

ECOSTYLE 2013 - Press Release

Plastics and Ecology - How does that work? Better than you might think!

koziol is a manufacturer of design products for kitchen, bath, and home. Since it was founded in 1927, all the company's products and components have been exclusively made in Germany. The vertical integration of all production steps is impressive: design, development, construction, moulding, manufacturing, shipping and administration all takes place under one roof, in one location.

For koziol, made in Germany is an essential part of our successful company philosophy.

Our corporate strategy is set for healthy and sustainable growth. All profits are invested right back into keeping our production plants up-to-date, improving our company processes and keeping our employees happy. The technologies we employ all meet the latest, most energy-efficient standards. All our production waste, including packaging material, is recycled and re-used.

We use a groundwater cooling system for our production machines, and, at the beginning of this year, koziol switched to "green electricity" for its production plants, which translates into an annual saving of around 1,276 metric tonnes in carbon emissions.

Our raw materials purchasing policy signally favours local, German suppliers above all others. Furthermore, the vertical integration of all production processes under one roof does away with the problems of long-distance transports. The worldwide distribution logistics of the finished products are tackled with the cooperation of an international, specialist partner also committed to the same sustainability concepts as koziol.

Design and Product Quality

Our sustainability strategy is already inherent in our design phase. The durability and longevity of our products is always our foremost concern. Their unique combination of function and emotion ensures that our products are used and cherished over years and even decades, which underlines their environmental friendliness. The ease of use of our sturdy, unbreakable products makes them suitable for all ages and abilities, from children to senior citizens. The design implementation of each product focuses on the best possible functionality and safety in use factors, such as stability, rounded edges, and ergonomic handles. Resource-saving manufacturing processes are also taken into account in the design phase. One-piece flow production, optimized material thickness, good demoulding characteristics, and short turnaround times ensure an efficient and particularly energy-saving manufacturing process.

Materials

Materials can never be categorized as entirely "bad" or "good", and not even as "sustainable". There is no simple equation that states that a given, natural material is always best. When selecting our raw materials, our primary concern is therefore always their suitability for the intended product. Additional factors, such as local availability or shortest possible transport distances from the supplier, also play a part in this decision.

At koziol, we manufacture products for which certain plastics are the most suitable materials. Our products are designed for continued use, not as once-only disposable articles. At koziol we only use high-grade thermoplastic polymers that are durable and certified as food safe, dishwasher safe, and 100% free from toxins such as BPA or plasticisers. It therefore comes as no surprise that the ÖKOTEST German consumer watchdog organization recently awarded the highest test grades ("Sehr gut") to another two of our products: the CAMILLA watering can and the FUSION room divider.

The polymers are fully recyclable, and can be repeatedly re-used as secondary raw materials. In production, thermoplastic polymers actually have a significantly better energy balance than paper or ceramics, for example.

koziol does not yet use any biopolymers in its products. This is because none of the organic compounds or biopolymers currently available on the world market are able to meet our high quality standards, particularly in terms of food safety, colour fastness, odourlessness, and high surface density.

Social Responsibility

koziol manufactures only in Germany, so our entire workforce benefits from the German work safety and social welfare directives. Safe employment, commensurate pay, further qualification opportunities, and diverse part-time employment models (for example, for parents) are, of course, an integral part of our corporate values. This also includes vocational training for school leavers. At present, koziol has seven trainees or apprentices working towards their qualifications in different vocations according to the approved list of the German chamber of commerce and industry (IHK).

Behind the Scenes

In 2009, koziol opened its "Glücksfabrik" factory outlet at the company site in Erbach/Odenwald, Germany, which also serves as an experience centre revolving around the company philosophy of "Made in Germany". The history of the company is presented in the koziol museum, from 1927, the year in which koziol was founded as an ivory carving workshop, to the present date.

The "Glücksfabrik" concept also permits guided tours of the shop floor, and the koziol shop presents the entire, current product portfolio in an entertaining display that covers 450 sqm. Since last year, koziol has been holding Open Days for our business partners several times a year, which have also been a great success. Traders and retailers are able to spend an entire day at koziol, with a guided tour of our production facilities, a visit to the design workshop, and a hands-on decoration workshop at which they can create their own POS display concepts.