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- **Minister Gormley's Press Release for the Cré Conference**
- **EPA Press Release on the National Waste Report 2007**
- **Minister Gormley's Press Release on the National Waste Report 2007**
- **Irish Independent, Thursday 29th January 2009**
- **Irish Independent, Thursday 29th January 2009**

Gormley addresses Composting Industry

26/01/09

Speaking today (26th January) at a Cré (Composting Association of Ireland) meeting in the Croke Park Conference Centre Mr. John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government highlighted the challenges of implementing the National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste.

“There are challenges to face but along with challenge comes opportunity. This is a time of opportunity for the compost industry and I am confident that the industry will not be daunted by the task. We have achieved much in recycling in recent years and by continuing to work together I have no doubt that our success in recycling can be replicated across the composting sector,” said Minister Gormley.

“I realise the need to drive material away from landfill and so I will be introducing new legislation to make changes to the landfill levy. Diversion of material from landfill will provide the composting industry with opportunities for expansion,”

Background

The National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste was published in April 2006 and sets out measures to progressively divert biodegradable municipal waste from landfill in accordance with the agreed targets in EU Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste. These targets are in relation to the progressive diversion of biodegradable municipal waste from landfill to 75% by 2006, 50% by 2009 and to 35% by 2016 of the amount of biodegradable municipal waste generated in the baseline year of 1995 (estimated for Ireland at 1,289,911 tonnes). In the case of Ireland, we availed of a derogation and so interim diversion targets to 75% by 2010 and 50% by 2013 have been established.

The future

The Minister stressed the need for all stakeholders to work together to achieve the challenging targets. He indicated that new regulation was planned which would help divert waste from landfill and facilitate the development of a vibrant composting industry, providing opportunities for employment and growth. The Minister announced that a stakeholder consultation on the proposed regulation will take place on 11 February. He also said that he was “determined to work with industry to promote the use of quality recycling and to change mindsets to see the various waste streams as a valuable resource.”

EPA Press Release: National Waste Report 2007

Diverting food waste from landfill is the main waste management priority for the coming year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency's National Waste Report (2007), published today.

Biodegradable municipal waste in 2007: The recycling of biodegradable municipal waste decreased by 2.7% in 2007, and its disposal at landfill increased by 5.2%. The disposal of this waste at landfill is subject to strict targets, the first of which is due in 2010.

The report states that:

- The overall generation of municipal waste did not increase appreciably in 2007, in contrast to 2006;
- Recycling rates generally remained steady with good progress reported in relation to packaging;
- The diversion of very large quantities of food waste from landfill is a priority that must be addressed; and
- The level of waste reported in 2007, allied with the need for businesses to reduce costs in 2009, reflects the need for continued support for resource conservation initiatives in relation to waste, water and energy, such as the National Waste Prevention Programme.

Launching the report, Ms Laura Burke, Director, Environmental Protection Agency, said; "Although significant progress has been made in managing waste in Ireland the report clearly shows that Ireland, is in danger of missing a key EU target for diverting biodegradable municipal waste from landfill. Urgent and short-term actions are required in 2009 to tackle the generation and recycling of food waste from households and businesses if we are to meet the 2010 target for diverting an additional half a million tonnes of this waste from landfill."

Priority Actions

The report identified the following priority actions:

- Putting in place the services for the separate collection of organic (particularly food) waste at households and commercial premises;
- Ensuring there is adequate infrastructure to treat the very large amounts of organic (particularly food) waste that must be collected separately and diverted from landfill;
- Developing outlets for the products of such treatment;
- Making regulations/bye-laws that can be used to enforce the segregation and separate collection of food waste at household and commercial premises;
- Delivering the new waste policy on foot of the international review of waste management as quickly as possible to provide certainty and to allow for accelerated investment programmes that are necessary if organic waste is to be treated and landfill avoided.

Minister Gormley's Press Release on National Waste Report 2007

Continuing Progress made in Recycling

Need to increase progress towards landfill diversion

“Ireland continues to make significant progress in terms of recycling, but we need to move our focus towards prevention and reduction”, said Mr. John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government reacting to the publication of the National Waste Report 2007 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today (28 January).

Biodegradable Waste

The National Waste Report 2007 states that the quantity of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled continued to increase to 1,485,968 tonnes in 2007. “I am concerned at our progress towards meeting targets for the diversion of this material. Last year, I issued a circular to all local authorities to drive forward the roll out of brown bins and promote the use of home composting and I note progress in relation home composting contained in the report.

However, in order to drive further progress on this issue, I am bringing forward draft regulations to help divert commercially-generated biodegradable waste from landfill.” In addition, the Minister said that primary legislation would be brought forward to allow for significant increases to the landfill levy, which will make sustainable alternatives such as composting more economically attractive.

Recycling Performance

“The report illustrates the continued commitment of the public to recycling and despite recent difficult market conditions, this continues to be a way in which we can all make a real difference”, said Minister Gormley. “The challenge is to ensure that we continue to produce marketable material from our segregated collection systems and I have put in place the Market Development Programme to address issues such as quality and the development of indigenous markets for what is coming to be seen as a resource and not a waste product. The creation of such markets will reduce our reliance on volatile world markets.” 36% of municipal waste was recycled, exceeding the 2013 recycling target of 35%.

A challenging year ahead

The Minister congratulated the EPA on the publication of the report which helped to quantify the scale of the challenge faced in relation to waste. “The coming year will see a number of developments in relation to waste. A range of legislative measures will be brought forward to drive waste away from landfill to help meet our diversion targets. The Action Group on Recyclate Markets and the Market Development Programme will work to ensure the continuation of our high recycling rates, and the conclusion of the international review of waste policy will help point the way forward in the challenging years ahead”, concluded Minister Gormley.

Urgent action needed as our waste now at unsustainable levels

Report warns of fines if EU targets are missed

Paul Melia

IF every citizen on the planet produced as much waste as the Irish, mankind would need three planet Earths to survive, the Environmental Protection Agency warned yesterday.

And urgent action is needed if Ireland is to meet an EU target for diverting household waste from landfill and avoid paying millions of euro in fines.

The EPA's National Waste Report 2007 published yesterday said that diverting food waste from landfill must be the main priority for 2009, noting that household waste generated has not risen "appreciably", with recycling rates remaining "steady".

However, it warned that levels of consumption must be addressed.

"It is worth noting that the collection of increasing quantities of waste for disposal or recycling reflects a level of production and consumption that

is unsustainable," the report said.

"Recent ecological footprint analysis for Ireland established that if everyone on the planet consumed as much as an Irish resident, then we would need three Earths to support current global resource consumption," it added.

"While it is apparent that consumers need to keep consuming to maintain prosperity, the business model must change to provide goods and services using less resources."

The report also found:

- The quantity of municipal (non-commercial) waste recycled increased by 3.6pc. Household rates were up 8pc, and packaging waste increased by 14pc.

- 36pc of municipal waste was recycled, exceeding the 2013 recycling target of 35pc.

- More than a quarter of household waste was recycled. While satisfactory, there remains considerable distance to reduce the landfilling of household waste to 50pc by 2013.

- 64pc of packaging waste was

recycled, above EU targets.

- The average person recycled 8.7kg of electrical and electronic equipment, more than double the EU target of 4kg per head.

- Recycling of biodegradable municipal waste, such as food waste and garden clippings, fell by 2.7pc, with the amount sent to landfill increasing.

Landfill

"Although significant progress has been made in managing waste in Ireland, the report clearly shows that Ireland is in danger of missing a key EU target for diverting biodegradable municipal waste from landfill," EPA director Laura Burke said.

"Urgent and short-term actions are required in 2009 to tackle the generation and recycling of food waste from households and businesses if we are to meet the 2010 target for diverting an additional half a million tonnes of this waste from landfill."

Labour's Environment spokeswoman Joanna Tuffy said that under a Green minister, Ireland was moving away from

EU targets on reducing waste being sent to landfill.

"The report shows that we are sending more food and garden waste to landfill, not less, and that only eight out of 34 local authorities provide a service collecting organic waste from households," she said.

"I welcome the fact that the minister has targeted this area for improvement in 2009, because there is no doubt that improvement is badly needed," she added.

Environment Minister John Gormley said the focus needed to move towards waste prevention, and that new regulations would require commercial premises to recycle food waste.

Levies would be increased for sending waste to landfill, and composting would become "more economically attractive".

He added that agreement would be reached with producers to reduce the amount of packaging used in food.

The EPA says that services must be put in place to separate organic waste, such as food, from other waste streams.

Amount of food waste going to landfill is rising says EPA report

OLIVIA KELLY

NEW BYLAWS must be introduced to stop increasing volumes of household and commercial food waste from being dumped in landfill, the Environmental Protection Agency has said.

Ireland is facing millions of euro in fines from the EU if it fails to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste going to landfill by 35 per cent next year.

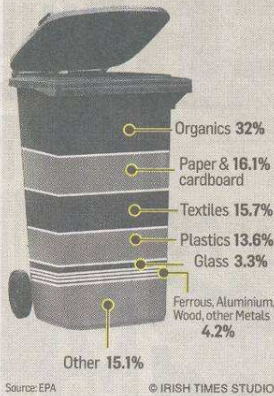
According to the latest figures from the EPA 1,485,968 tonnes of biodegradable waste were dumped in landfill in 2007. The maximum quantity allowed by the EU landfill directive in 2010 will be 967,433 tonnes.

Despite the looming directive, and the call on local authorities by Minister for the Environment John Gormley to introduce brown organic waste bins, the amount of food waste going to landfill is rising according to EPA figures.

Less than 9 per cent of organic waste, largely food and some garden waste, was saved from landfill in 2007 and the quantity of biodegradable waste dumped in landfill increased by more than 5 per cent on 2006 figures, moving Ireland further away from the EU

Black bin household waste

Composition of mixed residual household waste in 2008



Source: EPA

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target, the EPA said.

Organic waste was the largest component material in black bins collected from households in 2008, accounting for one third of general waste collected from households and sent straight to landfill without segregation.

This level of food and garden

waste going to landfill was "very disappointing" the report said.

The report did note however, that Mr Gormley last year asked local authorities to intensify the roll out of brown bins, and that this, along with legislation requiring the separate collection of commercial biodegradable waste, may show an improvement in the recovery figures.

However, the report said all necessary infrastructure for the separate collection and treatment of organic and other biodegradable waste must be in place early in 2010 if the EU targets are to be met. Bylaws should also be introduced to enforce the segregation of food waste from households and commercial premises.

"The report clearly shows that Ireland is in danger of missing a key EU target for diverting biodegradable municipal waste from landfill," EPA director Laura Burke said.

"Urgent and short-term actions are required in 2009 to tackle the generation and recycling of food waste from households and businesses if we are to meet the 2010 target for diverting an additional half a million tonnes of this waste from landfill," she said.

The report found that Ireland has made significant progress in other areas of recycling in 2007. The recycling of municipal waste (which includes household waste and commercial, industrial and street cleaning waste with a similar composition to household waste) increased by 3.6 per cent to 36 per cent, exceeding the 2013 target of 35 per cent municipal waste recycling.

The quantity of household waste recycled increased by 8 per cent to 26 per cent, however this still fell far short of the 50 per cent recycling target by 2013. Some 64 per cent of packaging waste was recycled, exceeding the EU target of 60 per cent recycling by 2011.

Ireland was also making progress in relation to implementing the Weee (waste electrical and electronic equipment) directive. In 2007 8.7kgs of Weee was collected per capita, more than double the EU target of 4kg per capita.

Responding to the report Mr Gormley said he intended to bring forward draft regulations to help divert commercially-generated biodegradable waste from landfill and would introduce legislation to increase landfill levies.