



Standard Test Method for Installation Acceptance of Plastic Gravity Sewer Lines Using Low-Pressure Air¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method provides procedures for testing plastic pipe sewer lines, using low-pressure air to prove the integrity of the installed material and the construction procedures. Two procedures are included to find the rate of air leakage—the constant-pressure method and the time-pressure drop method.

1.2 This test method shall be performed on lines after all connections and service laterals have been plugged and braced adequately to withstand the test pressure. The time between completion of the backfill operation and low-pressure air testing may be specified by the approving authority.

1.3 This test method also may be used as a preliminary test, which enables the installer to show the condition of a buried line prior to final backfill, paving, and other construction activities.

1.4 This test method is applicable to all gravity sewer lines made of thermoplastic pipe, reinforced thermosetting resin (RTRP) pipe, and reinforced plastic mortar (RPM) pipe, defined in Terminology D883, D1600, and F412.

1.5 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety problems, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.* For specific precautionary statements, see Section 5.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

C828 Test Method for Low-Pressure Air Test of Vitrified Clay Pipe Lines

C924 Practice for Testing Concrete Pipe Sewer Lines by Low-Pressure Air Test Method

D883 Terminology Relating to Plastics

D1600 Terminology for Abbreviated Terms Relating to Plastics

D2122 Test Method for Determining Dimensions of Thermoplastic Pipe and Fittings

D3567 Practice for Determining Dimensions of “Fiber-glass” (Glass-Fiber-Reinforced Thermosetting Resin) Pipe and Fittings

F412 Terminology Relating to Plastic Piping Systems

2.2 *Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association Standard:*

UNI-B-6-90 Recommended Practice for Low-Pressure Air Testing of Installed Sewer Pipe³

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 The section of the line to be tested is plugged. Air, at low pressure, is introduced into the plugged line. The line passes the test if the rate of air loss, as measured by pressure drop, does not exceed a specified amount in a specified time. Pressure drop may be determined by using Table 1 or Table 2, or calculated by use of the formulas in 9.1.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This low-pressure air test detects damaged piping or improper jointing by measuring the rate at which air under pressure escapes from an isolated section of sewer.

4.2 The rate of air loss will indicate the presence or absence of damaged piping or leaking joints. This test method is not intended to show total system water leakage limits and cannot be used as a quantitative measure of leakage under service conditions for infiltration or exfiltration.

NOTE 1—A finding of acceptable air loss specified in this test method can be interpreted as an installation acceptance test in lieu of infiltration or exfiltration test.

4.3 This test method will ensure the best possible initial condition and quality workmanship of all property-installed sewer pipe.

5. Apparatus

5.1 *Plugs*—Mechanical or pneumatic type.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F-17 on Plastic Piping Systems and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F17.62 on Sewer.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ Available from Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association, Suite 155, 2655 Villa Creek Drive, Dallas, TX 75234.

TABLE 1 Minimum Specified Time Required for a 1.0 psig Pressure Drop for Size and Length of Pipe Indicated for Q = 0.0015

NOTE 1—See Practice UNI-B-6-90.

NOTE 2—Consult with pipe and appurtenance manufacturer for maximum test pressure for pipe size greater than 30 in. in diameter.

Pipe Diameter, in.	Minimum Time, min:s	Length for Minimum Time, ft	Time for Longer Length, s	Specification Time for Length (L) Shown, min:s								
				100 ft	150 ft	200 ft	250 ft	300 ft	350 ft	400 ft	450 ft	
4	3:46	597	0.380 L	3:46	3:46	3:46	3:46	3:46	3:46	3:46	3:46	3:46
6	5:40	398	0.854 L	5:40	5:40	5:40	5:40	5:40	5:40	5:40	5:42	6:24
8	7:34	298	1.520 L	7:34	7:34	7:34	7:34	7:36	8:52	10:08	11:24	11:24
10	9:26	239	2.374 L	9:26	9:26	9:26	9:53	11:52	13:51	15:49	17:48	17:48
12	11:20	199	3.418 L	11:20	11:20	11:24	14:15	17:05	19:56	22:47	25:38	25:38
15	14:10	159	5.342 L	14:10	14:10	17:48	22:15	26:42	31:09	35:36	40:04	40:04
18	17:00	133	7.692 L	17:00	19:13	25:38	32:03	38:27	44:52	51:16	57:41	57:41
21	19:50	114	10.470 L	19:50	26:10	34:54	43:37	52:21	61:00	69:48	78:31	78:31
24	22:40	99	13.674 L	22:47	34:11	45:34	56:58	68:22	79:46	91:10	102:33	102:33
27	25:30	88	17.306 L	28:51	43:16	57:41	72:07	86:32	100:57	115:22	129:48	129:48
30	28:20	80	21.366 L	35:37	53:25	71:13	89:02	106:50	124:38	142:26	160:15	160:15
33	31:10	72	25.852 L	43:05	64:38	86:10	107:43	129:16	150:43	172:21	193:53	193:53
36	34:00	66	30.768 L	51:17	76:55	102:34	128:12	153:50	179:29	205:07	230:46	230:46

TABLE 2 Minimum Specified Time Required for a 0.5 psig Pressure Drop for Size and Length of Pipe Indicated for Q = 0.0015

NOTE 1—Consult with pipe and appurtenance manufacturer for maximum test pressure for pipe size greater than 30 in. in diameter.

Pipe Diameter, in.	Minimum Time, min:s	Length for Minimum Time, ft	Time for Longer Length, s	Specification Time for Length (L) Shown, min:s								
				100 ft	150 ft	200 ft	250 ft	300 ft	350 ft	400 ft	450 ft	
4	1:53	597	0.190 L	1:53	1:53	1:53	1:53	1:53	1:53	1:53	1:53	1:53
6	2:50	398	0.427 L	2:50	2:50	2:50	2:50	2:50	2:50	2:51	3:12	3:12
8	3:47	298	0.760 L	3:47	3:47	3:47	3:47	3:48	4:26	5:04	5:42	5:42
10	4:43	239	1.187 L	4:43	4:43	4:43	4:57	5:56	6:55	7:54	8:54	8:54
12	5:40	199	1.709 L	5:40	5:40	5:42	7:08	8:33	9:58	11:24	12:50	12:50
15	7:05	159	2.671 L	7:05	7:05	8:54	11:08	13:21	15:35	17:48	20:02	20:02
18	8:30	133	3.846 L	8:30	9:37	12:49	16:01	19:14	22:26	25:38	28:51	28:51
21	9:55	114	5.235 L	9:55	13:05	17:27	21:49	26:11	30:32	34:54	39:16	39:16
24	11:20	99	6.837 L	11:24	17:57	22:48	28:30	34:11	39:53	45:35	51:17	51:17
27	12:45	88	8.653 L	14:25	21:38	28:51	36:04	43:16	50:30	57:42	64:54	64:54
30	14:10	80	10.683 L	17:48	26:43	35:37	44:31	53:25	62:19	71:13	80:07	80:07
33	15:35	72	12.926 L	21:33	32:19	43:56	53:52	64:38	75:24	86:10	96:57	96:57
36	17:00	66	15.384 L	25:39	38:28	51:17	64:06	76:55	89:44	102:34	115:23	115:23

5.2 *Air Compressor*—A properly calibrated portable, oil-free air source with a singular control panel containing a main shut-off valve, pressure-regulating valve, 9 psig pressure-relief valve, input pressure gage, and a continuous monitoring pressure gage having a pressure range from 0 psi to at least 10 psi with minimum divisions of 0.10 psi and an accuracy of ± 0.04 psi.

5.3 *Rotameter*, standard CFM reading with an accuracy of ± 2 %.

6. Safety Precautions

6.1 This low-pressure air test may be dangerous to personnel if, through lack of understanding or carelessness, a line is overpressurized or plugs/caps are installed or restrained improperly. It is extremely important that the various plugs be properly installed to prevent the sudden expulsion of a poorly installed or partially inflated plug. Observe the following minimum safety precautions:

6.1.1 No one shall be allowed in the manholes during testing.

6.1.2 Install and restrain all caps and plugs securely.

6.1.3 When lines are tested, it is mandatory that all the caps and plugs be braced as an added safety factor.

6.1.4 Do not overpressurize the lines. Do not exceed 9.0 psig.

NOTE 2—The axial force on a plug at 4 psig internal pressure is $F = P \pi D^2/4$ lb, where D is the inside diameter in inches. Thus, the axial force on an 8-in. plug at the start of a properly-conducted test is over 200 lb. Restraint systems must be designed to handle these forces with adequate safety factors. Every effort should be made to maintain backfill over the pipe during air testing.

6.1.5 A regulator or relief valve set no higher than 9 psi shall be included on all pressurizing equipment.

7. Preparation of the Line

7.1 Clean the section of sewer line to be tested by flushing or other means prior to conducting the low-pressure air test. This cleaning serves to eliminate debris and produce the most consistent results.