

## **Supermarkets a 'blot on landscape' in many towns, reveals litter survey**

IBAL calls on councils to 'get tough' with business offenders

Supermarkets are "a blot on the landscape" according to the results of a litter survey by business group Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL). The survey, conducted across Ireland, showed over one quarter of supermarkets to be 'seriously littered', with supermarket entrances, car parks and surrounding pavements the most littered areas in many towns. Overall, supermarket sites were twice as likely to be seriously littered as sites generally.

Among the offending supermarkets, the An Taisce inspectors singled out Tesco Waterford for its "persistent litter presence, with no litter bins in the area surveyed." Dunnes Stores Ballina was criticised as "by far the most heavily littered of all the sites surveyed in Ballina. There was a wide variety of litter present and the recycle facility was particularly poor." In Tesco Mallow, "much of the litter was 'old', indicating a lack of thorough cleaning for quite some time. The overall appearance was shabby and uncared for." At Lid/Argos Galway "the planted areas and location at roadside edge of car park were very dirty – filled with a wide variety of all manner of litter". On the other hand, Superquinn Blanchardstown was praised for being "in very good condition – the overall impression is of a very well maintained environment. There was a complete absence of litter."

Under the Litter Act, it is the responsibility of the occupier of a property to keep the visible areas surrounding the property, including footpaths and car parks, free of litter, irrespective of the source of that litter.

"The Local Authority's job is not to clean these areas, but to ensure the job is done, by enforcing the law where necessary," comments Dr Tom Cavanagh, Chairman of IBAL. "Authorities plead that resources are scarce, but it costs little to send a fine in the post, and the monies collected are retained by those authorities. The benefit in improved cleanliness is immediate."

"The survey exposes a crucial shortcoming in how we tackle the litter problem," says Dr Cavanagh. "Local authorities are simply turning a blind eye to commercial litter offenders. They happily on occasion fine an individual for dropping a sweet wrapper. However, getting tough with an employer in a town, who ignores the litter laws, is quite another matter. Supermarkets, pubs and fast-food outlets will continue to blot our landscape until councillors and council staff choose to issue fines instead of mere warnings. All litter offenders need to be pursued, not just those who illegally dump their waste. "

Schools and train stations around the country have shown significant improvement since IBAL began its litter surveys in 2002. Over 90% of schools, and 65% of train stations, were found to be free of litter this year, with not a single school, and just one train station, graded as 'seriously littered'.

**-ENDS-**

**For further information contact Cullen Communications.**

**Dawn Burke Tel: 01 6689099/ 087 215 6942, [dburke@cullencommunications.ie](mailto:dburke@cullencommunications.ie)**

**Conor Horgan Tel: 01 6689099/ 086 8217211 [chorgan@cullencommunications.ie](mailto:chorgan@cullencommunications.ie)**

### **Editors note:**

Set up in 1996, Irish Business Against Litter is an alliance of companies sharing a belief that continued economic prosperity - notably in the areas of tourism, food and direct foreign investment - is contingent on a clean, litter-free environment.

As part of the IBAL Anti-Litter League, An Taisce independently monitors all towns of population 6,000 and over, in accordance with international grading standards.

## The survey results were as follows:

Status	Town/City	
Clean to European Norms	Ashbourne (Aldi)	
	Ballinasloe (Lidl)	
	Blanchardstown (Superquinn)	
	Bray (Superquinn)	
	Gorey (Lidl)	
	Killarney (Supervalu)	
	Letterkenny (Aldi)	
	Midleton (Supervalu)	
	Monaghan (Tesco)	
	Newcastlewest (Lidl)	
	Roscommon (Dunnes Stores)	
	Rosslare (Aldi)	
	Shannon (Lidl)	
	Tralee (Lidl)	
	Tullamore (Dunnes Stores)	
	Moderately littered	Ashbourne (Tesco)
		Athlone (Lidl)
		Balbriggan (Lidl)
Ballina (Tesco)		
Buncrana (Lidl)		
Carlow (Tesco)		
Castlebar (Dunnes Stores)		
Celbridge (Tesco)		
Drogheda (Lidl)		
Enniscorthy (Aldi)		
Fermoy (Lidl)		
Limerick (Lidl)		
Lucan (Tesco)		
Nenagh (Lidl)		
New Ross (Tesco)		
Trim (Lidl)		
Seriously littered		Ballina (Dunnes Stores)
		Ballinasloe (Costcutters)
	Castlebar (Supervalu)	
	Enniscorthy (Dunnes Stores)	
	Galway (Lidl/Argos)	
	Mallow (Tesco)	
	Nenagh (Costcutters/O'Connors)	
	Portlaoise (Dunnes Stores)	
	Thurles (Tesco)	
	Waterford (Tesco)	
Wicklow (Tesco)		