

PREVENT & SAVE

**Best Practice Guidelines
in Waste Management -
Pharmacy Sector**

REPAK 

Business *funding* recycling

Created in partnership with industry.

CASE STUDY

SAM MCCAULEY CHEMISTS - COMMITTED TO PREVENTING PACKAGING WASTE

Repak member Sam McCauley Chemists were founded in 1953. Today Sam McCauley Chemists operate 30 stores nationally, employ over 500 staff and are ranked amongst the top 500 companies in Ireland. They are one of a small group of pharmacies which holds the title of 'Deloitte Best Managed Companies'.

Sam McCauley Chemists take their commitments to the environment seriously and have made excellent progress in terms of preventing packaging waste and ensuring that where packaging waste is generated it is effectively managed to maximise recycling.

KEY INITIATIVES

- To avoid wood waste, pallets are not accepted by Sam McCauley stores and are taken away by their suppliers after delivery.
- Outer packaging from deliveries to Sam McCauley's central warehouse is removed and recycled at that point. These products therefore arrive to Sam McCauley stores without their outer packaging which minimises waste at the stores.
- Both cardboard and plastic waste are baled on site in order to maximise recycling and reduce the amount of general waste generated.
- Staff members are dedicated to the effective management of waste and cages are used to hold materials in preparation for baling on shared sites.
- Reusable plastic crates are used as the primary method for the delivery of products to the store network.
- These crates eliminate secondary packaging use and reduce waste on up to 45% of all incoming product deliveries.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on Sam McCauley Chemists environmental initiatives please contact John Eggleston at Sam McCauley Chemists at john.eggleston@smcc.ie.



PREVENTION & MINIMISATION

For small / medium size businesses, it can be quite difficult to reduce packaging from suppliers however there are initiatives you can take to provide incremental savings.

Why not write to suppliers informing them of your initiatives to reduce packaging and ask them if there are further opportunities to do so on the products they supply.

Ask suppliers to take pallets back with them or to reuse cardboard boxes. Packaging re-use systems such as returnable plastic crates are commonly used amongst pharmacies. The primary aim is to reduce the amount of packaging that a pharmacy has to manage once the product is delivered.

Communicate your packaging policy to staff and customers to let them know that you strive to use the least amount of packaging on your products and seek opportunities to reduce the level of packaging used wherever possible.

FINALLY...

If you would like to discuss opportunities to prevent packaging waste or reduce your waste bills please contact Brian or Colm by email at prevention@repak.ie or alternatively by phone at 01 467 0190.

MAXIMISING RECYCLING, MINIMISING COST

The most important aspect of waste management is having access to comprehensive data on the processing and collection of your waste. Your waste contractor should be supplying you with a breakdown (by weight) of all the waste which is being collected from your business. This means that you are aware of:

1. What your waste collection is costing,
2. Areas where waste or overuse may be occurring and
3. Areas where you can make savings.

STAFF INVOLVEMENT – A VITAL INGREDIENT

Pharmacies with the most successful track records with regard to waste management have a 'project champion' in place. This person has responsibility for staff training on waste management, monitoring collections by the waste contractor, and putting initiatives in place to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. This waste type is the most expensive to have collected, so it makes good business sense to have somebody responsible for minimising general waste as much as possible.

Typical initiatives where project champions have been successful are:

- Monitoring the waste types, weights and costs of waste management.
- Training of staff (new and existing) on best practice in waste management.
- Signage of collection points and storage points for waste.
- Cleanliness of waste management areas.
- Initiation of projects to reduce weights and increase recycling.
- Liaison with suppliers with regard to waste minimisation.
- Introduction and monitoring of returnable crates and pallets.
- Tapping into benchmarking and experience from other stores.
- Periodic reviews on cost and effectiveness with main waste contractor.
- Source segregation of waste materials.

Some businesses have found it beneficial to implement a 'Green Team' where a number of staff from the business monitor the success of initiatives implemented and liaise with others to find new ideas on waste reduction or minimisation, through regular meetings. The outcomes of these initiatives and approved ideas are communicated to management for appropriate attention.

WASTE CONTRACTOR INVOLVEMENT

Your local waste contractor has the most knowledge and experience of what materials can be recycled in your business. If you have any queries about what can be recycled, or what condition the material needs to be in before it can be recycled, your local waste contractor will know. If you need more than one opinion, you will find local waste contractors (recovery operators) in your area on the Repak website at www.repak.ie/for-business/recovery-operators/.

SEGREGATION IS KEY

Waste segregation is a highly effective way of maximising recycling and minimising your waste costs. All clean paper/ cardboard and plastic types should be separated from other types of waste so that they can be recycled rather than incinerated or landfilled. There must be clearly marked and weatherproofed areas or bins to place paper/ cardboard, plastics and general waste. Place these near where waste is produced and where people are working.

To assist with segregation of waste, the following guidelines may be useful:

- Colour code different types of waste e.g.
 - GREEN = Paper / Cardboard
 - BLUE = Plastics
 - BROWN = Food waste for composting
 - BLACK = General mixed waste
- Collect in clear plastic bags to ensure that the waste is segregated correctly
- Use photographs as well as text to help employees who may have difficulty reading or whose first language is not English.

All new staff should be fully briefed on the benefits of segregation, the use of these areas or bins and also be aware of the business's environmental policies.

PREPARATION OF WASTE FOR COLLECTION AND RECYCLING

Always ensure that areas of the business that are used for collection of waste are kept tidy and that each area or bin is clearly marked.

If applicable, investigate the use of balers and compactors to compress your waste. Paper/cardboard bales and plastic bales are a very effective way of reducing storage space and transport costs for waste.

Compactors reduce the space required to store food waste or mixed waste, but are normally used only where there are high volumes of this waste.

A wide range of balers and compactors are available and can be leased, rented or purchased.

Clean, segregated, baled (or compacted) waste material will attract a higher value, as opposed to low value unprocessed waste. The higher the value you can attract on your waste material, the quicker the payback period on any equipment you have acquired.

Avoid the use of open skips on your site. Open skips quickly become filled with recyclable material, compostable material and general waste in an uncontrolled manner. They are also the most expensive of all waste collection methods.

OTHER REUSE, RECYCLING

There may be opportunities to reuse or recycle material in your business that is not collected by a waste contractor.

For example:

- Print internal documents on both sides of a page.
- Reuse envelopes for internal staff documents.
- Ensure that the internal internet is used, when practical, for staff announcements and campaigns.
- If you have a staff magazine, rather than printing, save it as a PDF and post on your website or email it, as an attachment, to staff.

These types of opportunities come from working with staff, customers and other businesses in your area to see what can be re-used or recycled. Anything you can recycle in this way can save you money on waste charges.