

Shoprite Group recycles sanitising wipes

The Shoprite Group is the first retailer to recycle wipes from its 1 328 supermarkets nationwide.

The wipes, which are green to identify them as 100% recyclable polypropylene, are used to sanitise baskets and trolleys and are sent for recycling after use. The bucket container and all stickers on the bucket are also 100% polypropylene and recyclable.

It is estimated that [129 billion face masks and 65 billion plastic gloves](#) are discarded every month, globally.

Since the onset of the pandemic, retailers have been faced with a number of environmental challenges including a massive increase in the quantity of wipes. For the Shoprite Group, this has amounted to tens of thousands of kilograms a month.

The Group partnered with Sani-Touch to provide it with 100% recyclable wipes and has embarked on a programme to isolate used wipes and make sure it is sent for recycling rather than being thrown away with general waste and ending up in landfill.

The increased quantity of wipes, and the opportunity to source locally resulted in the Group moving more wipe products across to the locally-sourced polypropylene.

“With small changes to the way we do things we can ensure that single-use products such as wipes don’t only offer excellent infection protection but can also be environmentally neutral,” said Group Sustainability Manager, Sanjeev Raghubir.

The wet wipes supplier, Sani-Touch said that volumes in the past have not been big enough for many companies to recycle, but by including the buckets, and with the volumes of wipes that the Shoprite Group uses, this has become viable.

“Wet wipes have proven to be invaluable in the fight against the coronavirus, as well as in general infection control in public places and in medical facilities, eliminating the chance of cross infection. As a manufacturer our responsibility is to ensure that these products do not pose a risk to the environment.”

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