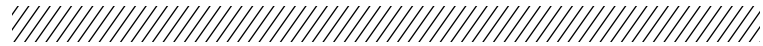


42. Govaerts Recycling



From Waste
to sustainable
Furniture in the
Streets

recentre



Govaerts Recycling NV was founded in 1998. It is a family company, managed by Marleen and Eddy Govaerts, that produces high quality recycled plastics and street furniture. The environment protection theme has always been sufficiently considered at Govaerts Recycling and the company wishes to play an active part in the cycle that contributes to the preservation of our eco system.

Govaerts Recycling stands for quality. With our sophisticated production process and the use of high quality raw materials we are able to produce and supply high quality products.

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‘Govaerts Recycling stands for quality. With our sophisticated production process and the use of high quality raw materials we are able to produce and supply high quality products’, says company director Eddy Govaerts. ‘The basic material consists of 100% very pure industrial recycled PE-HD, PE-LD and PP plastic originating from buckets, crates, packaging, excess production, etc. with specific recipes.’ This homogeneous material, in the shape of milling paste, agglomerate or reggranulate, is mixed with colorant and other additives to improve the product. ‘All this is later melted together at high temperatures and injected into molds. These molds are cooled and then the profiles are automatically pressed out of the mold.’ The production concept was the brainchild of company director Eddy Govaerts. ‘Let’s say it is a kind of hobby I do after work’, he laughs. By adapting the machine itself to the product, he is sure that the end product is what the market wants.

Govaerts Recycling makes an extensive range of plastic products, such as planks used in the building of horse stables, beams for the construction and industry sector, patio floors, park and street furniture and playground products. ‘The strongest features of our products are superior quality, sustainable, rot free and weather resistant, splinter free, natural look, environmentally friendly, easy to maintain,

resistant against acids and salts and hundred percent recyclable.’ All products are produced in a very sustainable way. ‘Our production process is a good example of the cradle-to-cradle philosophy: we use recycled material and our own products can be 100% recycled again. This means that we do not even experience production loss. We grind products with slight defects that come out of the machines ourselves and use them as raw materials again.’

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But Govaerts Recycling also wants to work ecologically in its production process. ‘We work according to the ‘one-step technology’. The raw material is put in and the end product comes out. The production department consists of five production units and a mixing installation. Our energy supply only consists of hundred percent green power, for which we received a certificate from our supplier. In addition, the cooling water used for the cooling of the finished products that come out of the machines is used again. We use as few chemical substances as possible. We also only use pure, chlorine free plastics.’ Eddy Govaerts thinks this way of enterprising is important. ‘I am an entrepreneur and of course I need to gain profit from the products we create. But I think it is important to do that in the most environmentally friendly way possible. Each entrepreneur should consider this, because this planet has to keep going for a long time.’ Govaerts Recycling has grown into one of the market leaders in plastic park and urban furniture. ‘We want to provide a beautiful and sustainable solution to municipalities, cities and other organisations. This street furniture

ranges from benches to plant pots. In urban furniture it is not only important it is a long lasting, sustainable product. It needs to be pleasing to the eye too. And for municipalities it is important that furniture is integrated in the environment. That's why we work together with furniture designers.' That co-operation brings results, because three years ago Govaerts Recycling was awarded the Ovam Ecodesign Award and a Henry van de Velde label for the 'Canvas bank'. 'We appreciate such awards. They give a sense of achievement to the company and its employees.'

Govaerts Recycling has recently also started the development of sustainable and environmentally friendly toys. GOVAPLAY focuses on sustainability in the schoolyard. 'A school or kindergarten yard is not a playground and must meet other requirements. We focus on developing and producing toys that are not only sustainable, but also easy to transport and maintain. The advantage of the playing objects is that they are much safer. Again, there is no danger of splinters and the like.' But Govaerts Recycling wants to go one step further than only supplying a sustainable and recyclable play object. All the schools that buy one of the products can request an educational package with samples of the recycled raw materials and the finished products. Govaerts Recycling thus wants to provide educational tools to schools to inform children on recycling and its advantages.

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The company director thinks that Govaerts Recycling is on the right track. 'It is important that we continue innovating. That enables us to expand our range even more, but also





to give existing products a new lease of life. We continue to look where we could save energy. Sustainable enterprising is increasingly important for future survival in my opinion. It is important that the whole company is behind this idea. That is the case at Govaerts Recycling. Dealing with people in a sustainable way is at least as important, because it gives you happy employees. Sustainability is something that grows slowly in many companies. We have been dealing with it since the launch of the company. The path is not always easy. It often means finding a way through all the regulations. It seems important to me that the authorities get more involved in this story and start to work on raising more awareness.'

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Kizzy van Horne for REcentre

Interviewee /

Eddy Govaerts, Company Director

[Govaerts Recycling](https://www.govaertsrecycling.com)

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Sector • Plastic & recycling industry

Year of foundation • 1998

Number of employees • 25

Turnover (2010) •
9 million EUR