

IWMA calls for Help from the Public to Improve Plastic Recycling Rates

25th August 2023 In response to the latest EPA data on packaging waste, which shows that just 28% of plastic packaging was recycled by householders and businesses in Ireland in 2021, the Irish Waste Management Association (IWMA) is calling for help from the public to increase this figure to meet the EU target of 50% by 2025.

To make it easier for customers to do the right thing, all plastic packaging is accepted in the dry recycling bin and waste operators have invested in sophisticated sorting systems to separate recyclable and non-recyclable plastics collected from these bins.

Now it's time for the public to do their part by putting clean, loose and dry plastic packaging and recyclable materials in the correct bin. Too much potential recyclable materials are still being placed in the general waste bin which means it will end up in incineration or landfill.

Des Crinion Chair of the IWMA said: *"I worry that people still don't understand the importance of the circular economy and see recycling targets as a problem for the government, and of no consequence to them. The reality is, only by everyone making small changes will we have an impact on the crisis on our planet.*

"The most frustrating thing for our members is to see good recyclables lost in general waste bins. But as waste collectors, we can only do so much. If we don't get help from householders and businesses, it will be impossible for Ireland to meet its recycling targets and our planet will continue to suffer. We are encouraging all our customers – households and businesses – to refocus their efforts on recycling and to put clean, loose and dry plastics and other recyclables into the proper bin. We've simplified our processes as much as we can to make it easy for our customers".

The IWMA said that some householders with large families have large quantities of dry recyclables that may not fit in their dry recycling bin every fortnight. In these circumstances, the IWMA encourages those people to contact their waste collector to see if they can get a larger or a second dry recycling bin.

Crinion added; *"Many IWMA members will consider such a request favourably and that could ease the pressure for those households. We want to make it easy for people to do the right thing in the context of plastics recycling."*

Further information on materials accepted in dry recycling bins can be found at www.mywaste.ie

Ends.