**PRESS RELEASE**

**Householders in Westmeath urged to tackle hoarding of electrical waste by making 2024 a year for recycling**

* 84% of Irish householders are hoarding broken or unused electrical items at home
* Irish homes contain an average of 15 to 20 broken or unused electrical items
* Typical hoarded electrical items include kettles, plugs and cables, mobile phones, TVs, microwaves, laptops, power tools and vacuum cleaners
* Recycling electrical waste is free, and MyWaste.ie has a convenient interactive map with hundreds of electrical waste drop off points located across the country
* First-of-its-kind national waste electrical recycling campaign launches today

**22 January 2024:** Householders in Westmeath are being urged to make ‘recycling of household electrical waste’ a new year resolution for 2024. With 84% of Irish households containing an average of 15 to 20 broken or unused electrical items in their home, there has never been a better time to declutter while positively impacting on the environment and supporting a more circular economy.

To encourage people to recycle their electrical waste, a national awareness campaign is today being launched by Minister of State, Ossian Smyth. The “Recycle your Electrical Waste for Free!” awareness campaign will inform and educate people on what items can be recycled and advise them of the multiple civic amenity sites and participating electrical retailers across Ireland.

Ossian Smyth, Minister of State with responsibility for Public Procurement, eGovernment and Circular Economy, said *“I am delighted to launch this national awareness campaign today, to remind everyone that they can return their electrical waste for free recycling at hundreds of drop off points across the country.*

*“This campaign is a collaboration between the Government of Ireland, MyWaste.ie and the two national compliance schemes ERP Ireland and WEEE Ireland. It demonstrates our commitment to work together to raise public awareness of the importance of responsible recycling of electrical waste.”*

He added *“Electrical products contain valuable raw materials, and recycling these materials will help Ireland to transition to a circular economy, where waste is minimised.”*

Consumer research comprising 1,000 respondents was undertaken by iReach on electrical waste within homes in Ireland. It demonstrated that 30% of Irish households are storing old, broken or unused electrical items in garden sheds, 25% hoard them in drawers and 16% keep them in the attic, rather than recycling correctly.

E-waste is the fastest growing waste stream globally. Recycling is crucial to produce enough secondary raw materials and by recycling electrical waste we ensure these items can be used again in the manufacturing process, saving on the environmental impacts and creating a more circular economy.

WEEE Ireland, Westmeath’s designated Compliance Scheme Operator for electrical waste, reports that people in Westmeath have contributed greatly to the nation’s electrical waste recycling every year, with 908 tonnes of e-waste collected in the county during 2022. 9.47kg of waste was recycled per person in Westmeath in 2022, falling short of the national average of 10.33kg per person.

Leo Donovan, CEO of WEEE Ireland, said, *“For every 10 new small electrical products sold in Ireland last year, only 4 are eventually coming back through the Irish approved e-waste recycling system when they reach end-of-life. Ireland has performed exceptionally well in recycling our larger household items such as fridges and washing machines. We now need to extend that great effort to the smaller electronic items that end up languishing in our homes forgotten about or worse still, binned.*

*It is vital to remind everyone that old and broken electrical items with a plug, battery, or cable contain valuable components that can be given a second life through recycling. You can easily return these items for free recycling at your nearest civic amenity site or participating electrical retailer.”*

Check out the [MyWaste.ie](https://www.mywaste.ie/) website to learn more about electrical recycling and to locate your nearest free recycling drop-off point on their interactive map at [www.mywaste.ie/waste-service-locator/](http://www.mywaste.ie/waste-service-locator/).

**ENDS**

**About MyWaste.ie**

My Waste, Ireland’s official guide to managing your waste. Here you will find everything you need and want to know about managing your waste responsibly, efficiently and in the way that suits you. Browse this site for your local waste services; bring banks, recycling facilities along with ways to help you prevent waste, reuse and upcycle. You can find an a to z guide here but if you can't find the item you are looking for please get in contact with us through social media and we will gladly help where we can.

MyWaste is an information portal only, our role is to guide and advise you on where and how you can report activities such as illegal dumping or possible problems with your waste collection service. This is an initiative brought to you by the Regional Waste Management Offices on behalf of the Department of Climate Action, Communications and the Environment.

Web: <https://www.mywaste.ie/>

**About WEEE Ireland**

WEEE Ireland (Waste, Electrical and Electronic Equipment) is a not-for-profit organisation, founded by Producers of electrical and electronic appliances to help them comply with the legal obligations imposed by the EU Battery Directive 2006/66/EC and WEEE Directive 2012/19/EU.

WEEE Ireland manages the collection of household e-waste, lighting, solar PV equipment and batteries from authorised collection points for recycling, on behalf of its 1,300 producer members.

WEEE Ireland’s objective is to provide cost effective quality compliance for producers to meet the requirements of the regulations whilst minimising the cost to the consumer.

WEEE Ireland supports indigenous recycling facilities with WEEELABEX (European quality recycling standards) certified recycling partnerships.

There are a number of recycling operators certified to the WEEELABEX standard in Ireland: KMK Metals Recycling Tullamore, Irish Lamp Recycling Athy, and Wisetek, Cork. Additionally, ENVA Toomebridge fridge recycling in Northern Ireland is also certified to WEELABEX standard.

[**Web: weeeireland.ie**](http://www.weeeireland.ie)

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