
From: sarah@wastematters.ie
Sent: Friday 11 June 2021 15:54
To: circulareconomy
Subject: Consultation - Circular Economy Strategy - Polystyrene Recycling
Attachments: Waste Matters.submission1.docx

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Hello

Please accept my submission. Copy attached.

Waste Matters (Ireland) Ltd, Clara, Co. Offaly

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Waste Matters, established in 2010, provides polystyrene recycling services to business and Civic Amenities throughout Ireland. We have developed a solution to recycle Expanded Polystyrene (EPS), transforming it from a problematic material to a valuable resource.

In recognition of our achievement's, we were Finalist in 'Excellence in Waste Management & Recycling' at the PakMan Awards in 2015 and Winner in 2017.

Our aim is to recycle 100% of polystyrene generated in Ireland and end the practice of putting it into landfill and/or incineration.

Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) is a commonly used polymer in the packaging, fishing, and building industries. The importance of EPS recovery is related to the materials' short service life and the high volume of EPS waste. EPS has a high volume /weight ratio, 4,836,000 cubic litres is equal to 10 tonnes of material (Tesco Ireland Polystyrene Case Study 2018). If not recycled EPS ends up in Landfill, taking up valuable space, or is incinerated.

Of the EPS collected and compacted by Waste Matters, 100% is recycled. The recycled EPS is exported into Europe, mainly to Spain and

Portugal, where it is re-used in manufacturing e.g., in the production of fish boxes (1) and in **thermal insulation** (2). **Thus, transforming it from a hazardous waste to the perfect circular economy material.** Also, this displaces some of the requirement for virgin material and is directly connected to the retro-fitting of buildings that is envisaged will take place under the EU's Green Deal.

Currently we are unable to meet the increasing demand for recycled EPS. Of the 96 Local Authority Civic Amenity Sites in the country, Waste Matters services 18. We can provide an EPS recycling service to any Civic Amenity site in the country. I have exhausted efforts in trying to encourage EPS recycling and consider it necessary for Government to add weight to the guidelines of 'recycle where practicable' in line with their resource efficiency action plans (REAPs).

Local Authorities could include EPS recycling as a requirement when they tender for the management of civic amenity sites.

The income from exporting recycled EPS allows us to operate on a break-even basis on service provision and offer very reasonable rates for the service provided.

One of our customers is the Marine Institute (Oranmore, Galway). A paper has recently been submitted to the journal @Toxins@, detailing efforts made in the Shellfish Safety Section (Biotxin chemistry) to reduce the environmental impact of their monitoring program. In this paper they report on reduction of waste to incineration/landfill by >95% (3), which was partly achieved through the services Waste matters provide.

Testimony from Christine Reynolds:

I am the Meath facility manager for Navan ,Trim and Kell's recycling sites for Oxigen environmental.

We were introduced to polystyrene processing in December 1919..by Waste Watters, what a huge success it has been. I was not even aware polystyrene could be recycled until I was contacted by Sarah Bennett in Waste Matters.

Before processing we had to send to landfill a minimum of 30 ton bags of polystyrene from each site weekly. This amount would fill a 40 foot container weekly ..

Now, this is processed down to approximately one pallet of poly logs.

So this gives you an idea of the saving on both transportation and cost of disposal apart from the Environmental benefit of this not being landfilled.

Waste matters have been amazing and a great company to work with. I would encourage any SME to process their own polystyrene as the benefits are definitely worth it.

regards

Christine Reynolds
Oxigen Environmental
OHS Consult,
Civic Amenity

Meath Facility Manager 0860200826 creynolds@oxigen.ie.

I hope you will give this submission consideration. Waste Matters is a small enterprise, employing 9 people. We need the assistance of Government Bodies to enable us to achieve our aim of recycling 100% of EPS used in Ireland. If the majority of civic amenities accepted and recycled polystyrene, this can be achieved. It is in all of our interest.

1. <https://bewi.com/products/fish-box-other/>. Accessed 8 June, 2021
2. <https://thermogreen.com/>. Accessed 8 June, 2021
3. Kilcoyne, J.; Bogan, Y.; Duffy, C.; Hollowell, T. *Reducing the environmental impacts of marine biotoxin monitoring. Toxins, 2021, submitted.*

Please review the following reports

[https://repak.ie/images/uploads/reports/Expanding the Knowledge Base of Expanded and Extruded Polystyrene.pdf](https://repak.ie/images/uploads/reports/Expanding_the_Knowledge_Base_of_Expanded_and_Extruded_Polystyrene.pdf)

<https://www.>

Sarah Bennett

