

# #PVC is PLASTIC

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## FACT SHEET

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FALSE: PVC pipe is exceptionally durable and corrosion resistant.<sup>1</sup>

**TRUE: PVC has only 10% of the impact strength and only 25% of the burst strength of Ductile Iron Pipe. (Source: dipra.org)**

FALSE: PVC is the most sustainable piping material available.

**TRUE: Ductile Iron Pipe is only the second product in the buried infrastructure industry to earn a coveted Gold rating in the Institute for Market Transformation to Sustainability's SMaRT® certification. It earned high marks for recycled content, exceedingly long life, and the industry's commitment to innovation in conserving energy and water resources while controlling emissions. (Source: dipra.org)**

FALSE: "PVC lasts in excess of 110 years" - Bruce Hollands, Executive Director of the Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association

**TRUE: The service life for modern Ductile Iron Pipe is expected to be at least 105 years. The service life for PVC is less than a fraction of that. (Source: dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/buried-no-longer)**

FALSE: "PVC pipe is a completely recyclable...alternative to traditional corrosion-prone piping materials." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association press release

**TRUE: Over seven billion pounds of PVC are thrown away each year in the U.S., and only a fraction of that is recycled – less than .50%. (Source: youtube.com/watch?v=uwHRAoxhUcl)**

FALSE: "Iron Piping is not 'Green.'" - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association facebook post

**TRUE: Ductile Iron Pipe is only the second product in the buried infrastructure industry to earn a coveted Gold rating in the Institute for Market Transformation to Sustainability's SMaRT® certification. It earned high marks for recycled content, exceedingly long life, and the industry's commitment to innovation in conserving energy and water resources while controlling emissions. (Source: dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/environmental-benefits)**

FALSE: "[PVC is] up to 70 percent less expensive than iron pipe." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association website

**TRUE: A 30,000 foot-long 24-inch Pressure Class 200 Ductile Iron Pipeline could result in savings of \$300,000 in energy costs over 20 years compared to DR 18 PVC pipe of the same size. (Source: dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/environmental-benefits)**

FALSE: "Less energy and fewer resources are needed to manufacture and install [PVC]." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association publication

**TRUE: PVC pipe is sensitive to installation miscues. It cannot withstand relatively minor scratches, and extra care must be taken to avoid large rocks, frozen lumps and debris. A scratch no deeper than the thickness of a dime can ruin an entire length of PVC pipe. (Source: dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/environmental-benefits)**

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FALSE: "PVC pipe has the lowest overall failure rate when compared to cast iron, ductile iron, concrete, steel and asbestos cement pipes." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association website

**TRUE: PVC pipe is weak. It cannot withstand stress, especially common differential stresses that result in localized weak points. The longevity of PVC pipe is dependent on stress and time—the greater the stress, the sooner it will fail. (Source: [dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/dangers-of-using-pvc](https://dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/dangers-of-using-pvc))**

FALSE: "Using PVC pipe leads to better water conservation and lower replacement, maintenance, and repair costs." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association facebook post

**TRUE: Tapping PVC pipe is difficult and time-consuming and can be dangerous - resulting in cracked pipes, injured workers, and severe water loss. Locating a leak in PVC pipe is extremely difficult. Most locating techniques involve transmitting sound waves down the pipeline, sound waves that do not travel well in plastic pipe. (Source: [dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/dangers-of-using-pvc](https://dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/dangers-of-using-pvc))**

FALSE: "PVC pipe is one of the safest and most tested materials used in North America." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association press release

**TRUE: Exposure to the toxins emitted from PVC facilities can cause respiratory problems and other serious health issues. It has also been shown to increase the risk of developing cancer—especially in children. The resins used to make PVC pipe are typically created in these facilities. (Source: [yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/d0cf6618525a9efb85257359003fb69d/7dc7e89d5b4a7e3f852579a400581721!OpenDocument](https://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/d0cf6618525a9efb85257359003fb69d/7dc7e89d5b4a7e3f852579a400581721!OpenDocument))**

FALSE: PVC doesn't leach chemicals like lead, calcium, BPA, or plasticizers into water.<sup>3</sup>

**TRUE: Plastic pipe is susceptible to permeation, which can damage the pipe and contaminate the water. In fact, in a study prepared for the EPA, plastic pipe was involved in 98% of permeation incidents. Ductile Iron Pipe, on the other hand, is not prone to permeation and the contamination of drinking water that may result. (Source: [dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe-resources/technical-publications/general](https://dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe-resources/technical-publications/general))**

FALSE: "There are almost no valid technical reasons for not including PVC pipe in municipal bids except when operating pressures are above 305 psi or when water temperature is above 140°F." - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association blog

**TRUE: PVC pipe is weak. It cannot withstand stress, especially common differential stresses that result in localized weak points. The longevity of PVC pipe is dependent on stress and time—the greater the stress, the sooner it will fail. (Source: [dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/dangers-of-using-pvc](https://dipra.org/ductile-iron-pipe/dipra-facts-and-figures/dangers-of-using-pvc))**

<sup>1</sup> One of the world's most durable products with arguably no known end-life, PVC is the most sustainable piping material available. - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association publication

<sup>2</sup> PVC pipe's greatest environmental attribute is its exceptional durability and corrosion resistance – leading to better water conservation and lower replacement, maintenance and repair costs. - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association facebook post

<sup>3</sup> [PVC] neither leaches chemicals like lead, cadmium, BPA or plasticizers, nor does it release harmful organotins, nor pose major hazards in its manufacture, use and disposal, nor create a dangerous bio-film, nor form dioxins as water passes through. - Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association website