



Designation: A674 – 05

# Standard Practice for Polyethylene Encasement for Ductile Iron Pipe for Water or Other Liquids<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation A674; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers materials and installation procedures for polyethylene encasement to be applied to underground installations of ductile iron pipe. It may also be used for polyethylene encasement of fittings, valves, and other appurtenances to ductile iron pipe systems.

1.2 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, 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.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:<sup>2</sup>

**D149** Test Method for Dielectric Breakdown Voltage and Dielectric Strength of Solid Electrical Insulating Materials at Commercial Power Frequencies

**D882** Test Method for Tensile Properties of Thin Plastic Sheeting

**D1709** Test Methods for Impact Resistance of Plastic Film by the Free-Falling Dart Method

**D1922** Test Method for Propagation Tear Resistance of Plastic Film and Thin Sheeting by Pendulum Method

**D4976** Specification for Polyethylene Plastics Molding and Extrusion Materials

### 2.2 ANSI/AWWA Standards:<sup>3</sup>

**C 600** Installation of Ductile Iron Water Mains and Their Appurtenances

**C 105/A21.5** Polyethylene Encasement for Ductile-Iron Pipe Systems

## 3. Terminology

### 3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *polyethylene encasement*—polyethylene material, in tube or sheet form, that is used to encase ductile iron pipe.

3.1.2 *securing overlap*—any one of various methods of holding polyethylene encasement in place at the point of overlap until backfilling operations are completed. This may be accomplished with adhesive tape or plastic tie straps.

3.1.3 *linear low-density polyethylene film*—Film extruded from virgin linear low-density polyethylene raw material.

3.1.4 *high-density, cross-laminated polyethylene film*—Film extruded from virgin high-density polyethylene raw material, which is then molecularly oriented by stretching. Two single layers of the film are then laminated together with their orientations at 90° to one another to form the final product.

## 4. Requirements

### 4.1 Materials:

4.1.1 *Linear low-density polyethylene film*—Linear low-density polyethylene film shall be manufactured of virgin polyethylene material conforming to the requirements of Specification **D4976** shown in **Table 1**.

4.1.1.1 *Thickness*—Linear low-density polyethylene film shall have a minimum thickness of 0.008 in. [0.20 mm].

4.1.2 *High-density cross-laminated polyethylene film*—High-density cross-laminated polyethylene film shall be manufactured of virgin polyethylene material conforming to the requirements of Specification **D4976** shown in **Table 2**.

4.1.2.1 *Thickness*—High-density cross-laminated polyethylene film shall have a minimum thickness of 0.004 in. [0.10 mm].

4.2 *Tube Size*—The tube size for each pipe diameter shall be as listed in **Table 3**.

4.3 *Color*—Polyethylene film may be supplied with its natural color, colors including white and black, or black (weather-resistant) containing not less than 2 percent carbon black with an average particle diameter of 50 nm or less. A

<sup>1</sup> This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee A04 on Iron Castings and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee A04.12 on Pipes and Tubes.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Available from American Water Works Association (AWWA), 1401 New York Ave., NW, Suite 640, Washington, DC 20005.

**TABLE 1 Linear Low-Density Polyethylene Characteristics**

Raw Material Used to Manufacture Polyethylene Encasement Material	
Group, density, and dielectric strength in accordance with the latest revision of Specification <b>D4976</b>	
Group	2 (Linear)
Density	0.910 to 0.935 g/cm <sup>3</sup>
Dielectric strength, volume resistivity	10 <sup>15</sup> ohm-cm, min
Polyethylene Encasement Material	
Tensile strength	3600 psi (24.83 MPa), min (ASTM <b>D882</b> )
Elongation	800 %, min (ASTM <b>D882</b> )
Dielectric strength	800 V/mil (31.5 V/μm) thickness, min (ASTM <b>D149</b> )
Impact resistance	600 g, min (ASTM <b>D1709</b> Method B)
Propagation tear resistance	2550 gf, min (ASTM <b>D1922</b> )

**TABLE 2 High-Density Cross-Laminated Polyethylene Characteristics**

Raw Material Used to Manufacture Polyethylene Encasement Material	
Group, density, and dielectric strength in accordance with the latest revision of Specification <b>D4976</b>	
Group	2 (Linear)
Density	0.940 to 0.960 g/cm <sup>3</sup>
Dielectric strength, volume resistivity	10 <sup>15</sup> ohm-cm, min
High-Density Cross-Laminated Polyethylene Encasement Material	
Tensile strength	6300 psi (43.47 MPa), min
Elongation	100 %, min
Dielectric strength	800 V/mil (31.5 V/μm) thickness, min
Impact resistance	800 g, min. (ASTM <b>D1709</b> Method B)
Propagation tear resistance	250 gf, min. (ASTM <b>D1922</b> )

**TABLE 3 Polyethylene Tube Sizes for Push-On Joint Pipe<sup>A</sup>**

Nominal Pipe Diameter, in.	Recommended Polyethylene Flat Tube Width, in. [cm] <sup>B</sup>
3	14 [36]
4	14 [36]
6	16 [41]
8	20 [51]
10	24 [61]
12	27 [69]
14	30 [76]
16	34 [86]
18	37 [94]
20	41 [104]
24	54 [137]
30	67 [170]
36	81 [206]
42	81 [206]
48	95 [241]
54	108 [274]
60	108 [274]
64	121 [307]

<sup>A</sup>These wrap sizes should work with most push-on joint pipe and fitting bell sizes. Where bell circumferences are larger than the sheet sizes shown, the bell areas should be carefully wrapped with cut film sections, effectively lapping and securing cut edges as necessary; or, alternatively, sufficiently large tube or sheet film to effectively cover these joints should be ordered.

<sup>B</sup>For flat sheet polyethylene, see **5.2.3**.

minimum of 2 percent of a hindered-amine ultraviolet inhibitor is required in any natural or colored film except black film containing 2 percent or more carbon black.

4.4 *Marking requirements*—The polyethylene film supplied shall be clearly marked, at a minimum of every 2 ft along its length, containing the following information:

- Manufacturer's name or registered trademark
- Year of manufacture
- ASTM A674
- Minimum film thickness and material type (LLDPE or HDCLPE)
- Applicable range of nominal pipe diameter size(s)
- Warning—Corrosion Protection—Repair Any Damage

4.4.1 *Marking height*—Letters and numerals used for marking items a through e in Section 4.4 shall not be less than 1 in. [25.4 mm] in height. Item f in Section 4.4 shall be not less than 1½ in. [38.10 mm] in height.

## 5. Installation

### 5.1 General:

5.1.1 The polyethylene encasement shall prevent contact between the pipe and the surrounding backfill and bedding material but is not intended to be a completely airtight or watertight enclosure. All lumps of clay, mud, cinders, etc. which may be on the pipe surface shall be removed prior to installation of the polyethylene encasement. During installation, care shall be exercised to prevent soil or embedment material from becoming entrapped between the pipe and the polyethylene.

5.1.2 The polyethylene film shall be fitted to the contour of the pipe to effect a snug, but not tight, encasement with minimum space between the polyethylene and the pipe. Sufficient slack shall be provided in contouring to prevent stretching the polyethylene bridging irregular surfaces, such as bell-spigot interfaces, bolted joints, or fittings, and to prevent damage to the polyethylene due to backfilling operations. Overlaps and ends shall be secured by the use of adhesive tape or plastic tie straps.

5.1.3 For installations below the water table or in areas subject to tidal actions, or both, it is recommended that tube-form polyethylene be used with both ends sealed as thoroughly as possible with adhesive tape or plastic tie straps at the joint overlap. It is also recommended that circumferential wraps of tape or plastic tie straps be placed at 2 ft [0.6 m] intervals along the barrel of the pipe to help minimize the space between the polyethylene and the pipe.

5.2 *Pipe*—This practice includes three different methods for the installation of polyethylene encasement. Method A and B are for use with polyethylene tubes and Method C is for use with polyethylene sheets.

#### 5.2.1 Method A (see Fig. 1):

5.2.1.1 Cut the polyethylene tube to a length approximately 2 ft [0.6 m] longer than the length of the pipe section. Slip the tube around the pipe, centering it to provide a 1-ft [0.3-m] overlap on each adjacent pipe section, and bunching it accordion fashion lengthwise until it clears the pipe ends.

5.2.1.2 Lower the pipe into the trench and make up the pipe joint with the preceding section of pipe. A shallow bell hole must be made at joints to facilitate installation of the polyethylene tube.

5.2.1.3 After assembling the pipe joint, make the overlap of the polyethylene tube. Pull the bunched polyethylene from the

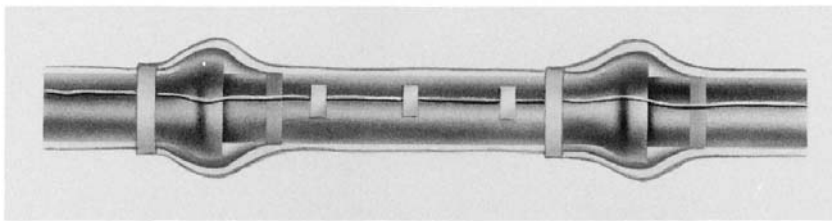


FIG. 1 Method A

preceding length of pipe, slip it over the end of the new length of pipe, and secure in place. Then slip the end of the polyethylene from the new pipe section over the end of the first wrap until it overlaps the joint at the end of the preceding length of pipe. Secure the overlap in place. Take up the slack width at the top of the pipe as shown in Fig. 2, to make a snug, but not tight, fit along the barrel of the pipe, securing the fold at quarter points.

5.2.1.4 Repair any rips, punctures, or other damage to the polyethylene with adhesive tape or with a short length of polyethylene tube cut open, wrapped around the pipe, and secured in place. Proceed with installation of the next section of pipe in the same manner.

5.2.2 Method B (see Fig. 3):

5.2.2.1 Cut the polyethylene tube to a length approximately 1 ft [0.3 m] shorter than the length of the pipe section. Slip the tube around the pipe, centering it to provide 6 in. [150 mm] of bare pipe at each end. Make the polyethylene snug, but not tight, as shown in Fig. 2; secure ends as described in 5.2.1.

5.2.2.2 Before making up a joint, slip a 3-ft [0.9-m] length of polyethylene tube over the end of the preceding pipe section, bunching it accordion fashion lengthwise. Alternatively, place a 3-ft [0.9 m] length of polyethylene sheet in the trench under the joint to be made. After completing the joint, pull the 3-ft length of polyethylene over or around the joint, overlapping the previously installed on each adjacent section of pipe by at least 1 ft [0.3 m]; make snug and secure each end as described in 5.2.1. A shallow bell hole must be made at joints to facilitate installation of the polyethylene tube or sheet.

5.2.2.3 Repair any rips, punctures, or other damage to the polyethylene as described in 5.2.1. Proceed with installation of the next section of pipe in the same manner.

5.2.3 Method C (see Fig. 4):

5.2.3.1 Flat sheet polyethylene shall have a minimum width twice the flat tube width shown in Table 3.

5.2.3.2 Cut the polyethylene sheet to a length approximately 2 ft [0.6 m] longer than the length of pipe section. Center the cut length to provide a 1-ft [0.3-m] overlap on each adjacent pipe section, bunching it until it clears the pipe ends. Wrap the polyethylene around the pipe so that it overlaps circumferentially over the top quadrant of the pipe. Secure the cut edge of polyethylene sheet at approximately 3-ft [0.9-m] intervals along the pipe length.

5.2.3.3 Lower the wrapped pipe into the trench and make up the pipe joint with the preceding section of pipe. A shallow bell hole must be made at joints to facilitate installation of the polyethylene. After completing the joint, make the overlap as described in 5.2.1.

5.2.3.4 Repair any rips, punctures, or other damage to the polyethylene as described in 5.2.1. Proceed with installation of the next section of pipe in the same manner.

5.3 Pipe-Shaped Appurtenances—Bends, reducers, offsets, and other pipe-shaped appurtenances shall be covered with polyethylene in the same manner as the pipe.

5.4 Odd-Shaped Appurtenances—Wrap valves, tees, crosses, and other odd-shaped pieces which cannot practically be wrapped in a tube, with a flat sheet or split length of polyethylene tube. Pass the sheet under the appurtenance and bring up around the body. Make seams by bringing the edges together, folding over twice, and taping down. Handle slack width and overlaps at joints as described in 5.2.1. Tape polyethylene securely in place at valve stem and other penetrations.

5.5 Repairs—Repair any cuts, tears, punctures, or damage to polyethylene with adhesive tape or with a short length of

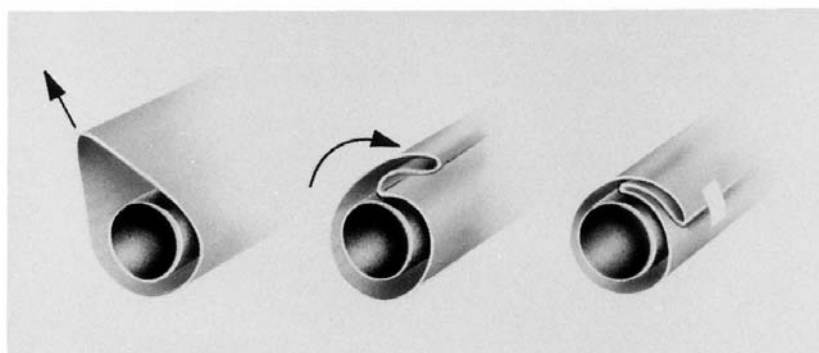


FIG. 2 Slack Reduction Procedure—Methods A and B