

HANDLING AND STORAGE



PVC and CPVC are strong, lightweight materials, about one fifth the weight of steel or cast iron. Piping made of this material is easily handled and, as a result, there is a tendency for them to be thrown about on the jobsite. Care should be taken in handling and storage to prevent damage to the pipe.

PVC and CPVC pipe should be given adequate support at all times. It should not be stacked in large piles, especially in warm temperature conditions, as bottom pipe may become distorted and joining will become difficult.

For long-term storage, pipe racks should be used, providing continuous support along the length. If this is not possible, timber supports of at least 3" bearing width, at spacings not greater than 3' centers, should be placed beneath the piping. If the stacks are rectangular, twice the spacing at the sides is required. Pipe should not be stored more than seven layers high in racks. If different classes of pipe are kept in the same rack, pipe with the thickest walls should always be at the bottom. Sharp corners on metal racks should be avoided.

For temporary storage in the field when racks are not provided, care should be taken that the ground is level and free of sharp objects (i.e. loose stones, etc.). Pipe should be stacked to reduce movement, but should not exceed three to four layers high.

Most pipe is now supplied in crates. Care should be taken when unloading the crates; avoid using metal slings or wire ropes. Crates may be stacked four high in the field.

The above recommendations are for a temperature of approximately 80°F (27°C). Stack heights should be reduced if higher temperatures are encountered, or if pipe is nested (i.e. pipe stored inside pipe of a larger diameter). Reduction

in height should be proportional to the total weight of the nested pipe, compared with the weight of pipe normally contained in such racks.

Since the soundness of any joint depends on the condition of the pipe end, care should be taken in transit, handling and storage to avoid damage to these ends. The impact resistance and flexibility of both PVC and CPVC pipe are reduced by lower temperature conditions. The impact strength for both types of piping materials will decrease as temperatures approach 32°F (0°C) and below. Care should be taken when unloading and handling pipe in cold weather. Dropping pipe from a truck or forklift may cause damage. Methods and techniques normally used in warm weather may not be acceptable at the lower temperature range.

When loading pipe onto vehicles, care should be taken to avoid contact with any sharp corners (i.e. angle irons, nail heads, etc.), as the pipe may be damaged.

While in transit, pipe should be well secured and supported over the entire length and should never project unsecured from the back of a trailer.

Larger pipe may be off-loaded from vehicles by rolling them gently down timbers, ensuring that they do not fall onto one another or onto a hard, uneven surface.

Prolonged Outdoor Exposure

Prolonged exposure of PVC and CPVC pipe to the direct rays of the sun will not damage the pipe. However, some mild discoloration may take place in the form of a milky film on the exposed surfaces. This change in color merely indicates that there has been a harmless chemical transformation at the surface of the pipe. A small reduction in impact strength could occur at the discolored surfaces but they are of a very small order and are not enough to cause problems in field installation.

Protection – Covering

Discoloration of the pipe can be avoided by shading it from the direct rays of the sun. This can be accomplished by covering the stockpile or the crated pipe with a light colored opaque material such as canvas. If the pipe is covered, always allow for the circulation of air through the pipe to avoid heat buildup in hot summer weather. Make sure that the pipe is not stored close to sources of heat such as boilers, steam lines, engine exhaust outlets, etc.

Protection – Painting

PVC and CPVC pipe and fittings can be easily protected from ultraviolet oxidation by painting with a heavily pigmented, exterior water-based latex paint. The color of the paint is of no particular importance; the pigment merely acts as an ultraviolet screen and prevents sunlight change. White or some other light color is recommended as it helps reduce pipe temperature. The latex paint must be thickly applied as an opaque coating on pipe and fittings that have been well cleaned and very lightly sanded.