

Installing plastic pipes

General guidelines



Introduction

Modern plastic piping systems are produced and tested to exacting standards that have been developed by co-operation between the manufacturers and testing authorities. Manufacturing equipment and techniques now delivers products that consistently perform in some of the most severe and demanding operating conditions.

However the system will only give a long trouble-free life if it is installed correctly. Short-cuts or deviations from the recommended installation methods can lead to systems under-performing or expensive repair problems that would not have been necessary if the products had been installed correctly at the outset.

With a few exceptions, the practises used to install plastic piping systems above or below ground differ very little from those of other piping systems. However the physical characteristics of plastic materials must be considered when planning and installing systems. Training of contractors new to the materials is essential, and may be carried out by the materials supplier or by an independent agency.

Installation teams

Before commencing any work, the contractor must ensure that the installation team has received training in the methods used for the material to be installed. Where necessary, refresher training should be arranged with the system supplier. Topics that need to be covered include the correct handling methods and jointing techniques. Each member of the team should make up one or two test joints. Depending on the critical nature of the project, it may be prudent to have the joints tested before issuing training certificates to allow the team member to continue on to the job site.

The size of the installation teams will vary according to the project. Factors to be considered include the diameters and lengths of pipe, the type of jointing method to be used, the experience of the team, the installation time programme, the site temperature and weather, and the construction site conditions.

Assuming normal site conditions, the following is a guide to a recommended installation team size for joining plastic piping systems. The number of teams employed will vary according to the size of the project and the time schedule for the installation.

Pipe Nominal Diameter		Jointing Team (Minimum)
1/2" - 1 1/4"	6mm - 32mm	1
1 1/2" - 3"	40mm - 75mm	2
4" - 8"	100mm - 200mm	3
10" +	250mm +	4