004 to 2008

The EPA published a proposed outline multi-year prevention programme prior to the National Waste Prevention Programme commencing with indicative project activities listed (see [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)). Many of these activities have since commenced and are detailed elsewhere in this report as indicated below. Activities including consultation with stakeholder groups, collation of available case studies for dissemination and development of tools to enable organisations to undertake waste audits - all of which are ongoing (see Green Business Initiative). However, while baseline research studies have not progressed as originally envisaged following review, target sectors have been identified for further prevention efforts on foot of other research information. These include sectors generating hazardous waste (see National Hazardous Waste Management Plan) and the hotels and health-care sectors (see Green Business Initiative). The National Waste Report has been incorporated into the NWPP as indicated in the plan and a report has been published each year. Development of an electronic information management system for the collection of statistical returns is underway. The definition of waste prevention proposed by the ERTDI Waste Prevention Framework was discussed and adapted.

#### **Define Waste Prevention as\*:**

**“Elimination or reduction at source of material, water and energy consumption, waste arisings (solid, liquid, gaseous and heat) and harmful substances”**

\* Based on a definition provided in the ERTDI Waste Prevention Framework

Indicators and targets for waste prevention are considered to be best developed in relation to projects initially and later to sectors as practical prevention experience is gained (eg in relation to hotels under Green Business Initiative). Considerable input has been provided in relation to producer responsibility initiatives especially WEEE, RoHS and Packaging.

Overall, with experience and the limited resources available, it has taken longer than originally anticipated to roll out projects particularly in relation to annual waste audits for businesses. On the other hand, opportunities were developed to further waste prevention, which were not originally identified. These include the Local Authority Prevention Demonstration Programme and the Green Home project.

## ERTDI Waste Prevention Framework

The NWPP Outline Work Plan was based in part on the EPA/ERTDI Waste Prevention Framework document published also in 2004. Ten national priority actions were identified in the framework many of which are now underway. These include prioritisation to be given by Government, industry/commerce and the general public to waste and consumption issues. It proposes that adequate resources be provided for a response including the setting up of a Core Prevention Team (CPT) and steering group. Development of a prevention strategy and waste prevention audits is recommended. Technical support services on prevention for business and training/research programmes are proposed also. Many of the NWPP projects detailed in this report address these recommendations. Other suggestions not within the control of the CPT include differentiated charges for separately collected waste and other environmental charges or levies.

Additionally, ten actions were identified by the framework document for the CPT. These included development and dissemination of a waste prevention strategy for Ireland. While a programme has been developed and implementation is underway, consideration will be given in 2008 to developing a longer-term strategy. Legislatively based audit and waste reduction planning is recommended by the framework. Audit tools are in development and will be piloted by sector with a view to determining if regulatory backing is needed for implementation for example as for the Solvents/Deco-paints sectors. While a technical support agency is recommended, this function has been co-ordinated through the local authority and Green Business Initiatives. Training programmes on prevention have been set with business as well as a programme specifically for packaging prevention. Research on waste prevention will remain a focus of NWPP with more fundamental investigations being co-ordinated by the new EPA STRIVE research programme. The framework recommends building on the National Waste Report to improve knowledge of waste flows in Ireland. Green procurement programmes are advised and these are to be addressed by the Market Development Group. Waste prevention awareness campaigns were addressed through the recent Race Against Waste and ongoing NWPP publicity. Environmental grants schemes will be developed as part of the local authority programme.

## Proposal for a Directive on Waste

In 2007, political agreement was reached on a proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Waste. The document states that Member States shall establish waste prevention programmes setting out appropriate objectives and measures. These shall be aimed at breaking the link between economic growth and the environmental impacts associated with the generation of waste. It is noteworthy that the aim is not to try to reduce gross waste arising. The programme shall determine appropriate specific qualitative and quantitative benchmarks, targets and indicators for waste prevention measures. Annex IV to the document provides examples of waste prevention measures, which need to be evaluated for usefulness. These include planning measures, research on cleaner processes/products and indicators of environmental pressures associated with waste generation. Promotion of eco-design, information provision on waste prevention/best available techniques for industry and inclusion of waste prevention requirements in IPPC permits are recommended. Waste assessments and prevention plans for non-IPPC installations, awareness/supports for business, sectoral agreements and environmental management systems are all required to be considered. Economic

instruments, eco-labels and public awareness, green procurement and the promotion of repair/reuse are also listed.

Many of these ideas are being implemented and others will be considered in the context of the development of a strategy in 2008. At the appropriate time, the strategy will be published and subject to public consultation. It is anticipated that co-operation between Member States with their waste prevention programmes will result in useful synergies for example in relation to packaging waste prevention.

### Agreed Programme for Government 2007

The new Programme for Government commits to an international review of waste management plans, practices and procedures including prevention. The document also commits to establishing new ambitious waste management targets for maximum prevention, re-use, recycling and modern waste treatment to ensure that we match the best performance in the EU for recycling with the objective that only 10% of waste or less is consigned to landfill. Additionally, commitment is given to the implementation of the National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste, which aims to divert 80% of biodegradable waste from landfill through segregated collection and generation of compost, as well as the introduction of household hazardous waste collection in all suitable recycling centres.



#### The Core Prevention Team

From left, Brian Meaney, Jane Kenneally, Martin Doyle, Jennifer Cope, Fiona McCoolle, Keiron Phillips, Caitríona Collins, Odile Le Bolloch, Isabelle Kurz, Gerry Byrne, Michael McDonagh, David Dodd and Celine Horner.  
Missing from photograph, Deirdre Murphy

### 3. National Waste Prevention Programme: Project Reports for 2006/7

#### Local Authority Prevention Demonstration (LAPD) Programme

Phase one of the Local Authority Prevention Demonstration (LAPD) Programme was launched in July 2006. Projects under this programme are currently being implemented by the Councils in Galway (City and County), Monaghan, Limerick (City and County), Clare, and Kerry, following selection by open competition. The aim of LAPD is to assist local authorities to design and implement local integrated waste prevention programmes. Assistance is being provided by way of both technical expertise (from the Clean Technology Centre, Cork Institute of Technology) and grant monies to increase capacity for waste prevention locally. Projects include prevention in community, commercial and business contexts such as shopping centres, a regional airport, construction, farms, university, public organisations and schools. A guided study tour on prevention was conducted with all participants to the Netherlands as induction to the programme.



Local Authority Prevention Demonstration programme participants enjoying the guided study tour of prevention in the Netherlands

Phase two of the programme is now being implemented with grant and technical assistance being provided to single initiatives or projects to be implemented by local authorities. Seven more local authorities are now participating including the County Councils in Cork, Donegal, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Longford, Roscommon, South Tipperary and Wicklow. Projects selected include prevention initiatives in a town

centre, at three public swimming pool facilities, public buildings, an offshore island, a major retail outlet, on four farms and a university campus. Best practice case studies and prevention data/know-how will emerge from each project for dissemination and implementation throughout the country. For example, significant savings have been identified at Dundrum Shopping Centre and this successful approach will form the basis for a best practice guidance for dissemination to all such centres.

Four Plenary Meetings involving all participants in the LAPD programme have been held to share learning and experiences with the implementation of prevention projects. An annual Conference to highlight emerging prevention case studies and the achievements of the programme is currently being planned for February 2008. A customised and accredited training programme on waste prevention has been developed for dissemination to all local authorities commencing in November 2007. These activities will ensure that prevention learning and techniques emerging from the pilot projects will be applied widely in Ireland.

It is recommended that Waste Prevention and Green Business Officers be appointed in each region, at a sufficiently senior level, in order to disseminate and consolidate the waste prevention capacity being developed through the LAPD programme.

## Green Home Programme

An Taisce have had great success with the Green Schools environmental education (Eco-schools internationally) for over ten years. The programme involves over 2,700 or 66% of all Irish schools of which 1,150 have been awarded the coveted Green Flag. A pilot initiative called Green Home is now being funded by the NWPP to build on this success. The programme is intended to promote waste prevention in the homes of the school children associated with the original initiative thus targeting



some of the wider community. This is a pioneering project that has not previously been attempted within the international Green Schools movement.

Ten community areas have been surveyed and six community focus meetings have already been held. At these family-centred events, a range of environmental

issues is presented in a practical way focussing on solutions and behaviour change required for their implementation at home. Issues discussed include energy, water conservation, composting and waste. Presentation materials are being improved on an ongoing basis incorporating any feedback received. New material on waste prevention is being developed. A website at [www.greenhome.ie](http://www.greenhome.ie) will be populated with relevant material to support the project. Eleven further events are planned targeting an audience of 2,248 families. School visits and attendance at Parents' Council Meetings are necessary to gain ownership of the project locally and ensure its sustainability. The pilot programme will be evaluated on completion in relation to waste prevention to determine the resources required for rollout regionally or nationally.

The EPA also have on-line environmental education resources for schools available including the Catulator and Aqualator games (see <http://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/education/games/catulator/>). NWPP grant aid has also been provided to some smaller local initiatives on waste prevention including a Cork Environmental Forum project and to an internet-based schoolbook exchange project ([www.schoolbookexchange.ie](http://www.schoolbookexchange.ie)).

## Packaging Waste Prevention Programme

The Packaging Directive and associated regulations include objectives for the reduction of packaging. While considerable progress has been made nationally in the segregated collection of packaging waste for recycling, there is a need to progress to the actual prevention or minimisation of packaging waste generated. Companies already tend to “lightweight” or reduce material content of their packaging in order to reduce transport and other costs. However, there is a growing need for business marketing decision-makers to take into account the environmental impacts of their packaging design choices and for consumers to actively demand less packaging.



At the launch of the Packaging Prevention Programme were from left, Dr Gerry Byrne (EPA), Dr Andrew Hetherington (Repak) and Mr Dick Roche (TD), Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government

An agreement to co-fund a Packaging Waste Prevention Programme has been signed by NWPP and Repak. A budget of €200,000 for 2007 has been approved. Repak is leading the implementation of these projects with technical/strategic input from the EPA, Enterprise Ireland, Musgraves Ltd and the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government. National workshops on packaging

prevention were held in Dublin and Cork highlighting a range of case studies. Additional regional seminars are being planned to take place by year-end. Case studies have been published in printed form as well as on a new webpage developed for the [www.repak.ie](http://www.repak.ie) and [www.preventandsave.ie](http://www.preventandsave.ie) websites. A consultant has been appointed to investigate the supply chain of selected products and identify reasons for decisions made regarding packaging as well as degree of compliance with Essential Requirements, which specify statutory criteria for minimising packaging at source. Other projects now underway or planned include certified training in packaging prevention, appointment of an expert panel to disseminate best practice case studies, an SME communication programme and design awards for packaging prevention through the Graphic Design Business Association. Other packaging prevention projects will be developed as experience and feedback is gained through the implementation of the initial programme. The overall programme is an integral part of the strategy being devised by the National Strategy Group for Packaging Waste Recycling.



Mr John Gormley (TD), Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government presents the Repak Best Packaging Prevention Initiative Award 2007 to winners  
H.J. Heinz Co Ltd

NWPP also sponsor two categories in the Annual Repak Recycling Awards each year with particular attention being given to those participants demonstrating significant packaging waste prevention achievements.

## Green Business Initiative

Good case studies focussing on waste prevention, as opposed to recycling, have proven difficult to identify. A panel of experienced practitioners has been selected by tender with a view to identifying best practice prevention examples. Additionally, these experts will be used to identify suitable target firms for further dissemination of best practice and to initiate direct personal contact with selected companies on a campaign basis. In this way, a low cost service will be made available to SMEs and other organisations to develop their expertise in prevention and improve their competitiveness by saving costs.

One excellent case study that will now be disseminated widely is derived from an EPA/ERTDI Cleaner Greener Production Programme project called Greening Irish Hotels. This programme involved 56 hotels (3 to 5 star) ranging in size from 30 to 255 beds around the country. Environmental reviews, training, environmental management, best practices and cleaner production plans were developed. Quantified actual savings included diversion of 1,113 tonnes of waste from landfill, reduction of 5,000 tonnes of water consumption and 3,000 tonnes of carbon emissions. If extrapolated across the entire sector the economic benefit could amount to €81.4 million in cost savings, diversion of 56,000 tonnes of waste from landfill, 4.5 million tonnes reduction in water consumption and 162,000 tonnes of carbon.

A tender has been issued for suitable contractors to take forward the significant findings of this project for extensive implementation in 150 more hotels throughout Ireland. There is very significant scope for cost savings in the sector in relation not just to waste, but also to water and energy. Greening the industry would help competitiveness and improve the customer perception of the sustainability of the tourism product. In time, this sector-based approach will be extended according as suitable case studies or sector information become available. Health-care organisations, retail and construction activities are currently also being considered in this regard.

The Core Prevention Team worked closely with the Race Against Waste team to develop an on-line web-based waste audit tool. Much experience had been gained during the now completed Race Against Waste campaign utilising waste audits in a wide variety of sectors and activities. A pilot audit programme for businesses is in development to further refine and optimise the methodology. Modules on waste prevention will be augmented by guidance on water conservation with links to energy management information. This Resource Efficiency Tool will be web-based and hosted at arms length from the EPA to avoid its use being inhibited by fears of regulatory oversight of any data entered. Over time, it is envisaged that waste audits should be carried out regularly in many production and service industries as well as administrative organisations on either a voluntary or mandatory basis. This is with a view to developing waste reduction plans for effective widespread local implementation of prevention. The web-based tool should help greatly with this effort. Accessible back-up advice will be made readily available by phone or e-mail to support users of the tool. Additionally, site visits by experts to provide a review and advice service in confidence will be made available at an affordable cost. It is anticipated that these services will be available from early in 2008.

The policy document, *Delivering Change*, proposes the introduction of a programme of *mandatory* waste audits for organisations incorporating waste reduction plans.

Auditing against EPA guideline requirements by Accredited Inspection Contractors (AIC) will be obligatory for operators covered by the Solvent and Deco-paints Regulations (see later in report). However, it is hoped that the different sectors of society will co-operate with the prevention initiatives on a voluntary basis obviating the need for mandatory requirements. The Core Prevention Team will closely monitor this policy objective and will make recommendations as appropriate.



Attending the B2B WEEE Workshop were from left, Ms Áine Higgins (Siemens Ltd.), Dr Isabelle Kurz, Mr Martin Doyle, Dr Gerry Byrne (EPA), Mr David McCabe (ADC Barcodes Ltd.) and Ms Jane Kenneally (EPA)

## HAZRED Project

HAZRED is an EU/Life funded applied research project aimed at identifying SME sectors that generate significant amounts of hazardous waste and seeks to develop guidance and audit tools to promote waste prevention. The project is being led by the Environment Agency of England and Wales, with the EPA acting as partners in Ireland to ensure that Irish SMEs have the opportunity to participate. The project commenced in December 2004 and is due to be completed this year.

A methodology was developed to select sectors where SMEs generate significant quantities of hazardous waste. Six sectors were selected when the methodology was applied in the UK: Manufacture of speciality organic chemicals; Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles; Treatment and coating of metals; General construction and building; Manufacturing of machinery and equipment and, Photographic processing. The Core Prevention Team worked to disseminate the project in Ireland and seven SMEs in Ireland have signed up for the programme.

The selected SMEs are now being directly involved in demonstrating the efficacy of a new approach to waste prevention. A draft best practice guidance document has been drawn up for each sector and expert auditor/trainers have been appointed. Each SME has received an audit, training and advice on the guidance and were required to sign up to a waste reduction plan. Follow up visits from the expert consultants will determine the effectiveness of the prevention effort. The best practice guidance will be finalised later in 2007 to include lessons learned during the final site reviews. Ultimately this sector selection/guidance preparation and audit/monitoring approach will be incorporated into sectoral waste prevention initiatives noted above.

### Certified Waste Prevention and Minimisation Training

Key business decision-makers need to have the necessary information and skills to achieve prevention in their own organisations. The Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) were assisted in the development of a suitable waste prevention training course for business in 2005. The Clean Technology Centre (CTC) developed the modular course that includes lectures, directed home study as well as applied in-company waste prevention projects. Further development of the course by tailoring for different sectors is being co-ordinated by IBEC initially in Pharmachem. To date thirty-six people have completed this training. Options to have the course made more widely available, for example through FÁS or by distance learning, are being considered. As noted previously, a specialised version of the certified prevention course is being developed in relation to packaging prevention.



NWPP display stand at Enterprise Ireland hosted event on RoHS/Eco-design

## National Waste Reports

The Core Prevention Team considers the provision of accurate and timely information on national waste arisings to be key to any effective waste prevention programme. The National Waste Reports provide intelligence on trends in waste arisings from a variety of sectors and help to direct prevention or recycling efforts towards the management of priority waste streams. Additionally, the reports highlight relevant indicators on waste to regulators, policy and commercial decision makers. Importantly, reports required by the European Commission in relation to a range of Directives, including waste and Producer Responsibility Initiatives, are based on data published in the National Waste Reports. The Basel Convention Reports to the UN are also developed on foot of this information.

To develop the reports, detailed waste data is collected each year from numerous players in the waste management sector including waste operators, recyclers, industry and local authorities. Follow up and site audits form an important part of the verification of the waste data that is provided. Systems are in development to facilitate the reporting and collation of such information by way of electronic means in the medium term. All waste data are developed in conformance with the EU Waste Statistics Regulation.

The National Waste Report for arisings in 2005 was published early in 2007 and generated national media coverage and public debate on the subject of waste and its correct management. The report shows that while good progress has been made on the collecting of recyclable waste, landfilling remains at a high level (77% of household waste). The target of recovering 60% of packaging waste was achieved well in advance of the target date of 2011. Uncollected household waste was estimated at 202,940 tonnes, which is a matter for concern. Progress with diversion of biodegradable waste was slow with the need to implement the national strategy growing ever more urgent. Over 80% of recyclable waste materials collected here were exported reflecting the lack of commercial appetite for developing suitable facilities in Ireland.

The National Waste Report for 2006 arisings is currently in preparation for publication early in 2008.

## The National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste

This important strategy was published in April 2006 and proposes some new prevention targets for the Core Prevention Team. The issue of diversion of biodegradable waste is an urgent one for Ireland with stringent EU targets to be met by 2010 and beyond. The strategy proposes that the Core Prevention Team develop a programme specifically designed to target prevention of biodegradable waste. Within existing resources, all of the relevant NWPP projects have now been adjusted specifically to take cognisance of the strategy. The information needs for tracking performance of the implementation of the strategy itself are now integrated into the data collection processes involved in the compilation of the National Waste Reports. Additionally, under this project heading, waste characterisation research will be repeated in 2008 to assure that the most recent intelligence is available. During the phase two call for proposals under the LAPD Programme, priority was given to projects dealing with biodegradable waste prevention. Information on composting is

included in the Green Home Pilot Programme as well as in the existing Green Schools Programme. It is anticipated that considerable quantities of biodegradable waste can be prevented or diverted from landfill with the implementation of the Greening Irish Hotels project under the Green Business Initiative (up to 70% biodegradable). Similarly, the extension of this approach to the health-care sector should also realise significant diversion of biodegradable waste. Special consideration will be given to this issue as other projects are rolled out including case studies and provision of on-site waste prevention expertise for businesses. The EPA/Environmental Research, Technological Development and Innovation (ERTDI) Programme have funded Cré (an organisation promoting best practice in composting) to develop standards for compost products.



Quality compost can be used as a substitute for peat as a growing medium for plants

However, the prevention and minimisation proposals in the strategy cannot be expected to operate in isolation and it is becoming increasingly urgent that other aspects are implemented. This includes setting up the Strategy Implementation Group, widespread use of separate collection and widespread domestic or commercial composting with market opportunities identified by the Market Development Group.

## Water and Energy Resource Conservation

The issues of water and energy conservation inevitably arise whenever waste prevention is being considered. All three issues form an integral part of the prevention message in any event. There is a need to link them together whenever awareness-raising measures are being undertaken. Energy conservation is very much the topic of the moment with EU, national and global concerns about carbon emissions and climate change to the fore.

In relation to water use conservation, this too is a vital issue. Water is a precious natural resource and needs to be treated with the respect that it deserves. It should be conserved for many reasons including biodiversity, climate change adaptation and not least, the amount of chemicals/energy required to collect, treat, store and deliver safe drinking water. The issue is being considered with increasing urgency at EU level with a “Water Hierarchy” being proposed with water use reduction as the most favoured option and new water supplies only being considered as a last resort. Policy options for improved water efficiency, user pays principle, appliance water efficiency standards and buildings’ water performance specifications are to be explored.

The issue of water resources is very topical in Ireland at present with drinking water quality issues arising in Galway, Clonmel and other locations. Additionally, there is a proposal being made to pipe water from the Shannon system to the feed the escalating demand for water in the Eastern Region of the country. Considerable resources are already being deployed nationally to identify and reduce losses of treated water in transmission networks following the completion of a National Water Survey. Commercial and agricultural users of water increasingly have to pay *pro rata* their consumption and in some cases, reserve and pay for treatment capacity also (however, it is important that this does not become a barrier to prevention). Building Regulations will require dual-flush toilets from 2008. A new Water Services Act provides *inter alia* for a duty of care to maintain plumbing in a leak-free condition, new powers for local authorities to intervene where water loss is excessive and to issue hosepipe bans and fines. Pilot projects are underway to cost water production management and to reduce consumption in domestic and farm settings. Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) licensing of industry has sought to reduce water consumption in different sectors. A website at [www.taptips.ie](http://www.taptips.ie) is in place to advise people of best practice in relation to water use conservation.

The issues of water and energy resource conservation inevitably arise whenever waste prevention audits are being conducted. Therefore, these issues will be included within the Resource Efficiency Tool being developed as part of the Green Business Initiative. They will also be considered as an integral part of the Greening Irish Hotel project and any other prevention case studies being considered. However, as far as practicable, the existing resources and expertise of Sustainable Energy Ireland will be utilised whenever significant energy conservation solutions are needed. Strategic contacts have made with the principals in this organisation to ensure that mutual referrals are made between the programmes. In relation to water conservation, some of the ERTDI/Cleaner Greener Production projects achieved significant water savings and these will be considered for wider dissemination within the relevant sector. The Core Prevention Team will continue to link their work strategically with other key players to promote water and energy conservation as an integral part of the waste prevention effort.



The National Waste Prevention Committee welcomed Ms Katrijn Siebens (OVAM - Waste Prevention Office – Flanders) to their meeting (third from right)

## Communication of Waste Prevention

The many projects undertaken which are detailed in this report require extensive communications with a wide variety of audiences promoting good environmental practice. In addition, as they arise, opportunities are taken to communicate with wider audiences about the programme, including issuing of press releases or speaking at relevant conferences, as appropriate. A presentation on NWPP was given at the Waterford Chamber of Commerce awards ceremony for businesses that had achieved Green Dragon environmental standards. The Eco-eye television series was again commissioned and suitable broadcast material developed as a means of communicating with a much wider audience about the programme.

The waste section of the EPA website was completely revamped in 2005 to include extensive electronic links to information and documentation on all aspects of waste management in Ireland. Everything from policy documents, to regional/national waste plans, to database reports and waste management initiatives are now included. A new section on the National Waste Prevention Programme has been added with multiple electronic links to information and guidance on waste prevention. The idea is to provide a “one-stop shop” which will now act as an important Waste Information Resource Centre for businesses and the general public. The web-pages were relaunched in May 2007 when the main EPA site was updated. They may now be viewed at a new address: <http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/resource/>.

## 4. Hazardous Waste Prevention and Management

The EPA and the Core Prevention Team have been assigned a leadership role in the prevention and management of hazardous waste in Ireland. The EPA is required by law to prepare a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan having regard to the prevention/minimisation, recovery, collection/movement and disposal of hazardous waste.

Progress on the HAZRED project, specifically intended to prevent hazardous waste in SME businesses, is detailed above. In addition, the team works on the development, implementation and enforcement of a range of statutory measures aimed at prevention and better management of a wide variety of potentially hazardous/eco-toxic waste substances and products. This varied work has potential to result in significant prevention of hazardous waste from a variety of scheduled activities and products. These measures include implementation or enforcement of the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) legislation, the Solvents and Deco-paints Regulations, the Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) obligations as well as the Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS), Batteries and other Regulations. Project activities relating to these Regulations are detailed later in this report.

### The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan

The first National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (NHWMP) was published in 2001 and has the prevention of hazardous waste as a cornerstone of its principal recommendations. The National Waste Prevention Committee monitors the implementation of the NHWMP as required by the Terms of Reference for the committee to monitor the implementation, by relevant public authorities, of the plan recommendations (see Appendix B). The Core Prevention Team presents reports on hazardous waste issues to the committee on a periodic basis for discussion.

In accordance with the Waste Management Act, the NHWMP is currently being revised in line with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations. This process was commenced in 2005 and a Steering Group comprising most members of the National Waste Prevention Committee is providing oversight for the project. An initial public consultation has been completed and several Steering Group meetings have been held. Each hazardous waste stream is being considered in turn and fresh recommendations developed to better enable the effective prevention, collection, recycling or treatment of all such wastes, as appropriate. The relevant authorities in Northern Ireland have been consulted to maintain an all-island perspective on the issues.



A meeting of the international review group on hazardous waste planning

The draft plan, along with the SEA Environmental Report, was published in November 2007. Following full public consultation, the final plan together with an accompanying SEA Statement will then be published.

### Transfrontier Shipment (TFS) of Waste Imports

New Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations (TFS) has transferred responsibility for these issues to Dublin City Council from July 2007. Up to this, the Core Prevention Team had responsibility for enforcing the Regulations for scheduled waste being *imported* into and passing in transit *through* Ireland and all local authorities had this responsibility for scheduled waste being *exported* from the State. The team continue to have responsibility for developing all data for TFS reports for submission to the EU Commission as part of the National Waste Report project.

The team has completed considerable work in relation to the regulation of the importation of scheduled waste over the last year. Numerous enquiries were dealt with concerning TFS of waste for import in connection with waste oils for recovery and railway sleepers for reuse. Enforcement inspections have been undertaken with the Department of Agriculture and notifications were provided to the Health and Safety Authority as necessary. Authorisations for importations issued prior to the changes will continue to be managed up to their expiration. Support is being provided to Dublin City Council as they take up their new role in relation to TFS.

## Implementation of the Polychlorinated Bi-phenyls (PCBs) and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Regulations

The EPA published a Management Plan for PCBs in 2002 in accordance with the Regulations bringing Directive 96/59/EC into force. The plan described the position in Ireland regarding PCBs, provided technical guidance and outlined the legal requirements placed on any holders of such materials to notify the EPA. The plan and a notification form are available on the EPA website. A contractor has now been engaged to further mobilise efforts among holders of PCBs to comply with the requirements.

The Regulation on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) requires that a range of measures relating to control of production, placing on the market, use, stockpiles, release reduction and waste management be put in place. National regulations designating the EPA as Competent Authority in relation to POPs are in preparation. Other authorities with responsibilities in this regard have been engaged with extensively including the Department of Agriculture (Pesticides Control Service), Health and Safety Authority (REACH chemical Regulations), Irish Medicines Board and other parties. Development of inventories to air, water and land will be a priority for the EPA. Permit conditions in IPPC licences will be kept under review in relation to POPs. Monitoring data on the presence of dioxins, furans and PCBs in the environment will continue to be published by the EPA. A National Implementation Plan (NIP), including an Action Plan on measures to identify, characterise and minimise releases of specified substances, is in development and will be the subject of full public consultation in 2008.

## 5. Product and Scheduled Activity Compliance

### Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS): Product Compliance Enforcement

The RoHS Directive came into effect on 1 July 2006 and is intended to restrict the use of harmful substances in the manufacture of electrical and electronic equipment. This Single Market Directive is intended to contribute to the protection of human health and the environmentally sound disposal of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE). The substances controlled include lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium as well as specified flame retardant chemicals. The Regulations prohibit the marketing or distribution of relevant products that contain more than the specified level of these substances. In effect, this imposes statutory eco-design criteria on all players in the EEE market and supply chain. Producers must retain adequate records of certification of compliance or testing of any component utilised in production to verify compliance with these requirements. The EPA is the sole enforcement agency for RoHS and has been provided with extensive powers to investigate, test and, if necessary, issue directions for prohibited products to be withdrawn/recalled from the market. The EU Commission guidance on the implementation of Single Market Directives is applicable to the enforcement of RoHS Directive.

The Core Prevention Team have been delegated the task of enforcing RoHS in Ireland. A strategy is being implemented including information provision, investigation of complaints, consideration of producer reported breaches and sampling/testing of products on the market. Liaison with EU colleagues is ongoing through the RoHS Enforcement Body. A watching brief is maintained for opportunities to encourage and promote EEE eco-design as part of this work also.

### Deco-paints Regulation: Product Compliance Enforcement

Another Single Market Directive has been implemented in Ireland by the Deco-paints Regulations. Limits are specified for the solvent content of paints marketed to the household, professional and vehicle refinishing sectors. The EU Commission guidance on the implementation of Single Market Directives is applicable to the enforcement of the product requirements of Deco-paints. The EPA has been nominated as the Competent Authority in relation to these Regulations. An implementation strategy has now commenced and inspection information is being prepared for the EU questionnaire returns.

### Enforcement of the Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Regulation

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (1989) is an international initiative to protect the stratospheric ozone layer from harm by certain anthropogenic chemicals. This ozone layer protects the Earth from damaging ultraviolet emissions from the sun. The European Community and each Member State are Party to the Protocol. It aims to regulate the production, import/export, placing on the market, use, recovery, recycling, reclamation and destruction of specific substances that have an ozone depleting potential. Such substances are in limited use in diverse sectors such as refrigeration and air-conditioning (CFCs and HCFCs), fumigation and pest control (methyl bromide), fire prevention and suppression (halons) and the pharmaceutical sector (ozone depleting solvents).

The Regulations assign responsibilities, minimum qualification requirements and reporting obligations in relation to ODS. As there is no production of ozone depleting substances (ODS) in Ireland, the implementation and enforcement of the Regulation here focuses primarily on regulating their use and ensuring the correct management of waste ODS. The regulation of import and export is concerned with the import from, and export to, non-EU countries.

Meetings at European level of the ODS Management Committee and National Experts Committee have been attended. Liaison has been maintained with the Department of Agriculture and Food (Pest Control, Forest Services, Plant Protection), the Maritime Safety Directorate, the Air Corps and the Customs section of the Revenue Commissioners as organisations with responsibilities for specific tasks relating to ODS.

Survey questionnaires and site visits to relevant sector organisations (including sectoral representative bodies) were carried out for the purpose of raising awareness, gathering data for reports and ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Regulation. Presentations have been made at a number of sectoral seminars for the purpose of raising awareness and highlighting compliance issues such as movement of waste ODS. Sectoral guidance notes were made widely available for the benefit of operators affected by the ODS legislation. Contact has been made with educational bodies to ensure that appropriate training is available. All ODS related reports were provided on schedule to the EU.

### Implementation of the Solvents and Deco-paints Regulations for Scheduled Activities

The Solvents Directive aims to prevent hazardous waste arising in a range of different industrial sectors. In Ireland, the EPA regulates larger solvent using installations under the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) licensing regime. The Regulations require that SME operators register with their local authority, maintain detailed records of solvent use/reduction and undergo annual inspections of their operations from 31 October 2007 onwards. These inspections will be conducted by Accredited Inspection Contractors (AIC) registered by the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) to the ISO 17020 International Inspection Bodies Standard. Similarly, the new Deco-paints Regulations require that Vehicle Refinishers register with their local authority having undertaken a successful AIC audit by 1 March 2008. A range of installations generating significant quantities of hazardous process waste will be better regulated arising from the implementation of the Solvents and Deco-paints Regulations.

The Core Prevention Team has continued to develop the foundations for the operation of both AIC schemes. To date, three organisations have been accredited as AICs by INAB and have commenced operations. New guidance is in development for Vehicle Refinishers for presentation at a consultation workshop. A research project is underway to identify and directly alert all Vehicle Refinishers to their new obligations. All of the original Solvents guidance documents are being reviewed in line with the new Deco-paints Regulations. After the due dates have passed, the local authorities will need to enforce the obligations on any operator that does not comply. A briefing session was held with all local authorities through the Office of Environmental Enforcement's Environmental Enforcement Network on these requirements. A Working Group involving the regulators is developing guidance for the local authorities.

There are a large number of SME companies potentially impacted by the Solvents and Deco-paints Regulations (perhaps up to 2,000). There is scope for significant reductions in hazardous waste solvents arising. Any hazardous waste arising should be better managed as a result of these AIC schemes.



Mr John Gormley (TD), Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government presents the Repak Best Practice Award 2007 to winners Alcan Packaging Ltd

## 6. Producer Responsibility Initiatives

Producer Responsibility Initiatives (PRIs) are economic instruments, which require producers (both manufacturers and importers of products) to retain responsibility for the management of their products when they become waste. Producers are required to take account of the environmental impact of their products through design, in-use and at end-of-life management stages. The Terms of Reference for the National Waste Prevention Committee (Appendix B) requires it to monitor progress in sectoral producer responsibility initiatives.

The Core Prevention Team provides input and support to the development and implementation of a range of PRIs, in co-operation with other stakeholders, by actively participating in meetings of the Producer Responsibility Liaison Group, the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Monitoring Group, the Batteries Working Group, the WEEE Register Society, the National Strategy Group for Packaging Waste Recycling, the National Construction & Demolition Waste Council and the Market Development Group.

In particular, information is provided on the distance from targets to be achieved for the recovery of all relevant waste streams as part of the National Waste Reports. The official returns to the EU Commission concerning each Directive are based on data developed for these reports also. Whenever practicable, the prevention aspects within PRIs are developed eg WEEE Reuse, EEE eco-design, packaging prevention etc. Some of the work completed by the team on these PRIs is outlined below.

### Enforcement of the WEEE Regulations

Since the WEEE Regulations came into force on 13 August 2005, EPA inspectors and contractors have been undertaking random, unannounced inspections of retailers of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE). Significant efforts are being made also to identify any unregistered, potentially obligated producers or “free-riders”. Producers/distributors who supply EEE by means of distance communication (web-sites, mail order catalogues, telesales etc.) are also covered under the WEEE Regulations, and inspections of such operations are also ongoing. All complaints received, from whatever source, are acted on as part of the surveillance effort. Extensive ongoing correspondence has been initiated alerting retailers and producers to their obligations under the Regulations.

The team continues to work closely with other bodies including the National Consumer Agency, the Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland (ASAI), the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, the WEEE Register Society Ltd (the national producer registration body) and the Revenue Commissioners. All are providing the benefit of their particular expertise in relation to dealing with issues of registration/inspection of foreign and distance sellers of EEE.



WEEE collected and ready for processing and material separation

Under the WEEE Regulations, local authorities also have responsibility for the enforcement of many retailer obligations. The team has organised a WEEE Working Group to develop guidance for all local authorities. The established EPA Office of Environmental Enforcement's Environmental Enforcement Network on Producer Responsibility was utilised to host a Network meeting on WEEE involving all local authorities in March 2007.

The WEEE Regulations have had very significant results whereby large quantities of such waste have been collected for recycling. A stakeholder consultation is currently underway to determine ways to develop the systematic *Reuse* of WEEE in Ireland, which would be a significant waste prevention initiative.

### Packaging Waste Recycling

Local authorities are responsible for the enforcement of the Packaging Regulations in their functional areas especially for commercial entities which seek to self-comply. Compliance with Packaging Essential Requirements includes prohibitions on specified hazardous substances in packaging. The EPA Office of Environmental Enforcement provides leadership to local authorities through the Environmental Enforcement Network on improving compliance with the Packaging Regulations. The Core Prevention Team are responsible for verifying the packaging-recycling rate each year as part of the National Waste Report project.

New Regulations in 2007 are expected to bring many more businesses into the obligated producer category with the *de minimis* being reduced from 25 to 10 tonnes of packaging placed on the market. The team have initiated a project to search for all newly obligated producers in order to directly alert them to the requirements and to assist local authorities in their enforcement efforts.

While it is important to continue to continue to attain these mandatory recycling targets, including those now set out for 2011 (60%), attention is increasingly being focussed on Packaging Prevention as described earlier in this report.

### Other Producer Responsibility Initiatives

Under the End-of Life Vehicle Regulations, vehicle brand holders or producers must put in place a national network of Authorised Treatment Facilities (ATFs). These facilities must meet specified environmental standards and provide for the free depollution, treatment and recovery of vehicles at the end of their useful life. Additionally, there are eco-design obligations on producers including a requirement to ensure that vehicle materials and components do not contain lead, mercury or hexavalent chromium. Local authorities are responsible for enforcing these Regulations in each of their functional areas while the EPA are responsible for collecting data. The Core Prevention Team are engaging with the different sector players to ascertain how recycling data might be best compiled. Consideration is being given to the need to conduct waste characterisation and shredder trials to this end.



Valuable materials are recovered from WEEE for reuse as raw materials

Regulations on waste tyres were published in 2007 in order to promote the environmentally sound management of this waste stream. Information on quantities will be collated by the team as part of the National Waste Report project. A Batteries Working Group has been set up from within the WEEE Monitoring Group to involve all stakeholders in the development of a national scheme to implement the requirements of the Batteries Directive by September 2008. Included in the requirements are systems to finance the collection of targetted quantities of battery waste (in similar manner to WEEE) and to restrict the quantities of specified hazardous substances (in similar manner to RoHS).

## 7. Conclusions

This report details the wide range of developing projects being undertaken by the Core Prevention Team to engender widespread capacity in waste prevention in private and public sector organisations, as well as in the community generally. It is planned that each initiative will be expanded nationally as the pilot phases are completed and suitable mechanisms, including funding and human resources, are made available to achieve this. The projects will continue to document lessons learned and ensure that these are integrated across the whole programme.

Some recent contacts have provided fresh ideas for additional new projects in the years ahead. For example, BRE Ireland is setting up an Enterprise Acceleration Centre at Limerick Institute of Technology to promote sustainability and innovation in the built environment. The possible scope for collaborating on construction waste prevention and resource conservation through building design will be explored. This includes all phase of the life of the built environment from construction, use, refurbishment and demolition. Similarly, a National Industrial Symbiosis Programme is currently being run throughout the UK that provides linkages between companies to identify sustainable resource management solutions for businesses. The idea of commencing a similar programme here, perhaps on an all-island basis, will be explored over the next period.



Eco-building in the Netherlands

Waste prevention is an important strategic activity for Ireland to continue engaging with in order to ensure sustainable, competitive growth into the future. In the years to come, it is anticipated that the nascent waste prevention projects reported on here, in conjunction with other integrated national waste management initiatives, will yield important results. This will require that appropriate resources are available and that relevant stakeholders respond to the challenges. The current exploratory projects would need to be scaled-up considerably before an impact would be seen on national waste arising figures. The Core Prevention Team will continue to work with all relevant players to promote the ongoing development of a culture of waste prevention in Irish society. With the appropriate resources and the willing participation of all stakeholders, the ongoing developing National Waste Prevention Programme described in this report will ensure that Ireland makes good progress in this regard.

## Appendix A

### National Waste Prevention Committee Representatives

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Dr. Gerry Byrne, Chairman	Environmental Protection Agency
Mr. Pat Macken / Ms. Jean Clarke	Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government
Mr. Dale Crammond	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Ms. Margo Monaghan	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment
Nomination requested	City & County Managers Association
Mr. Donal Buckley	Irish Business & Employers Confederation
Mr. Brendan Keane	Irish Waste Management Association
Dr. Duncan Martin	Chartered Institute of Waste Management
Ms. Marion Byron	Irish Pharmaceutical & Chemical Manufacturers Association
Mr. Des Cummins	Small Firms Association
Dr. John Ryan	Irish Small Medium Enterprises
Mr. Tom Dunne/Mr Thomas Ryan	Irish Farmers Association
Mr. Fred McDarby	Enterprise Ireland
Nomination requested	Comhar
Mr. Noel Duffy/Mr Tadhg Coakley	Clean Technology Centre
Mr. Frank Corcoran	Environmental NGO's
Mr. Paul Javens	Chambers of Commerce of Ireland
Mr. Conor Creedon	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association

## Appendix B

# Committee Terms of Reference

### National Waste Prevention Committee TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Monitor the development and implementation of the National Waste Prevention Programme;
- Monitor the implementation, by relevant public authorities, of National Hazardous Waste Management Plan recommendations;
- Advise and provide strategic direction to the Core Prevention Team in developing and driving the National Waste Prevention Programme;
- Provide input to the Environmental Protection Agency for the purpose of section 26(6) of the 1996 Waste Management Act;
- Identify priorities for action and make recommendations to relevant public authorities and private bodies;
- Consider and make recommendations to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding appropriate policy and legislative initiatives;
- Have regard to national, European Union and international policy and legislation and best practice in relation to waste prevention and hazardous waste management;
- Facilitate, support and promote co-ordination and liaison between relevant bodies, public and private, on the National Waste Prevention Programme and the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan;
- Consider and make recommendations to relevant bodies regarding public awareness requirements in relation to hazardous waste and the prevention of waste;
- Monitor and evaluate new research and data on waste prevention, trends in hazardous and non-hazardous waste production and waste management practices;
- Consider and make recommendations to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on research priorities;
- Monitor progress in sectoral producer responsibility initiatives;
- Disseminate information on best practice in waste prevention and hazardous waste management;

- Consider and make recommendations to relevant bodies regarding the provision of funding to support implementation of the National Waste Prevention Programme and the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan; and
- Prepare and submit to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government an annual report outlining progress on the implementation of the National Waste Prevention Programme and the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan.