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Sustainability journal 2026



SUSTAINABILITY AS A DRIVER OF INNOVATION

One of the greatest challenges we face at this time is that of preserving our environment and therefore the fundamentals of life for humanity. Sustainable action is one way of achieving this goal. The principle comes from forestry: we should only cut as much timber as can be renewed to maintain levels. Applied to all of our basic needs, we understand sustainability today in line with the sustainability definition of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), which already defined sustainable development in 1987 as: "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The wide-ranging challenges associated with the topic of 'sustainability' are being addressed by a team we have put together specifically for this purpose.
As part of this, we focus on eight core areas: raw materials, supply chains, production, transport, trade, product use, durability and social responsibility. We are constantly working on improvements in these eight areas – and also making sure that our progress can be measured.

In this brochure, we want to provide you with an insight into the manifold ways in which we practice sustainability at Manufacturer – and illustrate how our activities in this regard drive innovation, time and again. Because that, too, is part of our DNA at Manufacturer: we're always striving to improve even further!

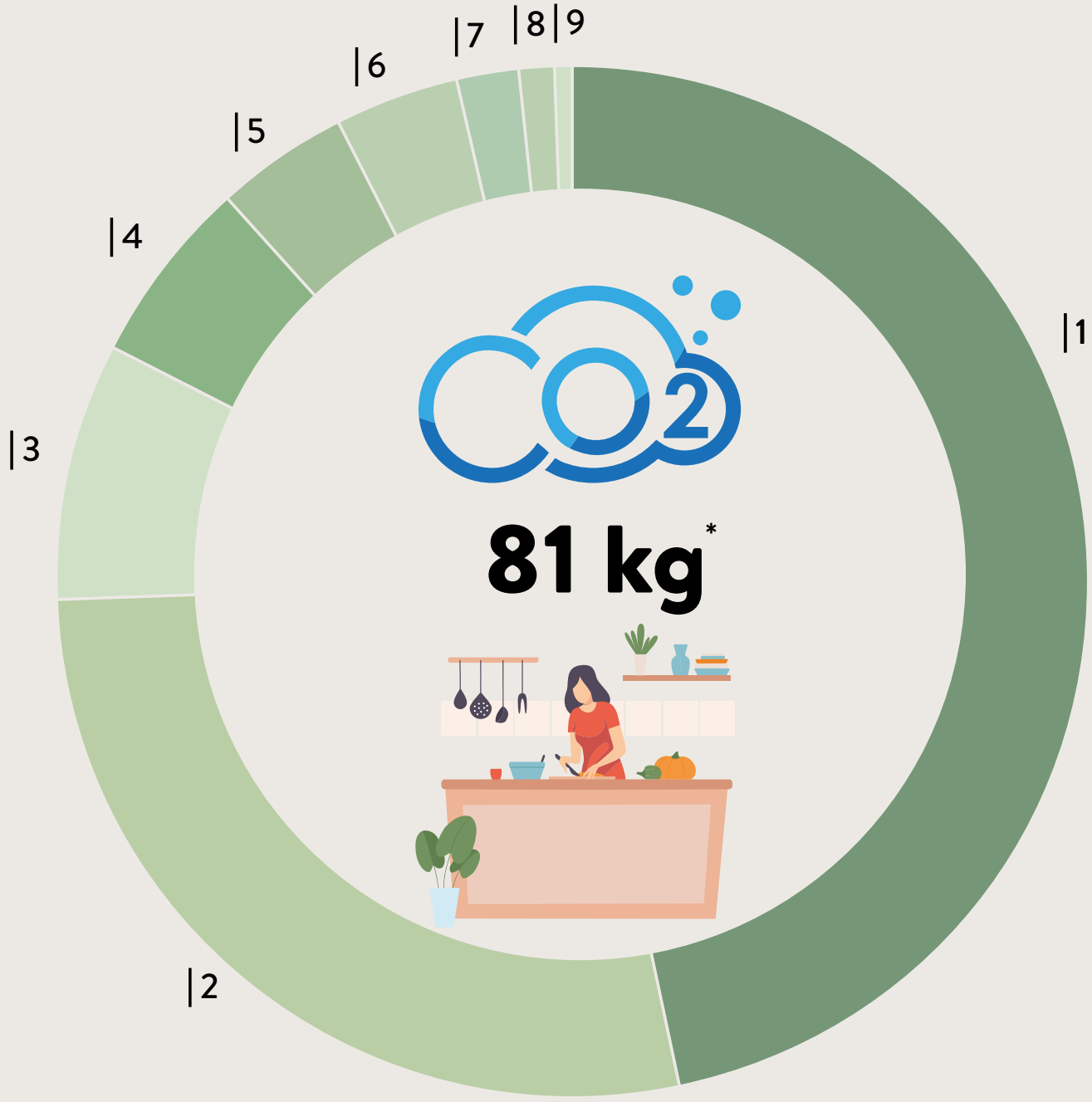


THE LIFE CYCLE OF Manufacturer FURNITURE

Acting in ways that enable a life worth living here on this planet, now and henceforward – that's how we understand sustainability at Manufacturer. And we're doing everything possible as a company to meet our responsibility for the future. In order to achieve this aim, we consider every phase in the life cycle of a kitchen: from the forest where the wood is sourced and the machines used to produce the kitchen through to the point in time when the end customer decides that a new kitchen is needed. Every single aspect along the way – the raw materials, supply chain, production, transport, retail and durability – offers potential for maintaining a life worth living on our planet in the future. And we're exploiting this potential – through innovative ideas with a verifiable impact. In this cycle, we explain the sustainability measures we're taking. Of course, the social aspect also plays a major role – which is why we put people, and therefore society, at the centre of our product cycle.

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46 | SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

AVERAGE EMISSIONS PER KITCHEN



* The present greenhouse gas balance shows those emissions that arise in direct connection with the company's own value creation.

| 1 Power consumption
| 2 Fuel consumption
| 3 Reverse logistics through third-party providers
| 4 Employee commutes
| 5 Volume of waste/water
| 6 Paper consumption
| 7 Business travel and hotel stays
| 8 Heat consumption
| 9 IT/hardware, gas leaks (refrigerant), consumables in production

THE TRACES LEFT BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY: THE CO_2 FOOTPRINT

In order to improve, we need to know where we're starting from. That is why, back in 2021, Manufacturer began to calculate its CO_2 footprint, the Corporate Carbon Footprint (CCF). We do so in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, which defines the greenhouse gas emissions that have to be taken into account.

In 2022, we generated approximately 64,993 t of CO_2 emissions through the manufacture and delivery of our kitchens. With 803,524 kitchens sold, this means: some 81 kg of CO_2 for each Manufacturer kitchen. This figure covers those emissions that can be traced directly to our business processes.

While our CO_2 footprint in 2021 was only 53,085 t, it rose by 22 percent the year after. What was the cause? The main driving factor was an increase in CO_2 emissions from electricity generation, which was largely a result of the energy crisis. To maintain cost-effectiveness, more coal had to be used for energy production. Fortunately this effect is temporary, affects the entire manufacturing industry, and will not weigh as heavily on the next energy balance – in particular, as our power consumption itself only increased to an extent fully explained by our increased output.

At the same time, we were able to lower CO2 emissions elsewhere in a targeted way. Significant savings could be made in the past few years with more flexible working models, growing digitalisation as well as a more deliberate use of IT hardware and paper consumption. The transformation of the world of work accelerated by the pandemic has a lasting positive impact here: Less commuter traffic, more efficient communication and the resource-friendly use of work equipment make a measurable contribution today to a reduction in emissions. Meanwhile, fuel consumption by the fleet of lorries remains stable despite increased output.

The reasons for the increase are therefore clear, temporary, and have affected many German companies to a similar degree. Nevertheless, we are not happy about this development and have taken a variety of measures to counteract it in the current business year. After all, the aim of our broad sustainability strategy is a long-term improvement of our CO_2 balance –with the objective of contributing to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

OUR PATH TOWARDS GREATER SUSTAINABILITY

In the area of technology, the carbon footprint is a key value when it comes to sustainability: our measures aim to gradually reduce this – to the point where we emit zero greenhouse gases in the near future. The road to climate neutrality comprises many steps, big and small, that all add up.

THREE STEPS TO REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT:

1. In Step 1, we'll avoid emissions by preventing the unnecessary release of CO_2. In addition to eliminating wasteful consumption, we'll work continuously to improve the efficiency of the energy users that are needed. For example, we'll replace older system motors and power units with new equipment with the most efficient technology available and we'll optimise our truck fleet: here we want to reduce fuel consumption.
2. We can't produce without energy. That is why step 2 involves generating the electricity we need ourselves – using climate-neutral, renewable energy sources. A first start has been made, we have already equipped three buildings with photovoltaics.
   The most recent one was commissioned in the summer of 2024 on the roof of our plant in Guetersloh. It generates around 2,000,000 kWh of electricity per year. A fourth system on the roofs of the plant in Saarlouis is expected to generate an annual output of around 3,200,000 kWh in future.
3. For the power requirement we cannot meet ourselves, the strategic objective of fully covering this with the additional purchase of green energy applies. Green power is obtained from renewable sources such as water, wind and sunlight. As a last resort, we can offset unavoidable emissions through climate certificates. But this approach is not without its critics – that's why our aim is to prevent all emissions in the first place. After all, that's the only sustainable way.



RAW MATERIALS

Where do we get the raw materials that go into making Manufacturer furniture? And what raw materials are we talking about? The environmental footprint of a piece of furniture depends greatly on what it is made of. That's why the raw materials we use have long been a focus area for us at Manufacturer – both in terms of their origin and recyclability.

PEFC-CERTIFIED: WOOD FROM SUSTAINABLY MANAGED FORESTS

Wood is the most important material for the furniture industry – and for us at Manufacturer. The term sustainability comes from forestry and originally referred to only felling the amount of trees replaced through reforesting. Of course, the world has become a much more complex place, but this idea of sustainability still fundamentally holds true. That's why at Manufacturer we're considerate in our use of wood as a raw material: our panel materials contain a high proportion of recycled material and our wood waste is used to heat our buildings. However, we still continuously need new wood for our furniture as well. In order to minimise the burden on the environment, we source our wood from sustainable forestry.

Manufacturer is certified to the PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) standard. This certification guarantees that the wood we use to manufacture our kitchen furniture originates from sustainably managed forests and controlled sources. This is how we ensure that every tree felled for our kitchens is replaced by planting a new tree – fully in keeping with the old principle of sustainability.

PEFC PEFC/04-31-1281

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RECYCLED WOOD – CIRCULAR ECONOMY OR "TURNING OLD INTO NEW"

Wood is an enormously valuable and versatile resource – and it is especially important within the concept of sustainability as a means of storing CO_2. To maintain this quality for the maximum duration, the wood should be used as a material for as long as possible. One approach is cascade use.

In cascade use, wood is utilised in many forms, perhaps first as solid wood, then as shavings, before finally being converted to energy. This protects forests and the climate. Chipboard is therefore not an inferior resource, but an intelligent material that makes a considerable contribution to resource conservation.

You can't plane wood without producing shavings. We use a very small amount of our shavings to heat our buildings. But most of it is sold. Namely, to the chipboard industry. This closes the circle – our wood waste is a (reusable) material for the chipboard industry, whose products are then used by us again: the panels utilised by Manufacturer have three layers. The cover layers at the top and bottom are made from new wood. The surface quality has to be perfect – after all, this is where the décor, the face of the panel, is applied. However, you'll find almost exclusively waste wood in the centre of the panel. This old wood was previously already used. This means that no trees have to be felled for this part of the chipboard. The use of waste wood conserves resources and protects the environment without compromising on product quality.

Given that the central layer of the chipboard consists almost entirely of recycled wood and that all of our carcases plus the Laser, Riva, Senso, Structura, Natura and Stoneart front series are constructed from chip-board, all of our chipboard consists of up to 70% recycled material. Or to put it another way, a significant part of our wooden material was already a kitchen, living room unit or pallet.

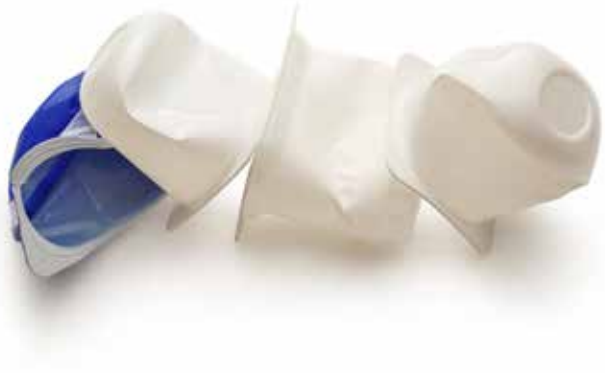


RECYCLED PLASTICS: FROM A YOGHURT CUP TO A PLINTH FOOT

Approximately 70% of the material used for our chipboard is recycled. But what about the other materials that go into Manufacturer products? Obviously, there, too, we use recycled materials wherever possible. One good example of this is the plinth feet on which our kitchens stand.

These invisible helpers covered by a plinth panel are used for tall and base units. In other words, for carcases that account for almost two thirds of the units sold by Manufacturer. As each unit sits on at least four plinth feet, more than 20 million plinth feet have to be integrated each year – that's quite a number.

The special plastic used to make these is processed as granulate. In the case of one of our suppliers, this plastic granulate is obtained from the contents of "yellow bags" (used to collect waste made of plastic, metal or composite materials) – without compromising on the product qualities. Therefore, approximately ten million of our plinth feet each year are made from reconditioned plastic – and that has been the case for a great many years already. Accordingly, our plinth feet represent a second life for millions of former plastic bags, yoghurt cups and food packaging.





TRANSPORT PACKAGING: OPTIMUM PROTECTION AND RECYCLABILITY

Our packaging concept contributes greatly to sustainability. Here, too, if it's not required, we dispense with it. But we still have to ensure that the kitchens reach our customers in pristine condition. That's why we need packaging that has been sufficiently well designed to reliably protect the product but at the same time can be kept to a minimum in order to conserve resources. Our own well-trained employees are crucial to achieving this: only experts handle our products during loading, transport and unloading. If products have to be sent by post, however, much more stable packaging is required.

The second aspect relates to the packaging itself, namely the materials used for it. Most of the packaging used by Manufacturer is fully biodegradable or up to 98% recyclable. That's the result of having packaging composed of just four different materials: corrugated cardboard (91.1%) for packaging the units, plastic strapping (1.8%) to fix this cardboard in place, polyethylene film for our long parts and worktops (7.1%), for example, protect our carcase fillers. These materials are collected by a service provider commissioned by us (see the article on RKT), sorted and recycled. Therefore, almost 98% of our packaging material circulates within a material cycle – turning old into new.





SUPPLY CHAINS

Supply chains are now a topic on the lips of consumers. Unfortunately, the current global trade in goods means that even a navigational error in the Suez Canal can have devastating effects on international supply chains. That's why at Manufacturer we work with local suppliers where possible.

COOPERATION ON EQUAL TERMS: SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS BASED ON PARTNERSHIP

As a family business, it is part of the Manufacturer corporate philosophy that we do not ignore ethical questions when taking business decisions. This also applies in our dealings with our suppliers.

We view this collaboration as a long-term partnership. Ultimately, this is the only way we can improve together and create smooth processes and procedures that minimise problems. This philosophy of partnership is not new – we've been cooperating with more than half of our suppliers for over 20 years.

This style of cooperation also means that we're loyal to our partners in times of crisis. Difficult times are a feature of any relationship – and the coronavirus crisis was an example of such. During the pandemic, we could easily have switched to alternative suppliers, some with cheaper prices. But instead, at Manufacturer we've strengthened our relationships with our existing group of suppliers in order to overcome the crisis together. When a partner is experiencing turmoil due to forces beyond their control, we still stick by them. This holds for smaller companies in particular for whom Manufacturer represents a major portion of their business and where jobs depend on Manufacturer.

In order that we can help when help is needed while still ensuring our high quality standards are met, we conduct a supplier assessment every quarter. This looks at quality indicators, delivery performance and much more. In the end, a grade of A, B or C is assigned. Companies with a C rating receive special support from us at Manufacturer. What has improved since the last time? Is an audit required? Thankfully, this situation hardly ever arises – but when it does, the assessment gives us an opportunity to respond early on in the interests of both companies.



REGIONAL FOCUS: THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL!

Globalisation has brought the world closer together. This has come with a host of benefits, but also disadvantages. Supply chains are often very fragile. A shipping incident in the Suez Canal may be enough to considerably disrupt global trade. The sheer amount of energy that goes into transporting goods between countries and continents is another drawback. That's why at Manufacturer we "think global, act local". 80% of our suppliers are based in Germany, and 50% have operations within a 50 km radius of our Verl site. On the other side, we sell around half of our finished kitchens in Germany, and another 40% in nearby European countries. Therefore, we choose not to transport raw materials or our kitchens half way round the world for processing or sale.

There are further advantages to this regional approach: ability to deliver has become especially important since the coronavirus outbreak started. Global supply chains have changed considerably and raw materials are scarce everywhere. Here, too, our ties with partners in the region are paying off. Of the almost 250 suppliers of machines, equipment and raw materials, most are based in Germany. We obtain large quantities of chipboard from Gütersloh and Brilon, for example. And our assembly equipment and control technology is sourced directly from our locality in Verl. So, supply chains are not a problem for us.

Even the farthest distance travelled by a material for us is still basically just a trip down the road in global terms. We obtain our purchased fronts from the Veneto region in northern Italy. As a company with strong regional roots, we and our suppliers benefit from short transport routes and keep environmental impact as low as possible.





SUPPLIER AUDITS: FOR A SMOOTH SUPPLY CHAIN

Without suppliers, we couldn't make kitchens at Manufacturer. We've found that the better the supplier, the easier and more efficient the cooperation. And this has an impact on not only stress levels and costs, but also resource conservation. If some or all of the goods we receive from a supplier don't meet our expectations, we can't incorporate them into our products either. This results in repeat production, special transports, delays and lots of unnecessary complications. The consequences of this include customer dissatisfaction, exceptional costs and additional resource consumption.

To prevent this, we conduct supplier audits that examine our suppliers' processes and procedures and identify shortcomings. Then we develop solutions together with these suppliers. Always with the aim of having optimum processes in place with our suppliers. After all, that's the best way to guarantee that problems don't even arise in the first place.

Traditionally, these supplier audits are always carried out when a new supplier comes on board. As we have long-standing partnerships with many companies at Manufacturer, the supplier audits are repeated at regular intervals. In this way, we also ensure that any issues identified are dealt with permanently – in other words, sustainably. Accordingly, supplier audits are not just a matter of quality control but also a small but important part of our sustainability strategy.



PRODUCTION

Production accounts for the largest share of our CO_2 footprint. And the majority of waste is also generated in our factories. For this reason, Manufacturer has initiated a whole series of measures to reduce energy consumption, to recycle production waste sensibly or - if not otherwise possible - to utilise it thermally. These measures are based on carefully determined key figures and are coordinated by a steering team.

PV SYSTEMS: CLEAN IN-HOUSE POWER GENERATION FOR OUR PRODUCTION

Reducing energy consumption or not consuming energy in the first place is certainly the ideal way to protect the climate and achieve sustainability. But energy will always be needed to be able to produce: Machines need electricity and people need a well-lit workplace, for example, in order to work ergonomically. However, not all electricity production is the same. While conventional electricity generation from energy sources such as coal or gas causes high CO_2 emissions, this is significantly lower with renewable sources such as wind and hydroelectric power or solar energy. This is why we generate some of the electricity we need for our business activities from renewable energy sources.







However, we have now significantly increased this proportion of our own clean electricity generation: The entire roof area of our plant in Guetersloh has been equipped with a photovoltaic system of the latest generation. This system has an output of more than 2,300 kWp - which covers the electricity requirements of more than 400 single-family homes, but in our case is self-sufficient: around 50% of the plant's electricity requirements are met by the system. The latest system in Saarlouis is already under construction and, with a capacity of 3,685 kWp, will cover approximately 25% of current electricity requirements.

The core team sustainability at Manufacturer:
Dr. Maik Schlickel, Dr. Julia Brinkmann, Alexander Balsliemke





PURPOSEFUL UTILISATION OF WOOD WASTE: USING PRODUCTION WASTE FOR HEATING

You can't plane wood without producing shavings – a lot of shavings. At Manufacturer, we produce over 700,000 kitchens every year. For this, over 40 million wooden parts have to be cut, edged and bored. The amount of wood waste is accordingly high – especially borings and remnants. Indeed, over 75,000 tonnes a year.

Of course, we don't simply dispose of this, but re-use it in various ways. For example, it serves to heat our entire production facilities and the administration offices in our plants in Verl-Suerenheide, Kaunitz, Guetersloh and Saarlouis and therefore over 400,000 m² of covered space or building area, primarily in winter. The heating systems are designed for these dimensions: for instance, the system in Verl-Suerenheide has a peak output of around 10,700 kW – by way of comparison, the heating system for a detached home achieves an output of approximately 8 kW.

Therefore, we effectively recycle wood materials that can no longer be used: instead of meeting our heating needs with non-renewables such as oil, gas or coal, we utilise wood as a renewable material. This is an extremely sustainable use of our production waste.

HEATING IN SPRING AND AUTUMN: HEAT RECOVERY FROM AIR COMPRESSORS

We heat our buildings with wood waste when the temperatures are lowest; during the milder months of the year, however, we use another heat source, namely the waste heat from our air compressors. Compressed air is needed in large quantities for the grippers, lifting equipment and presses in our production facilities, which cover over 400,000 m². We produce this compressed air with our own compressors.

In such air compressors, an electric motor drives a turbine that then compresses the ambient air. Heat is produced when air is compressed. We take this waste heat generated through friction and compression and feed it into our heating circuits. If we didn't use this waste heat, it would simply be discharged into the air.

We therefore achieve a double effect: our heating water is also warmed up. This means that we don't have to burn any additional energy sources to heat our buildings – another example of how we at Manufacturer are helping to conserve resources with innovative ideas.





GENERATE ELECTRICITY, REDUCE CONSUMPTION: ENERGY RECOVERY FROM STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL MACHINES

In order to reduce CO_2 emissions to the point where our operations at Manufacturer are climate-neutral, we have to lower energy consumption and produce our own electricity. We are already achieving both in our high-bay warehouses, where we're generating electricity and reducing consumption at the same time.

We store mainly front materials, accessories and worktops in our high-bay warehouses. In huge numbers. Our high-bay warehouse in Plant in Verl-Suerenheide has more than 27,000 pallet bays, for example. Fourteen fully automatic storage and retrieval machines (SRMs) are used there for pallet movements. These are in motion all day long. When such a machine carries a load from up high to down low, we make use of gravity: we utilise the motors of the SRMs as dynamos to generate electricity during braking and descending.

This principle is called recuperation and is now also frequently used in increasing numbers of motor vehicles, with energy being recovered under braking. At Manufacturer, more than half of all of our storage and retrieval machines are equipped with this technology.



REUSABLE PACKAGING: CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR MATERIAL PROTECTION

The best packaging is packaging that has not been produced in the first place. We take this sustainability principle very seriously at Manufacturer and, wherever technically possible, dispense with packaging entirely in all areas. To ensure goods are still protected, we use closed-loop systems – in the areas in which we have regular material deliveries. This works very well: in cooperation with our suppliers, almost all production materials are delivered in such reusable packaging.

Fittings, of which we need many thousands every day to produce drawers, pull-outs and the like, come to us in trays, like crates, instead of disposable boxes. They arrive laden and return empty. In this way, the trays are constantly moving between ourselves and our suppliers. 250,000 of these trays are in use. They have a lifespan of many years and therefore save on disposable packaging.





We also use reusable containers for the protective packaging for our worktops. These packaging elements are transported in collapsible boxes made of corrugated cardboard. Once we've removed all protective elements in production, the boxes are folded apart, returned to the supplier and filled with packaging elements once again. A circular system consisting of fully degradable materials. We work in this way with almost all of our suppliers – whether dealing with small load carriers for our logistics centre or wooden boxes for our glass niches.



WASTE CONCEPT: WHAT CAN'T BE AVOIDED IS CAREFULLY SEPARATED AND RECYCLED

Like in a household, although a great deal of waste and scrap can be avoided, there will always be a certain amount of waste. It's important that anything that cannot be avoided or recycled is disposed of properly. With our comprehensive disposal concept, we endeavour to collect and carefully separate the waste. For this to work as standard across all plants, Manufacturer has defined all of the different types of waste and introduced a colour coding system. This system clearly illustrates to all employees which waste should be disposed of in which container.

Having based our concept on the familiar household rubbish management system, waste rarely ends up in the wrong bin.

The different fractions of waste that result are subsequently taken away by certified disposal companies. The goal here is to recycle as much as possible of the collected fractions and avoid mixed fractions, such as general waste. Overall, this enabled us to achieve a recycling rate of 77.51% across all sites in 2025.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: PROCESS-BASED GOAL SETTING

What is a management system, and what does it have to do with sustainability? Simply put: a management system bundles activities, instruments and methods in order to guide and steer a company in setting concrete targets for a specific field of work. At Manufacturer, our management system covers three areas: quality (ISO 9001), the environment (ISO 14001) and energy (ISO 50001). By helping us to define clear rules, instructions and processes for our activities, it creates transparency that greatly facilitates our work.

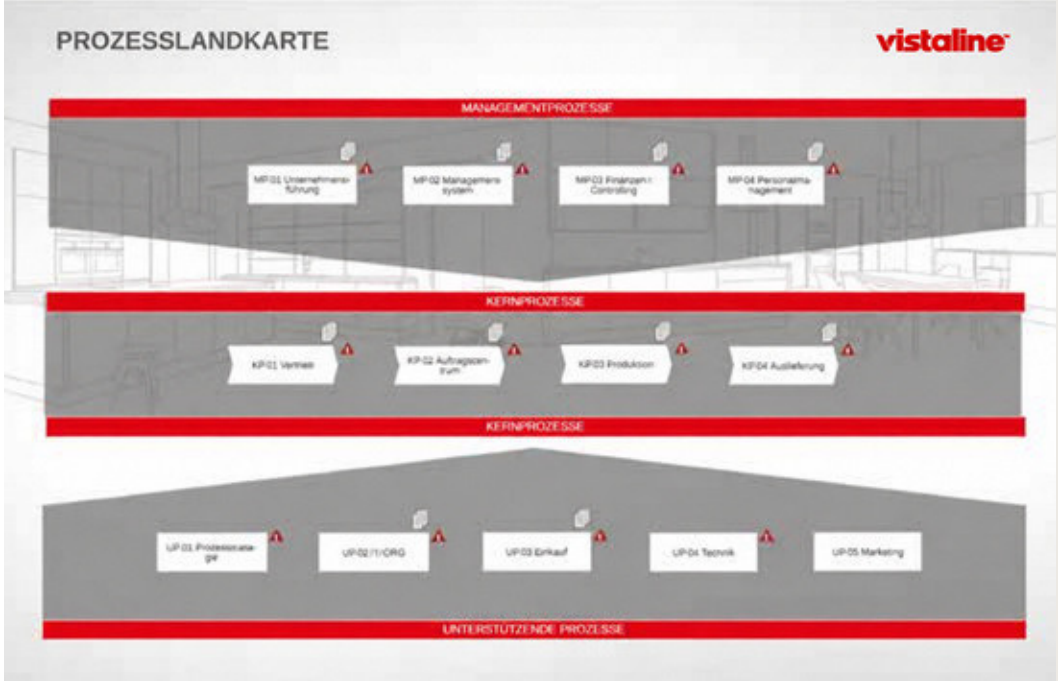
When it comes to saving energy and reducing our carbon footprint, ISO 50001 is especially important. This international standard is helping Manufacturer to establish systematic energy management based on recording energy flows (energy sources, use and consumers) and evaluating the level of energy efficiency. This data forms the basis on which measures can be developed and implemented. As abstract as this sounds, the results are very concrete: unused energy efficiency potential is tapped, energy costs are lowered and greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts are reduced. Our management system is therefore an important basis for our sustainability concept and a useful aid on our journey towards climate-neutrality.



ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 50001

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EEMC: TAKING MEASURES ACROSS ALL PLANTS

As Manufacturer carbon footprint shows, a large proportion of the CO_2 emissions we produce results from production and our vehicle fleet. A targeted, company-wide concept is needed to work on measures that will improve energy efficiency – and has to be organised across five plants and various departments. With this in mind, we've established at Manufacturer an Energy and Environmental Management Committee (EEMC) in our technology division. This committee evaluates and coordinates all energy and environmental activities across all departments and plants and takes steps towards their implementation. Under the leadership of our management team in the technology area, energy and environmental figures are evaluated here and the measures are presented to the departments.

All technical departments with a bearing on energy and the environment therefore take part in the committee meetings. To complement this work, tax issues and important framework conditions for energy procurement are coordinated in an extended core team. The figures confirm the effectiveness of this focused approach:
In the past three years, the measures implemented by the departments saved more than 10,000,000 kWh of energy.

REJECT REDUCTION: PREVENTION FIRST, THEN RECYCLING

At Manufacturer, we produce around 75,000 tonnes of wood waste a year. We utilise this waste in two ways: a smaller part as a renewable heating material in winter, but by far the majority we return to a producer for proportional use as a recycled material in new chipboard or for energy generation in the chipboard plant. Here too, however, we take a "prevention first, then recycling" approach. This applies in particular to rejects, which, unlike normal sawdust, take valuable energy and work time to produce. Therefore, avoiding rejects benefits the environment and makes our work more efficient, which in turn saves money during production.

That's why at Manufacturer we are always looking for ways to reduce the number of rejects. One place where rejects are naturally common is parts manufacturing. 40 to 50 million furniture components have to be cut, edged and bored each year in parts manufacturing in order to manufacture more than eight million units. Thanks to many individual measures, we've managed in recent years to halve the number of rejects there. This has reduced wood waste there by around 10,000 tonnes a year – which is good for the environment and for Manufacturer bottom line.





LED LIGHTING: INTELLIGENT LIGHTING SYSTEMS

Replacing conventional bulbs with LEDs, switching off lights when no-one's there – just like in all our homes, this is standard practice at Manufacturer too. The reason is obvious: from a given amount of energy, LEDs generate four to ten times as much light as conventional bulbs. In addition, they last ten to 15 times longer, too.

Therefore, LED lighting is now standard in our production areas. And we've also made the switch in most of our administration buildings.

And we save even more energy by only switching on lights when needed. To this end, we've installed a "DALI" lighting control system at Manufacturer, which adjusts the lighting according to the available daylight: depending on the amount of natural daylight entering the respective hall, the LED lighting is automatically dimmed.

And there's even further potential for optimisation here: Manufacturer has developed a new system at its Gütersloh plant to optimise DALI lighting control and has gradually rolled it out across all its plants. This will also be gradually rolled out to all of our other plants. The workplace is being illuminated in an even more targeted and optimised way thanks to a special surface. At the same time, the lighting levels are reduced to the necessary minimum at break times. In this way, we're essentially using the natural light available according to the workplace, achieving optimum workplace lighting and saving energy at the same time.



REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION, AVOID HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

When considering the environmental aspects of our business activities, it would be remiss of us to overlook liquids such as water, hazardous fluids and solvents. Water is a scarce resource. That's why at Manufacturer we only use as much of this resource as is truly needed. We can largely operate without water, which is only required for some cooling processes. Otherwise, our water use is limited to the canteen, washrooms and cleaning activities.

We also minimise the use of hazardous substances, mainly adhesives, cleaning agents and lubricants. It is rare for us at Manufacturer to use lacquers or solvents. We are also extremely careful when it comes to hazardous substances, as protecting the health of our employees has the highest priority for us. That's why hazardous substances undergo comprehensive safety evaluation and testing before they are introduced into the company.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: PREPARED FOR A SERIOUS INCIDENT

As a furniture manufacturer, Manufacturer is not a high-risk operation in terms of environmental damage. But there are risks in furniture production that may lead to an emergency – and, as a family company, at Manufacturer we take responsibility for protecting our employees to the best of our abilities. Through our emergency management plans, we aim to be best prepared for any potential risks that may arise and to ensure the best possible protection for employees and the environment. In-house paramedics, safety stations and fire protection measures are examples of our emergency management setup.

- **In-house paramedics and safety stations:** in order that we can provide targeted assistance in the case of risks to the health of employees, as well as visitors, we've introduced a system at Manufacturer with around 50 in-house paramedics in addition to the first-aid organisation required by law. These specially trained employees are equipped with a broad selection of medical supplies in a backpack and are called in by plant security in the event of an emergency. In addition to this rescue backpack, there are also additional safety stations with defibrillators, blood pressure monitors, breathing apparatus and oxygen masks in place across every area.
- **Fire protection:** companies engaged in furniture production have an increased risk of fire. We take this risk very seriously. Fire protection measures of all kinds aimed at preventing fires have the highest priority for us. We also take very seriously the residual risk that remains despite these comprehensive measures: the best possible preparation for a serious incident is essential here. When everyone knows exactly what they need to do if a fire breaks out, then crucial minutes are saved – and minutes can make all the difference to saving lives and preventing environmental impact in the event of a fire. Our focus in this area is on cooperation and drills with the local fire department, briefings for employees and external companies, training of fire protection assistants and the establishment of an alert system to notify all necessary individuals in the event of an incident.





ENERGY MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS AND KPIS: ESTABLISHING A SOUND BASIS FOR MEASURES

Before developing strategies aimed at improving our energy efficiency, we want to know where we stand and the most useful places to start. We base this analysis on figures – which we obtain via a company-wide energy measurement system for electricity. To this end, digital electricity meters – over 1,000 in total – have been installed in the transformer substations and in various power distribution systems and machines. These meters permanently measure consumption and transfer the data via network to a database.

We use this data material for all kinds of evaluations. This includes our quarterly internal energy and environmental report as well as detailed analysis on various matters: for example, the energy data allows us to tell whether machines and systems that are not needed are being switched off at the end of the day. We can also compare the energy demand of different systems.

All of this helps us to understand where we use the most energy and where there's room for improvement – as well as what the best possible approach might be.



INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING: OPTIMISING ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN MACHINE PROCUREMENT

At Manufacturer, responsibility for designing, planning and optimising production processes lies with Industrial Engineering (IE) – a strategically important division when it comes to sustainability and other matters. One of the main tasks of this division is to equip production with new machines. To this end, the employees design projects, purchase equipment and organise installation and commissioning. Operation in particular plays a major role in reducing energy consumption. To maximise efficiency here, IE maintains an overview of three aspects in particular: the energy review, the energy measuring systems in new equipment and the optimisation of production processes.

Energy review:
optimising energy efficiency together with partners

At Manufacturer, we work together with a wide range of partners: when a new system is ordered, we draw up specifications that clearly describe the requirements that our suppliers have to meet. By doing so, we aim to ensure that we get efficient machines that consume the least possible energy. To achieve this, we conduct an energy review: we take a look at the design and major energy consumers and then define ways of improving energy efficiency. This might be through the use of especially efficient electric motors, for example, or different cooling systems or mechanical solutions.

Optimising production processes:
eliminating unnecessary power consumers

When operating equipment, there's always potential for energy savings. That's why Industrial Engineering is continuously looking for ways to optimise power consumption. Here are a few examples:

- **Turning off the light on camera inspection systems:** units pass a camera system three times a minute for two seconds at a time. The camera system light used to be kept on at all times. Now the lighting system has been optimised so that it only stays on for the necessary six seconds per unit.
- **Switching off machines outside of production hours:** even when there's no kitchen on the line, systems still consume a great deal of power. Overnight, at the weekend and when the company is closed, there is therefore great potential for savings with machines, and Manufacturer makes use of this.
- **Reducing the speed of suction fans:** the extraction system is the biggest energy guzzler in production. We are now aiming to reduce the speed of the fans so that energy consumption can be reduced while still maintaining the requirements in respect of shaving extraction.




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TRANSPORT

After production, the transport of goods makes the second largest contribution to our CO_2 footprint. Manufacturer has introduced a series of measures here – and is always examining solutions for the future. The use of long trailers and optimised route planning already form part of our day-to-day work, and we are considering a switch to a vehicle fleet consisting of vehicles with electric or hydrogen drives for the future. All of these measures have one goal: making the transport of Manufacturer products more sustainable, step by step.

LONG TRAILERS, GIGALINERS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES: ENABLING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Loading and unloading kitchens requires expertise: everything has its place, nothing can be damaged. That's why we offer our customers – in other words, kitchen studios and furniture stores – a special service: our "white fleet" delivers kitchens directly to customer warehouses. Although this adds value for customers, the disadvantage is that logistics accounts for a large proportion (ca. 25%) of our carbon footprint.

The planned use of electric drives is groundbreaking for us. While hydrogen-based solutions are currently not a practicable alternative for heavy vehicles, we are already studying potential usage scenarios for E-mobility. We have gathered initial data through use of an electric yard truck in our internal plant traffic. Beyond that, we have reviewed a variety of approaches and plans for electrified logistics in recent months. Our aim is to consistently reduce emissions in logistics in the long term and prevent them entirely where possible.

Another important component is the consistent use of long trailers and gigaliners. Long trailers with a total length of 17.88 m are approx. 1.38 m longer than conventional trailers – and thus provide approx. 10% more loading volume. So with every seventh tour, one standard tour can be saved. In 2025, around 45,000 kilometres of travel distance and approx. 11,000 litres of diesel could be saved by using these vehicles alone. Currently, our vehicle fleet comprises 52 long trailers. In addition to this, the use of gigaliners with a total length of more than 25 m and a loading volume of approx. 105 m^3 has now been firmly established. With their capacity, 25 gigaliner tours can replace around 37 regular tours, which results in significant savings with regard to tours and emissions. In 2025, this meant around 7,200 kilometres fewer on the roads and approx., 1,700 litres of saved diesel. Two vehicles of this category currently feature in our portfolio.

Gigaliners in the Manufacturer vehicle fleet



HYBRID LOGISTICS MODEL: TRAILER TRANSPORT BY RAIL

Our vehicle fleet accounts for nearly a quarter of our CO_2 emissions. It's difficult to make savings in this area: the kitchens have to be transported to customers, including some outside of the main centres. That's why we can't eliminate truck transports entirely – and currently there is no alternative drive for trucks of the size we use on the market.

Nevertheless, there are optimisation options – for instance the use of trains. We have been making use of a hybrid transport model that involves our trailers switching to rail transport.

Specifically, the transport works like this: the trailers are first driven from the plant to a railway freight terminal, where they're loaded from the truck onto a train. The trailers are then transported by rail to the destination station, where they're offloaded and received by the local Manufacturer driver team and later unloaded in the usual careful way. Our team on the ground stays for an extended period of time in the destination region and unloads not just one but numerous trailers.

The big advantage: Long journeys on the road are no longer needed, and only short journeys by truck are required locally. And as transport by train is markedly lower in emissions by comparison, there is a noticeable sustainability gain. We have now firmly integrated this model into our logistics. For example for tours to the South of France, the hybrid trailer transport from our plant in Saarlouis is regularly used. Here, distances of up to 1,000 kilometres per journey are transferred to rail. The concept has been proven and following a test run, has now become an inherent part of our logistics system.





Environmentally friendly transport

OPTIMISED LOGISTICS: LESS DIESEL DUE TO INTELLIGENT ROUTES AND ECONOMICAL DRIVING

Long trailers, hybrid transports – at Manufacturer, we're already implementing various measures to reduce the diesel consumption of our truck fleet. Despite this, our vehicle fleet covers around 19.5 million kilometres every year. With such a high mileage, another key measure stands to reason: efficient route planning. Every detour not only costs time and money, but also causes emissions that can be prevented. To counteract this, we use state-of-the-art route planning methods at our order processing centre. These help our planners account for various parameters such as our customers' opening hours, delivery requirements and specific situations in order to plan the most efficient route and customer sequence. Our drivers receive the route with all of its stops through telematics. The ideal route to the next customer is calculated based on current traffic data. The result is a helpful combination of vehicle routing and operative route selection to optimally adapt the traffic load, route and transport workload to each other. Another milestone with regard to consumption optimisation is the performance tool of our telematics supplier, which has been used since January 2024.
In addition to other main features of the telematics such as navigation and order processing, this tool measures and analyses driver performance and provides individual feedback to the drivers – for example for more efficient utilisation of cruise control or anticipatory braking behaviour. All these factors not only affect fuel consumption, but also the wear and tear of vehicles as well as protection of the transported goods. The system is complemented by a monthly feedback model: Every driver receives a customised analysis of their driving behaviour – detailed and comparable. This creates a transparent incentive for improvement in the sense of sustainability, quality and efficiency. The success of this measure is plain to see: In 2025 alone, around 136,000 litres of diesel could be saved with the introduction and use of this technology – this corresponds to approx. 1,35 million kilowatt hours of energy and a CO_2 reduction of 360,000 kilograms.





TRADE

What does the kitchen trade have to do with sustainability? It's simple: kitchen studios and furniture stores are the interface to the end customer and should also provide good advice on sustainability. Proper assembly is another important aspect when looking at this topic in the round: mistakes put additional pressure on resources. And the same applies to the transport packaging used for our furniture components. At Manufacturer, we've also tackled these two issues.

ASSEMBLY ACADEMY: TRAINING KITCHEN FITTERS

Well-trained employees are a valuable asset from a social and sustainability point of view. This doesn't just hold for Manufacturer, but also the personnel along the entire supply chain. Kitchen fitters play a key role here. If they make mistakes, products then have to be delivered again or remade – with a resulting knock-on effect on resources. Well-trained fitters, on the other hand, make a positive contribution to conserving resources.

But, where can those well-trained fitters be found? "Kitchen fitter" is not a recognised apprenticeship trade. That's why at Manufacturer we've decided to take matters into our own hands in this regard: We established the Manufacturer Assembly Academy in Verl in 2022 so that we could play our part in providing kitchen fitters with professional skills.

Together with various cooperation partners, the future attendees will learn everything there is to know about correctly assembling a kitchen: from skilled handling of the kitchen furniture and the perfect tools for furniture assembly through to proper connection of electric appliances and plumbing. All of this content will be offered in individual modules and also as complete courses of study. This will be a major step for the industry – and another contribution to sustainability.



TRANSPORT PACKAGING: ENSURING RECYCLING TAKES PLACE

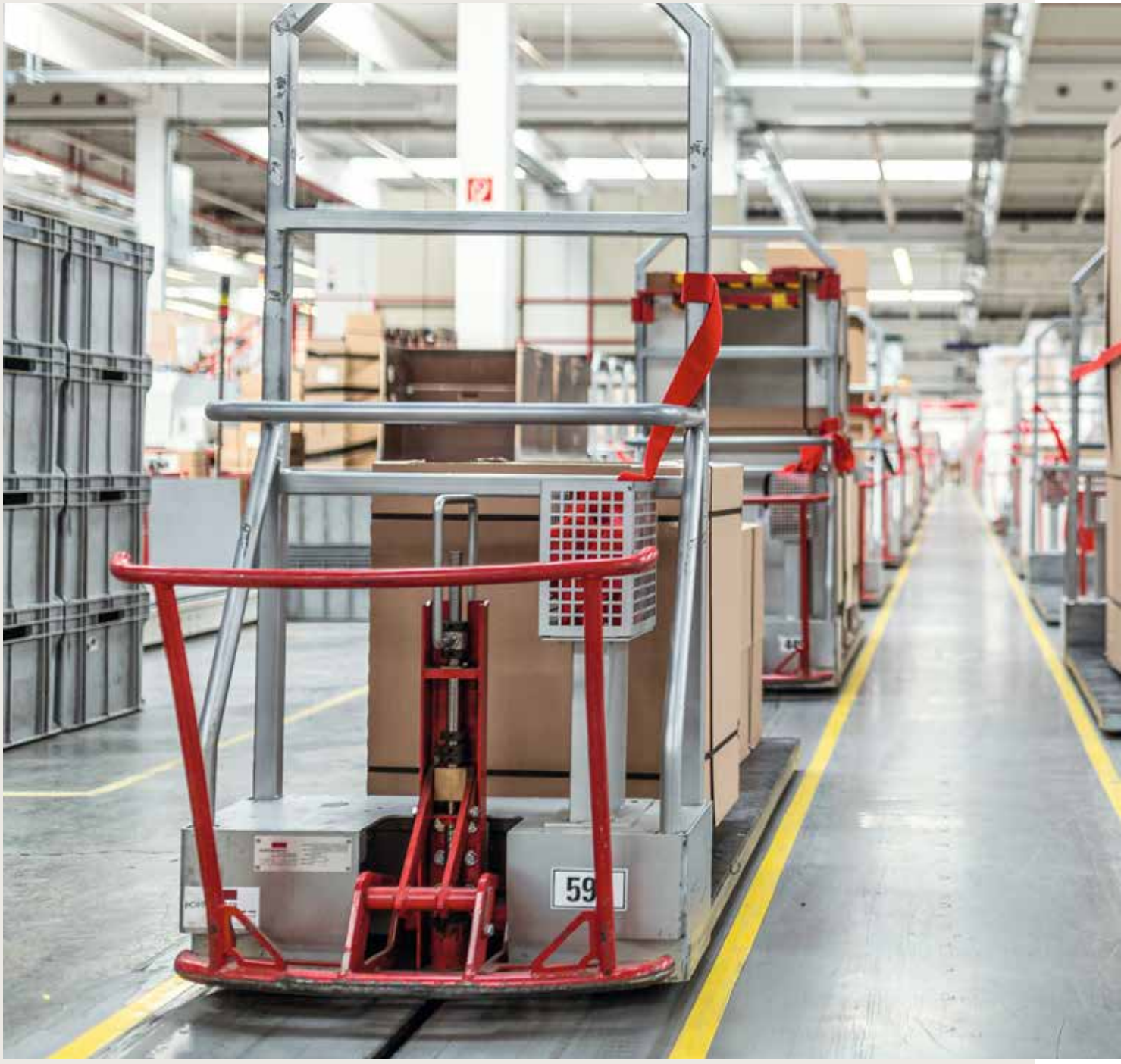
We use transport packaging to ensure that our kitchen furniture reaches the end user safely and well protected. This can be recycled very easily. To ensure that this is done, Manufacturer has joined forces with the disposal partner EKO-PUNKT.

EKO-PUNKT collects transport packaging for the entire kitchen industry in Germany and recycles it. All our retail partners have to do is contact EKO-PUNKT and inform them that they are supplied by Manufacturer. EKO-PUNKT then works with its local partners to ensure that all the different fractions of transport packaging are collected and recycled.

EKO-PUNKT then works with its local partners to ensure that all the different fractions of transport packaging are collected and recycled. The advantage of this procedure for our customers is that they no longer have to worry about disposing of the packaging. For the environment, the advantage is that all transport packaging is collected and recycled. Simple, efficient, sustainable.

EKO-PUNKT
IM AUFTRAG DER ZUKUNFT




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PRODUCT USE

Sustainability is now a factor influencing consumer decisions – and increasingly a selling point. Manufacturer **is the first choice here for many good reasons when customers decide on the kitchen they want: we combine meticulous testing and high quality with certified low-emission materials and energy-saving components.**

ROOM AIR: LOW-EMISSION FURNITURE FOR A HEALTHY INDOOR CLIMATE

In addition to environmental protection, health is a core element of sustainability – and that holds for our products, too. When it comes to chipboard, for example, formaldehyde emissions that are harmful to health are a major topic of consumer discussion. But not with Manufacturer: our products emit such small amounts of this substance that they meet the toughest requirements and are certified to the highest standards, such as CARB2, F4Star and Blauer Engel (blue angel eco label).

- **TSCA Title VI compliant/CARB2:** for the manufacture of kitchen furniture, we use only engineered wood products that meet the stringent US EPA Formaldehyde Emissions Standard of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA Title VI). Accordingly, the company fulfils the American requirements in effect since 1 June 2018 for the further reduction of formaldehyde emissions from derived timber products. The TSCA Title VI limit values correspond to those of the CARB2 (California Air Resources Board) standard. The furniture is labelled with the information “TSCA Title VI compliant”.
- **F4Star standard:** Some of our engineered wood products were even certified under the Japanese F4Star standard, which sets requirements that are higher again than CARB2.
- **Blauer Engel:** Manufacturer is a trailblazer when it comes to matters of quality and sustainability. Many of our product ranges are therefore labelled with the “Blauer Engel” (blue angel eco label), the official eco label of the German government. This label identifies products in the Manufacturer range that meet particularly high standards for environmental and health protection as well as consumer protection. Manufacturer is the first and only manufacturer in the industry to have received this certificate for several product ranges.

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LEGAL CONFORMITY: AT Manufacturer, WE GO THE EXTRA MILE WITH THE GS QUALITY SEAL

Sustainable action means that our customers can rely on us – and this in turn presupposes consistency and permanence. In addition to building trust through quality, legal conformity matters: products have to meet statutory requirements, such as those of the German Product Safety Act (ProdSG). This applies both to products from Manufacturer and from our suppliers, such as the large electrical appliances, like fridges and ovens, that we purchase from other companies.

At Manufacturer, the legal conformity of our products is confirmed with the GS quality seal for tested safety, which guarantees that ready-for-use products meet the requirements of the German Product Safety Act. These requirements are mainly set out in concrete terms in DIN and European standards or other generally accepted rules of engineering. The GS quality seal was introduced in 1977 with the aim of protecting users and third parties against harm to life and limb in the case of intended and foreseeable use. It is the only product safety quality seal in Europe that is regulated by law. It is often compared to the CE mark, but this is simply a non-verified declaration of the manufacturer or distributor. That’s not enough for us at Manufacturer – our company goes the proverbial extra mile with the GS quality seal.

Which means – at Manufacturer, all ranges within our collections undergo safety testing by the TÜV Rheinland GS furniture testing institute. It is thus independently confirmed that the requirements with regard to operating convenience, load capacity, material consistency and safety have been met in full.

PULL-OUT PANTRY BOX

Food lasts longer when stored correctly, which also boosts sustainability. The pantry box is the ideal unit for storing vegetables, bread and the like. A plastic box with an inset mesh base which ensures good ventilation offers the ideal storage conditions – so that vegetables stay fresh and nutritious for longer.





INDOOR GARDENING: TURNING THE KITCHEN INTO A GARDEN

We all came to appreciate our kitchens even more during the coronavirus. They are the central space for spending time with family and friends. And of course, they're where we cook and eat. The kitchen has been adapted for these various functions – and is now increasingly meeting the needs of people. Our love of nature in particular, which is only getting stronger in our increasingly virtual world, is a focal aspect of the new kitchen.

That's why we've been offering a special plant unit for our popular pole-mounted shelving system for some years now. This unit enables indoor gardening directly on the shelf. Green plants or herbs can be planted in a wooden box with a plastic insert. An LED surface luminaire with light waves designed specifically to promote growth and automated light control ensures that plants can thrive.

In 2023, we extended our offering in this segment to include the gardening box. The box is inserted into a pull-out in a kitchen unit. Microgreens of many flavours can be grown as young edible seedlings in the four trays. Integrated plant lights and ventilation control the day and night cycle. Depending on the plant type, the growth phase takes seven to ten days and can even be tracked and controlled using an app. Microgreens have a more intensive taste than fully grown vegetables. They even contain more vitamins and nutrients and are a real eye-catcher. The gardening box includes cress, mustard, pak choi and radish as a starter set. By the way: we use only organic seeds from Germany.

XTRA CERAMIC: THE RESOURCE-EFFICIENT CERAMIC INNOVATION

Innovation requires preparation: many years of development work preceded the product launch of our new ceramic material, for example. Our goal was to develop a resource-efficient, light and durable composite concept that did not yet exist in this form on the market. The result was the patented and multi-award-winning Xtra Ceramic.

The most important difference between our material and the industry standard is that we use a very thin ceramic layer. This reduces the environmental impact in production, as ceramic requires a firing temperature of over 1000°C. The thinner the ceramic layer, the less energy is needed for the firing process.

But even with 6 mm of thickness, the layer is so strong that all positive material properties such as heat and scratch resistance are still maintained. The intelligent combination of the ceramic with foam from recycled PET bottles and a glass fibre stabilising layer also makes the product extremely stable. By using the PET material in the middle layer, we are helping to reduce resource use as this is a recycled product.

This minimises much of the potential transport damage and resulting resource- and energy-intensive repeat production. The concept of a closed cycle was considered during product development as well: by using foam glass in the middle layer, we are helping to reduce resource use as this is a recycled product.

The spirit of green innovation that went into designing the product has been recognised many times over. Xtra Ceramic has received not just the Red Dot Design Award, but also the highly coveted Green Product Award. For over ten years, this international design and innovation competition has awarded products for exceptional sustainability, innovation and design.

Green Product Award
Winner
2022





XTRA CERAMIC



DURABILITY

In terms of sustainability, the best kitchen is the kitchen that does not have to be replaced. Durability, quality and freedom from harmful substances are prerequisites to this. All of these are aspects that we've long focused on at Manufacturer. Nevertheless, a kitchen will inevitably reach the end of its life cycle at some stage – and we also have this in mind. We don't assume that our responsibility ends when the guarantee runs out!

DURABILITY: PROTECTING RESOURCES THROUGH QUALITY

The longer a product lasts, the less often it has to be replaced. This is a very important aspect of sustainability. After all, resources are consumed every time a new purchase is made. Therefore, durability saves on resources.

Manufacturer kitchen, bathroom and living room furniture items are highly durable products. We know from customer feedback that our kitchens are frequently used for 15 years or more. In 2020, we ran an internal competition to find the oldest Manufacturer kitchen still in use – and the winner dated from the 1960s!

This durability isn't achieved by chance, but results from intensive product testing and painstaking quality checks: even though the relevant standards require that hinges can withstand 20,000 openings and closings without failing, for example, this doesn't go far enough for us at Manufacturer. As we've committed to meeting the strict requirements of the quality mark conferred by Deutsche Gütegemeinschaft Möbel e.V. (DGM, German Furniture Quality Association), we reach a higher benchmark when it comes to durability. Here at Manufacturer, a hinge has to be able to withstand 80,000 opening and closing cycles, for example. We therefore set our requirements for durability far above the market standard – to the benefit of customers and the environment alike.



CARE & EASE OF REPAIR: CONTRIBUTING TO DURABILITY

The quality of a product is crucial to determining how long it lasts. However, it's equally important that the materials are properly cared for. At Manufacturer, we already concern ourselves with suitable care agents during the product development phase and put these through their paces in our own laboratory. The care instructions then give customers detailed information on the care agents that will produce the best cleaning results in their kitchen. Practical: all of the recommended products are available from our own online shop.

When something does go wrong, however, the kitchens' modular structure means that individual components can be easily replaced – using standard tools. At Manufacturer, we guarantee the availability of spare parts many years beyond what is required by law. And as every kitchen can be identified via a permanently affixed product identification code, normally placed in the sink base unit, the Customer Service team can have the right part ordered in next to no time.



END OF LIFE: AT Manufacturer, WE ALSO KEEP THE END OF THE PRODUCT CYCLE IN MIND

At least 15 years – that's how long a Manufacturer kitchen can be used for. But even the most durable product will eventually reach the end of its useful life. That's why consideration of this phase is integral to our product development process. Two factors are paramount here: emissions of harmful substances and recyclability.

Harmful substances: material composition is a key determinant of recyclability. If materials are blended with toxic additives, then high-quality recycling is not an option. That's why we ensure here at Manufacturer that only harmless materials are used. This is guaranteed through regular checks and precise analysis of the substances used by Manufacturer itself and our suppliers. Thanks to these high standards, the Manufacturer product lines have been certified with the DGM emissions label – and many even with the "Blauer Engel" (blue angel eco label). Components and products with a harmful substance content of greater than 0.1% by weight are duly registered and this information can be viewed by disposal companies.

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RECYCLABILITY

Recyclability: using healthy materials doesn't necessarily mean a product is recyclable. At the end of the day, only items made of a single material can be easily recycled. This is where the modular and detachable design of our furniture helps. The main component of the furniture is chipboard. From a technical perspective, this is 100% recyclable and there's the possibility of creating a truly closed cycle here in which old furniture could be turned back into new, modern pieces. However, the problem here is that many disposal companies prefer to use chipboard to generate heat because this is a more financially attractive option. To fix this gap in the closed cycle, we're in discussion with a number of disposal firms – as this problem can only be solved if we put our heads together.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

There isn't just one definition of sustainability. At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, social development goals were incorporated in addition to environmental aims. As a family company, we feel a particular responsibility for these goals. Our social measures cover employees, suppliers and neighbours in the region alike.

In 2025, Manufacturer had a sustainability assessment conducted by international rating agency EcoVadis and was immediately awarded a bronze medal. This award recognises comprehensive efforts in support of the environment, labour and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. Our policies, actions and published reports were all considered in the assessment.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: SUSTAINABILITY IS ACHIEVED BY PEOPLE

What does professional training have to do with sustainability? It's simple: only when people understand the increasingly complex processes in furniture production can they take targeted action and minimise faults and waste. Skilled workers are therefore not just a requirement for effective business – but also provide the impetus for corporate sustainability.

The most promising way for a company to retain skilled professionals in the long term is to train them itself. And we've been doing this for some time at Manufacturer: currently, over 141 young people are being trained in one of nine commercial or technical professions or completing one of three work-and-study programmes in Industrial Management (business economics), Industrial Engineering, Wood Technology, Automation Technology and Mechatronics or Interior Design. In 2026, 36 new trainees and students started working on their professional qualifications at Manufacturer. Indeed, a large proportion of these trainees are Manufacturer skilled workers of tomorrow.

In addition to training, Manufacturer also attaches great importance to targeted onboarding of new employees. To this end, all new colleagues undertake special training when they join us. Quality, safety, the production flow, remuneration, etc. – the training team explains everything involved in working at Manufacturer.





COMPANY WELLNESS PROGRAMME: SUSTAINABILITY ALSO MEANS TAKING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Sustainability covers more than just the environment. Social responsibility also falls under this term. Accordingly, at Manufacturer we look after the health of our employees with a company wellness programme. This includes everything that might foster worker well-being – from sports to flu shots.

During our Health Weeks, we offer our employees one-week training on health topics. They can sign up for flu jabs as well as skin cancer screening.

The best preventive measure is maintaining physical strength. That's why we offer a range of sporting activities at Manufacturer: jogging under the guidance of a trainer is held once a week. For company runs, we cover the sign-up fees and provide singlets for our employees. Once a year, a cycling trip is organised and the whole company invited. And last but not least, there's "Sportnavi", a flat-rate fitness and wellness offering. For a small fee, every employee gets access to a multitude of partners: there's something for everyone here – from massage, fitness, tennis and squash through to table tennis, badminton, canoeing and swimming. Around 1,100 employees are currently making use of this offer.

WORKING CONDITIONS: ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

When it comes to well-being in the workplace, working conditions are of primary importance – and these differ from remit to remit and person to person. That's why the special features of the many different jobs have to be explored – and every employee empowered to create a healthy and stimulating environment for themselves. We've a wide selection of offerings in this regard at Manufacturer: for example, we offer Health Weeks during which employees can avail themselves of a week of training on preventing back problems. On production of a medical certificate, we pay for the computer glasses for employees. We've invested in office ergonomics in administration: chairs of a premium quality are set up in such a way as to ensure comfort while supporting the back. Height-adjustable tables can be ordered as well.

Manual tasks in the plants are also carefully monitored in respect of working conditions. Comfort and occupational safety have been considerably boosted there thanks to numerous measures taken. The many transparent skylights, for example, mean the lighting is as natural as possible. Personal protective equipment, such as earplugs, safety shoes and much more, is provided by Manufacturer and is always state of the art. What's more, in-house training is held so that employees can continue to develop and are made aware of the right ways to move and the topic of ergonomics. And, of course, financial appreciation plays a role in how well a person feels in their job. At Manufacturer, we make further benefits available in addition to the normal remuneration, such as contributions to capital formation. We also offer employer-funded pension care to our employees.





IN-COMPANY FURTHER TRAINING: PROSPECTS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Sustainable personnel development requires further training of employees. Acquiring new skills, further educating oneself, learning – these things lead to more highly skilled employees and to increased safety and expertise in the company. With our comprehensive further training, we endeavour at Manufacturer to ensure that there are suitable offerings for every position.

Conventional opportunities for further training are offered across all divisions. These include, for example, leadership seminars for team, department and production unit leads as well as MS Office training. Of course, more specialised courses are also available: language courses, seminars on wood, training on occupational safety and the environment, and seminars on leadership and soft skills. In addition, we've established at Manufacturer individual job-relevant further training that is coordinated between employees and supervisors in annual routines.



HEALTH AND A SMALL CONTRIBUTION TO LOWERING CO_2 EMISSIONS: BIKE LEASING FOR EMPLOYEES



Many of Manufacturer activities combine different aspects of sustainability: social topics with environmental protection and employer branding. With our bike leasing scheme, however, the former is clearly to the fore: employees are the backbone of a company. Content, engaged and well-trained colleagues are the result of corporate culture. That's why we do a lot at Manufacturer to ensure that employees also feel good. The company wellness programme is part of this – featuring our bicycle leasing scheme through which our employees can lease premium quality bikes and e-bikes on attractive terms.

The scheme has proven an enormous success: over 1,997 contracts have already been signed since the scheme began! The benefits are varied: cycling keeps you fit and healthy, strengthens your heart, circulation and general well-being, and is cheaper than driving. At the same time, it also helps the climate according to the German Federation for the Environment and Nature Conservation (BUND), the average car emits approx. 140 g of CO_2 per kilometre travelled. A bike or e-bike, by comparison, emits almost nothing. This means that 1 kg of CO_2 is avoided when covering a route of 7 km with a bike instead of a car. Therefore, if 1,000 colleagues with a commute of 7 km were to travel by bike, this would avoid a tonne of carbon dioxide – it's also the small steps that add up. That's why Manufacturer is approaching the topic of sustainability from so many different angles.

BUILDING STANDARDS: MAKING SAVINGS THROUGH PROPERTY

Buildings built to the KfW 55 standard have to meet defined energy-efficiency requirements. This standard considers the average energy needed for heating, ventilation and hot water preparation over the course of a year and how much energy is lost from a heated property to the outside. Based on this data, buildings are divided into different categories that indicate the percentage of energy consumed by the respective building compared to a reference house.

So what does all of that have to do with Manufacturer? That's easy! Our new administration buildings in Verl and Saarlouis have been built to the KfW 55 energy efficiency standard. Accordingly, they only consume 55% of the energy of a reference structure. They are contributing to energy savings thanks to their exceptionally good building insulation. By meeting the KfW 55 standard, they in some cases far exceed the standards of many detached homes in Germany.

The German Buildings Energy Act (GEG, previously the German Energy Saving Ordinance (EnEV)) sets out the energy requirements for new builds. All of our administration and production buildings have obviously been built to meet the applicable standards. With our well-insulated administration and production buildings, we are making a considerable contribution to the topic of sustainability here, too.



NOISE AND AIR EMISSIONS: RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Every industrial company produces not only carbon dioxide but also other emissions that may impinge on the environment and surrounding areas. At Manufacturer, these are mainly noise and air emissions:

- **Noise emissions:** noise is unavoidable when manufacturing furniture. Take, for example, the trucks delivering the goods, cutting saws in production and the fans in the wood chip extraction systems. In order to meet requirements in respect of our surroundings and the environment, however, all machines and processes are designed to comply with the legal framework and are approved before operation. This approval is always based on a noise survey produced by an independent expert. The relevant requirements in respect of the operation and design of machines and systems are set out in these noise surveys. We then consistently implement these at Manufacturer. In our plant in Guetersloh, the close link between both sound and building insulation is clear: the acoustic barrier and aerated concrete building envelope there have led to a considerable improvement in the building's thermal insulation.
- **Air emissions:** air emissions are mainly produced by our heating system and chip extraction setup. With respect to the requirements, it is essentially a similar story here to that for noise emissions. The legal requirements set out in the underlying permits are the basis for the design of the systems. In the case of our heating system, for example, emissions (smoke gases) are cleaned in three filter stages (post-combustion, multicyclone and electrofilter). A downstream measuring sensor system also monitors and records all relevant emission parameters.

Both examples show that here, too, we take a conscientious approach to the environment at Manufacturer. Meeting legal requirements and reducing emissions to the necessary minimum are of paramount importance.

Manufacturer Plant Saarlouis



Manufacturer Plant Verl and Plant Guetersloh



PREVENTION OF WATER POLLUTION: INVESTMENT TO AVOID OVERLOADING OF WATER BODIES

Halls, buildings and transport routes for delivery traffic are needed when producing furniture. The construction of such industrial facilities leads inevitably to land sealing, which has an impact on natural water cycles. The rainwater that accumulates can no longer seep through to the subsoil and therefore has to be collected and drained away in an environmentally friendly way. At Manufacturer, we discharge most of the rainwater into surface water bodies – in other words, streams and rivers. The rest seeps into the groundwater or is dissipated via the connection to the public rainwater drainage system.

Regardless of which route the precipitation takes, the following aspects are of major importance to ensuring an environmentally sound transfer:

- Impeccable water quality
- Rainwater buffering in the event of heavy rain

When rainwater is discharged into surface water bodies or the groundwater, impeccable water quality is a must. For this purpose, precipitation from traffic routes is cleaned before ending up in rainwater purification basins. In addition, all drainage systems are regularly checked, cleaned and repaired to ensure smooth operation. The water is regularly sampled to make sure it is of a consistently high quality.

Changing weather patterns are one consequence of climate change. Temperatures are rising, regular rainfall is lacking, storms are more prevalent. This also means changing requirements in respect of rainwater discharge, as many systems are not designed for heavy rain events. In order to mitigate the risks stemming from this, we at Manufacturer have invested in basins and rainwater storage options in recent years. These act as buffers, collecting water when it falls in abundance during heavy rain events, before it can be gradually released into rivers and streams. This prevents overloading of these water bodies.



INTEGRATION AND APPRECIATION: WORKING WITH SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

In today's world, sustainability also has a social component. Accordingly, sustainable action means taking social responsibility as well. And we do this at Manufacturer at different levels. One important measure is close cooperation with various sheltered workshops. People with disabilities are often excluded from working life. Sheltered workshops are one way to enhance their inclusive access to the labour market so that they can then feel valued for what they do.

Our colleagues in the sheltered workshops generally take on simple, but still important tasks. One example is packaging small parts into fittings bags. These small bags with brackets, screws and dowels are processed in various institutions that support integration. We've been working very closely with cooperation partners such as Wertkreis in Gütersloh, Bethel in Bielefeld and other workshops of this nature for many years. At the end of the day, these many small items are also essential to assembling the perfect kitchen.

nobilia®



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