

**Letter to the Editor, Irish Times**

**7<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

Sir,

Your editorial today posed the question as to why Ireland was not moving faster to develop more waste to energy processes rather than exporting waste.

The fact is that Ireland has made huge strides in this regard in the past six years. The rate of progress can be seen in the significant reductions in the disposal of waste in landfills. Between 2001 and 2008 Ireland was sending roughly two million tonnes of waste to landfill annually. In 2015, we estimate that less than half a million tonnes of waste will be landfilled in Ireland. This is a fantastic achievement and points to the growing environmental awareness among consumers as well as the continued investment in recycling and recovery technology by the waste sector.

Investment by IWMA members means that today, nearly 400,000 tonnes per annum of non-recyclable waste is now used as fuel in Waste to Energy plants and cement kilns in Ireland, replacing imported fossil fuels such as coal. Further improvements will be seen when the Poolbeg Waste to Energy facility is commissioned at the end of 2017, when much of the waste currently being exported will be converted to energy in this facility.

Ireland is rapidly catching up with the best performers in waste management in Europe and we expect to be the standard bearer by 2020

Yours etc

Kieran Mullins

Chairman

Irish Waste Management Association