

INSIDE MARLEY'S MANUFACTURING

From humble beginnings in 1959 as a vinyl flooring manufacturer, Marley has become a household name in PVC and polyethylene pipe systems. We tour the company's factory, exploring the business's pipe production and discovering their sustainability ethos. >>>

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 **MARLEY**[®]

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Marley's head office and main manufacturing site has been based at the Manurewa site since 1959 and today employs over 200 people in warehousing, distribution and manufacturing.

In Manurewa, Auckland, Marley's pipe and injection moulding production facility stands as a beacon of innovation and sustainability in New Zealand's manufacturing landscape.

Marley is part of a group of companies called Aliaxis NZ, which employs 450 New Zealanders across the country—over half of them in the factories that make the piping products Marley is renowned for, along with fellow Aliaxis businesses Dynex and RX Plastics. What's more, a remarkable 80 per cent of what Marley sells is made right here in New Zealand.

Quality pipe production

At the core of Marley's production line lies a commitment to quality control and rigorous testing procedures. In the quality control room, hot and cold-water baths for pipe pressure testing ensure that all pipes are

resilient to extreme temperatures far beyond any they would encounter in their lifespan.

Marley's OPTIM DWV pipe production involves innovative double or triple layer co-extrusion technology. This process merges multiple distinct layers, allowing for the creation of pipes with an aesthetically desirable virgin white plastic interior and exterior as well as a recycled content core. This enhances the structural integrity of the pipes but also addresses the challenge of including recycled materials in a high-quality product.

For Marley's Drainflo corrugated drainage line, the use of recycled material is central to the production process. Up to 60 per cent recycled content is used in every coil of Drainflo, with sources such as milk bottles and janitorial bottles for the likes of shampoo and conditioner—diverting what would normally end up in landfill into a durable drainage product that will withstand the test of time.

Commitment to sustainability

A key goal for Marley is constant innovation towards products that do the same job more efficiently, improving performance and reducing waste to help plumbers to lower their carbon footprint. That philosophy is reflected in their own business too. They have invested in power and water monitoring equipment at all sites and across all machinery to enable investigation of energy spikes and easily rectify water leaks and inefficiencies.

Beyond the factory floor, Marley's commitment to sustainability is demonstrated in its ambitious recycling initiatives. Marley has been recycling its own products for the past 25 years, and now is also recycling from external sources.

Although plastic manufacturing has changed a lot over the last 60 years, Marley can dose the right amount of recycled material into the new pipes.

"Plastic's durability makes it a low carbon option for use in building products because it doesn't rust or break easily—some of our systems last up to 100 years," explains Scott Townsend, General Manager – NZ Marketing. "The challenge is what we do with offcuts and leftovers and at end of product life. One of our big investments is in creating a recycling ecosystem to help products return to us at the end of life, along with offcuts and scraps that can be collected, sorted, washed, and shredded into granules to be reused."

Another scrap product saved from landfill is waste generated during vinyl record production. Marley recycles this material thanks to a partnership with Holiday Records and Stebbing's.

In a significant investment in recycling infrastructure, Plastics Recycling New Zealand—a joint venture between Aliaxis and WM New Zealand (WMNZ)—acquired Comspec last year, a business that recycles milk bottles and janitorial waste. Thus far, hundreds of tonnes of products have been recycled instead of ending up in the landfill.

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Scott reveals that Marley received just over \$4 million in funding from the government as part of the Ministry for Environment Plastics Innovation Fund to support this innovation, and Aliaxis alongside WMNZ will invest a further \$8.5 million to create this system. "This will be a truly powerful way to reduce the virgin plastic we bring in from overseas and massively increase the proportion of recycled product in the next few years." >>>



Marley uses over 500,000 cartons per year shipping goods to customers around New Zealand and the world. Keep your eyes peeled in-store for the recently refreshed design!

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At over 10 acres, the Manurewa facility covers an extrusions factory, a moulding factory, a crushing plant, framing area, warehousing and offices.

The system has not been without its hurdles. "To help us overcome the logistical challenge of gathering old plastic to be recycled, we've partnered with community recycling centres to get old pipes back to WMNZ."

Marley utilises two reduction mills at its Auckland factory to convert recyclable plastic into small granules and the company is awaiting the arrival of a new, more powerful mill, which will allow them to get usable recycled material at a much faster rate.

Vision for the future

With an impressive goal to reduce its carbon footprint by 75% globally by 2025, Marley is charting new territories in eco-

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friendly manufacturing. By embracing renewable energy sources and waste reduction initiatives, along with energy-efficient production methods and product designs aimed at minimising resource consumption, the brand's whole ethos sings of sustainability.

Parent company Aliaxis is dedicated to innovation and invests heavily in tech

startups and collaborations that are also shaping the future of pipe production. From technologies like Aquarius Spectrum, which detects leaks in underground pipes with unparalleled accuracy, to solutions like Zyphe, which harnesses heat from hot showers to conserve energy, Marley is shaping the future of water management and conservation.

As Scott reflects on Marley's journey to date, he is optimistic about the future. "We aren't greenwashing, we are taking great strides towards a circular economy. At the end of the day, when I go home to my six-year-old son, I am proud to acknowledge that we are part of the solution." 🌱



Marley has been recycling its own products for 25 years and now also uses external sources, such as shampoo bottles and road markers, to make products.



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