

Packaging Essential Requirements

The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations were introduced in Ireland in 1998 as part of an amendment to the Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations 1997. Article 9.1 of EU Directive 94/62 on packaging requires member states to ensure that only packaging which complies with all of these Essential Requirements may be placed on the market.

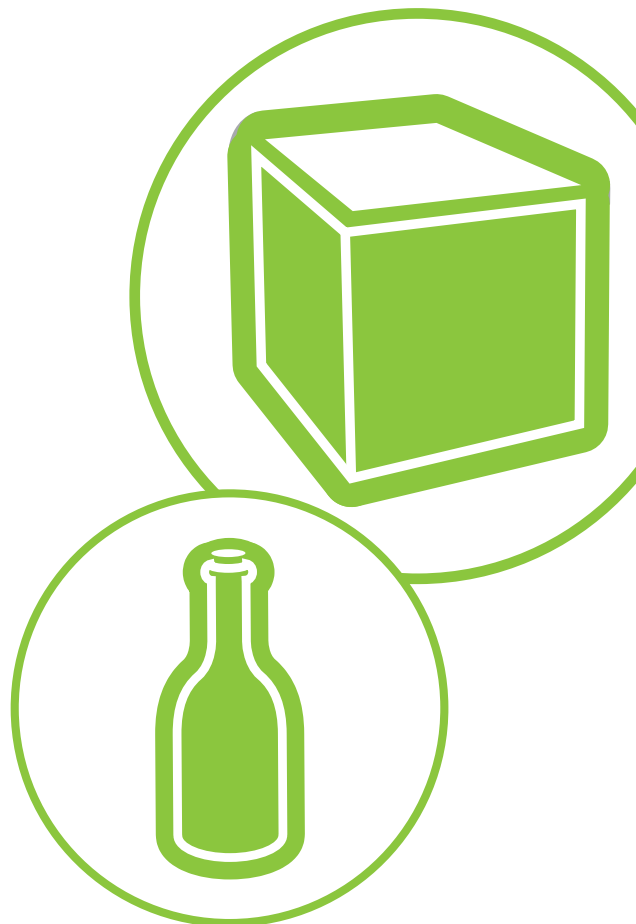
The legislation obliges packer/fillers of packaging, importers and 'own brand' retailers to ensure that packaging and individual packaging components (parts of packaging that can be separated by hand or by using simple physical means) meet certain specific standards.

In Ireland, the Local Authorities have responsibility for the enforcement of the Essential Requirements and are entitled to ask the obligated companies for a report of packaging composition and all relevant technical supporting documentation. Local Authorities are empowered to prosecute companies found in breach of the Essential Requirements. In this instance, inappropriately packaged goods could be removed from the marketplace and/or fines imposed.

A more detailed guide to the Essential Requirements is available at www.preventandsave.ie

The Essential Requirements can be summarised as follows;

- Packaging weight and volume must be reduced to the minimum necessary for safety, hygiene and consumer acceptance of the packaged product.
- Hazardous substances and materials must be minimised as constituents of packaging, with Annex II laying down specific limits on named heavy metals
- Packaging must be suitable, as deemed by the CEN Standards, for at least one of the following – material recycling, energy recovery or organic recovery.
- Packaging which is claimed to be reusable must be suitable for that purpose and for at least one of the three recovery methods specified above.



Repak



How Repak Helps Members Meet the Packaging Essential Requirements

Repak makes every effort to ensure that its members have an impact on the reduction of non-reusable, non-recyclable packaging and are actively working to keep their packaging output in line with the Essential Requirements.

Repak's 'pay by weight' fee structure gives an economic incentive to its members to use minimal materials in the packaging process. This provides the impetus for Irish business to move away from over-packaging.

Packaging Prevention Measures

Repak provides a packaging prevention service, to its member companies. This consists of packaging technology advice, site visits and packaging optimisation training courses. These facilities help members to optimise their packaging systems so that they have a minimal impact on the environment. Further information can be found at www.preventandsave.ie

Awareness Campaigns

Repak run advertising campaigns and local initiatives, aimed at increasing awareness among consumers about the part they play in contributing to the reduction of packaging waste. Successful campaigns include Repak Recycling Week, the Repak Recycling Awards and sponsorship of the An Taisce Green Schools Programme. This generates a sense of responsibility towards the environment amongst consumers, whose demands for more environmentally sound packaging play a large part in instigating changes and reductions within the production process.

By running awareness campaigns and providing prevention services, incentives and rewards for companies playing their part in adhering to the Essential Requirements, Repak's members are aided in their efforts to reduce packaging waste.

Unilever - Product & Packaging Concentration

Improvement

Persil and Surf Small & Mighty liquid detergents are now concentrated, resulting in half the amount of packaging used compared to standard liquids.

Description of Changes

Persil Small & Mighty has a concentrated formulation which means that just one small capful is enough for a whole wash load. Surf Small & Mighty has also been concentrated and is contained in a reduced bottle size, with a capful containing enough detergent for a wash load. Packed in smaller bottles, Persil and Surf Small & Mighty brings better shelf efficiencies and key environmental benefits to the market.

Environmental Benefits

- 60% less secondary & tertiary packaging.
- 50% less primary packaging
- 50% less raw materials.
- 50% less energy used during manufacturing
- 50% less waste for the consumer

Balance of Improvements

0.8 million litres of water saved
6 million plastic bags saved
17 Tonnes of CO₂
43.9 Tonnes less primary packaging



Unilever Persil





Same Price,
Same Number of Washes,
Half the Packaging

Jacob Fruitfield – Re-use of Outer Casing

Improvement

Reusing boxes which arrive as transport pack by refilling them with completed product for dispatch.

Description of changes

Previously, empty biscuit tins arrived in cardboard boxes which were flattened and recycled. The tins were then filled, placed into brand new boxes and transported to the point of sale. It was decided that the original box, containing the empty tins, could be reused if it was refilled with the completed product at the end of the production process. This necessitated a new type of box being created which would arrive with only branding for Jacob Fruitfield. Once filled, this could be labelled with a sticker which specifies the product contained within and also contains a barcode.

Environmental benefits

- Reduced packaging weight
- Reduction in transport emissions

Balance of Improvements

Packaging	Weight	Reduction
Removed Transport pack	0kg	100%





W&R Jacob opened their first biscuit factory in Waterford in 1881. Since then products such as Fig Rolls, Cream Crackers, along with Kimberley, Mikado and Coconut Creams have become firm favourites with Irish consumers.

Jacob Fruitfield – change from PVdC to PP Laminate Packaging

Improvement

A move away from difficult-to-recycle PVdC to a new PP laminate which is more easily recyclable.

Description of changes

Jacob Fruitfield historically wrapped some biscuit lines in PVdC film, as this was considered to have excellent barrier properties and was lightweight at 36micron. However, it is possible to laminate two sheets of PP together, printing the cover art inside the two layers, which provide a comparable barrier seal. The PP is eminently more recyclable than PVdC, but is heavier in weight at 40micron. This development creates a dichotomy between using plastics which may be more easily recycled and using plastics which are lighter in weight. There is an added cost benefit as PP film is cheaper than PVdC coated film

Environmental benefits

This new packaging technique reduces the quantities of difficult to recycle plastic entering waste stream, because PP is easier to recycle than PVdC and a move away from PVdC means that the harmful bleaches associated with this plastic are completely eliminated.

Problems Encountered

It was necessary to provide for the creation of a new printing technique to allow for continuity between previous printing process and the new PP Laminate packaging.





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Heinz Frozen Ready Meal – Packaging Minimisation

Improvement

Prevention and minimisation of packaging weight

Description of changes

HJ Heinz Frozen & Chilled Foods Limited is based in Co. Louth first opened in 1993 manufacturing crusts and chilled Pizzas. The frozen ready meal plant was subsequently opened in 1997. Our core business is now the production of frozen ready meals principally for export but also sold in Ireland. We produce the brand Weight Watchers from Heinz with meals such as Chicken Curry, Beef Lasagne, Chicken Hotpot and Ocean Pie. The company has a continuous programme to prevent and minimise packaging both on finished product and incoming raw materials. In 2006, the primary pack, a CPET tray was reduced in weight resulting in 59 tonnes less plastic being generated. Following a line upgrade an opportunity presented to remove the remaining outer cases from the manufacturing lines and replace with shrinkwrap; this resulted in the elimination of 250 tonnes of corrugated. After a series of trials with a wine supplier, bulk returnable containers replaced 20L containers and prevented 8 tonnes of plastic.



Environmental benefits

A combined 317 tonnes less plastic and cardboard entered the waste stream.

Balance of Improvements

Packaging	Weight	Reduction
CPET Tray	11%	59 tonnes
Corrugated Outer Case	100%	250 tonnes
Bulk Wine Container	47%	8 tonnes





Ready meals have become increasingly popular due to demographic and social trends and greater demand for convenience foods.

Now, with increased consumer awareness of health and dietary issues, manufacturers are producing more diverse ranges of healthy eating products. They are also more attuned to environmental issues in their products and packaging.



Inversoft Kitchen Rolls - Core Size Reduction

Improvement

Changing the manufacture of cardboard cores on the kitchen roll line from a two ply core to a single ply corerefilling them with completed product for dispatch.

Description of changes

The board stock to make the cores was reduced by 10mm from 97mm to 87mm, and the glue application system was also changed. The two ply system used 100% coverage of wet glue on one of the plys which is sandwiched to about two thirds of the second ply and wound until both plys butt against each other. The single ply system uses a glue block on 7mm of the edge of the cardboard and is then wound against itself until it seals. This vastly reduces the amount of glue required as there is a 'strip' of 7mm adhesive on the single ply system compared to several sandwiched layers of glue on the two ply system.

Environmental benefits

- Reduced cores from two to one ply
- Substantial reduction in core board
- Glue use reduced by 88%

Balance of Improvements

Packaging	Weight	Reduction
2ply Core board	300t	
1ply Reduced Core Board	240t	
1ply Reduced Core Board over two lines	60t	20%





Disposable paper kitchen towels are now an essential consumer product and a large and important grocery trade category. Paper kitchen rolls have virtually replaced textiles for everyday household use.