



Standard Specification for Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Hot- and Cold-Water Distribution Systems¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F877; 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 (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope*

1.1 This specification covers requirements, test methods, and marking requirements for system components when tested with nominal SDR9 crosslinked polyethylene tubing as a system. Systems are intended for 100 psi (0.69 MPa) water service up to and including a maximum working temperature of ~~180°F (82°C)~~ 180 °F (82 °C). Requirements and test methods are included for materials, workmanship, dimensions and tolerances, burst pressure, sustained pressure, excessive temperature and pressure, and thermo-cycling tests. The components covered by this specification are intended for use in residential and commercial, hot and cold, potable water distribution systems or other applications such as municipal water service lines, radiant panel heating systems, hydronic baseboard heating systems, snow and ice melting systems, and building services pipe.

1.2 The text of this specification references notes, footnotes, and appendixes which provide explanatory material. These notes and footnotes (excluding those in tables and figures) shall not be considered as requirements of the specification.

1.3 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as the standard. The values stated in parentheses are provided for information only.

NOTE 1—Suggested hydrostatic design stresses and hydrostatic pressure ratings for tubing and fittings are listed in **Appendix X1**. Design, assembly, and installation considerations are discussed in **Appendix X2**. An optional performance qualification and an in-plant quality control program are recommended in **Appendix X3**.

1.4 The following safety hazards caveat pertains only to the test method portion, Section 7, of this specification: *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, health, and health/environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.5 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D618 Practice for Conditioning Plastics for Testing

D1598 Test Method for Time-to-Failure of Plastic Pipe Under Constant Internal Pressure

D1599 Test Method for Resistance to Short-Time Hydraulic Pressure of Plastic Pipe, Tubing, and Fittings

D1600 Terminology for Abbreviated Terms Relating to Plastics

D1898 Practice for Sampling of Plastics (Withdrawn 1998)³

D2749 Symbols for Dimensions of Plastic Pipe Fittings

D2837 Test Method for Obtaining Hydrostatic Design Basis for Thermoplastic Pipe Materials or Pressure Design Basis for Thermoplastic Pipe Products

D3140 Practice for Flaring Polyolefin Pipe and Tubing (Withdrawn 1999)³

F412 Terminology Relating to Plastic Piping Systems

F876 Specification for Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing

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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 The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

- F1960** Specification for Cold Expansion Fittings with PEX Reinforcing Rings for Use with Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing
- F1961** Specification for Metal Mechanical Cold Flare Compression Fittings with Disc Spring for Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing (Withdrawn 2018)³
- F1807** Specification for Metal Insert Fittings Utilizing a Copper Crimp Ring for SDR9 Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing and SDR9 Polyethylene of Raised Temperature (PE-RT) Tubing
- F1865** Specification for Mechanical Cold Expansion Insert Fitting With Compression Sleeve for Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing (Withdrawn 2018)³
- F2080** Specification for Cold-Expansion Fittings with Metal Compression-Sleeves for Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Pipe and SDR9 Polyethylene of Raised Temperature (PE-RT) Pipe
- F2159** Specification for Plastic Insert Fittings Utilizing a Copper Crimp Ring for SDR9 Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing and SDR9 Polyethylene of Raised Temperature (PE-RT) Tubing
- F2434** Specification for Metal Insert Fittings Utilizing a Copper Crimp Ring for SDR9 Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing and SDR9 Cross-linked Polyethylene/Aluminum/Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX-AL-PEX) Tubing
- F2735** Specification for Plastic Insert Fittings For SDR9 Cross-linked Polyethylene (PEX) and Polyethylene of Raised Temperature (PE-RT) Tubing
- F2854** Specification for Push-Fit Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Mechanical Fittings for Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Tubing

2.2 *ANSI Standards:*

B 36.10 Welded and Seamless Wrought Steel Pipe⁴

Z 17.1 Preferred Numbers⁴

2.3 *AWWA Standard:*

Manual M-11, Steel Pipe Design and Installation⁵

2.4 *Federal Standard:*

Fed Std. No. 123 Marking for Shipment (Civil Agencies)⁶

2.5 *Military Standard:*

MIL-STD-129 Marking for Shipment and Storage⁶

2.6 *NSF Standard:*

NSF/ANSI Standard No. 14 for Plastic Piping Components and Related Materials⁷

NSF/ANSI Standard No. 61 for Drinking Water System Components-Health Effects⁷

3. Terminology

3.1 The terminology used in this specification is in accordance with Terminology **F412**, Terminology **D1600**, and Symbols **D2749**, unless otherwise specified. The abbreviation for crosslinked polyethylene is PEX. Plastic tubing denotes a particular diameter schedule of plastic pipe in which outside diameter of the tubing is equal to the nominal size plus 1/8 in. Plastic pipe outside diameter schedule conforms to ANSI B 36.10.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *crosslinked polyethylene plastics*—plastics prepared by crosslinking (curing) polyethylene compounds.

3.2.2 *fitting*—an appurtenance such as coupling, elbow or tee used to connect tubing or as an accessory to tubing.

3.2.3 *standard dimension ratio (SDR)*—a selected series of numbers in which the average outside diameter to minimum wall thickness dimension ratios are constant for all sizes of tubing in each standard dimension ratio, and which are the ANSI Z 17.1 Preferred Number Series R 10 modified by +1.

3.2.4 *manifold*—an appurtenance that has at least one inlet and multiple outlets.

3.2.5 *system components*—fittings and manifolds.

4. Materials

4.1 *General*—PEX systems shall use crosslinked polyethylene tubing as described in Specification **F876**.

4.2 Fitting and manifold materials shall meet the applicable requirements as described in Specifications **F1807**, **F1865**, **F1960**, **F1961**, **F2080**, **F2159**, **F2434**, **F2735**, or **F2854**.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

⁵ Available from American Water Works Association (AWWA), 6666 W. Quincy Ave., Denver, CO 80235, <http://www.awwa.org>.

⁶ Available from Standardization Documents Order Desk, DODSSP, Bldg. 4, Section D, DLA Document Services, Building 4/D, 700 Robbins Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111-5098, <http://dodssp.daps.dla.mil>, 19111-5094, <http://quicksearch.dla.mil>.

⁷ Available from NSF International, P.O. Box 130140, 789 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48113-0140, <http://www.nsf.org>.

4.3 *Certification*—PEX tubing and system components, used for the distribution of potable water, shall be products approved for that service by the regulatory bodies having such jurisdiction. These products shall be tested for that service by a nationally recognized and accredited testing laboratory and shall bear the certification mark of the testing agency.

5. Classification

5.1 *Fittings*—This specification classifies fittings including manifolds, intended for use in systems with PEX tubing, by a maximum continuous use temperature that shall be ~~180°F (82°C)~~ 180 °F (82 °C) and by nominal sizes from 1/8 in. through 6 in. on the basis of resistance to burst pressure, hydrostatic sustained pressure, excessive temperature pressure capability, and by thermocycling. Fittings shall be compatible with tubing made to the requirements of Specification F876.

6. Requirements

6.1 *Workmanship*—Fittings shall be made from materials that are homogeneous throughout and free of visible cracks, holes, foreign inclusions, or other defects. All sealing surfaces shall be smooth and free of foreign material. The walls of fittings and manifolds shall be free of cracks, holes, blisters, voids, foreign inclusions, or other defects that are visible to the naked eye and may affect fitting integrity.

6.2 Dimensions and Tolerances:

6.2.1 The dimensions and tolerances of fittings shall meet the specific requirements contained in Specifications F1807, F1865, F1960, F1961, F2080, F2159, F2434, and F2735 or other recognized specification.

6.2.2 Fittings shall be compatible with tubing made to the requirements of Specification F876.

6.3 *Corrosion Resistance*—Fittings shall be made from materials that are generally regarded as corrosion resistant.

6.3.1 Compliance with this specification requires that fittings contained in Specifications F1807, F1865, F1960, F1961, F2080, F2159, F2434, and F2735, and F2854 must meet the Performance and Test Method requirements of F877.

6.4 Hydrostatic Burst:

6.4.1 Tubing and fittings (tested as assemblies) assembled using the manufacturer's instructions shall meet the minimum hydrostatic burst requirements shown in Table 1 when tested in accordance with 7.6.

6.4.2 Manifolds with integral shut-offs (valves) shall be tested with all ports in the full-open or unrestricted position.

6.4.2.1 If the manifold has more than one connection size, the test pressure selected from Table 1 shall be based upon the largest nominal PEX connection.

6.5 Hydrostatic Sustained Pressure Strength

6.5.1 Tubing and fittings (tested as assemblies) shall meet the minimum hydrostatic sustained pressure strength requirements shown in Table 2 when tested in accordance with 7.4.

6.5.1.1 Manifolds with integral shut-off (valves) shall be tested with all ports in the full-open or unrestricted position.

6.6 Thermocycling:

6.6.1 Fittings, assembled using the manufacturer's instructions, shall not leak after completion of 1000 cycles between the temperatures of 60°F (16°C) and 180°F (82°C) 60 °F (16 °C) and 180 °F (82 °C) when tested in accordance with 7.5.

6.6.1.1 Manifolds with integral shut-offs (valves) shall be tested with all ports in the full open or unrestricted position.

6.7 Excessive Temperature—Pressure Capability:

6.7.1 *General*—In the event of a water heating system malfunction, PEX tubing and system components shall have adequate strength to accommodate short-term conditions, 48 h of 210°F (99°C) 210 °F (99 °C), 150 psi (1034 kPa) until repairs can be made.

6.7.2 *Excessive Temperature Hydrostatic Sustained Pressure*—Tubing and system components, when tested as assemblies, shall not fail as defined in Test Method D1598 in less than 30 days (720 h) when tested in accordance with Test Method 7.7.

6.7.2.1 Manifolds with integral shut-offs (valves) shall be tested with all ports in the full open or unrestricted position.

TABLE 1 Burst Pressure Requirements for SDR9 PEX Tubing and System Component Assemblies

Nominal Tubing Size		Minimum Burst Pressures at Different Temperatures			
in.	mm	psi ^A at 73.4°F (23.0°C)	(MPa) at 23 °C	psi ^A at 180°F (82.2°C)	(MPa) at 82.2 °C
1/8	3	870	(6.00)	390	(2.69)
1/4	7	752	(5.19)	336	(2.32)
3/8	10	620	(4.27)	275	(1.90)
1/2	13	480	(3.31)	215	(1.48)
3/8 and larger	16 and larger	475	(3.27)	210	(1.45)

^A The fiber stress for SDR9 PEX tubing used to derive this test pressure is:
at 73.4°F (23.0°C) 73.4 °F (23.0 °C) 1900 psi (13.10 MPa).
at 180°F (82.2°C) 180 °F (82.2 °C) 850 psi (5.86 MPa).

TABLE 2 Minimum Hydrostatic Sustained Pressure Requirements for SDR9 PEX Tubing and System Component Assemblies^{A,B}

Nominal Tubing Size		Pressure Required for Test, psi (MPa) ^A	
in.	mm	180°F (82.2°C)	180 °F (82.2 °C)
1/8	3	355	(2.45)
1/4	7	305	(2.10)
3/8	10	250	(1.72)
1/2	13	195	(1.34)
5/8 and larger	16 and larger	190	(1.31)

^A The fiber stress for SDR9 PEX tubing used to derive this test pressure is: 770 psi (5.31 MPa) at 180°F (82.2°C)-180 °F (82.2 °C).

^B Test duration is 1000 h.

NOTE 2—Tests applicable to assemblies and bends (6.4, 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7) are intended to be performance qualification tests and not tests required of each fitting.

7. Test Methods

7.1 *Conditioning*—The test specimens should be conditioned at 70 to 77°F (23 ± 2°C) and 50 ± 5 % relative humidity for not less than 40 h prior to test in accordance with Practice D618, for those tests where conditioning is required.

7.2 *Test Conditions*—Conduct the tests in the standard laboratory atmosphere of 70 to 77°F (23 ± 2°C) and 50 ± 5 % relative humidity, unless otherwise specified in the test methods or in this specification.

7.3 *Sampling*—A sufficient quantity of tubing and system components, as agreed upon by the purchaser and the seller, shall be selected and tested to determine conformance with this specification (see Practice D1898). In the case of no prior agreement, random samples selected by the testing laboratory shall be deemed adequate.

7.4 *Hydrostatic Sustained Pressure*— Determine in accordance with Test Method D1598, except for the following:

7.4.1 Test at least six joints, from randomly selected specimens assembled per the manufacturer’s instructions with at least 5-pipe diameters between joints.

7.4.2 Test temperature shall be 180 ± 4°F (82 ± 2°C).

7.4.3 The external test environment shall be air or water.

7.4.4 Condition the specimens with water at in accordance with Test Method D1598 a temperature of at least 120°F (50°C).

7.5 *Thermocycling*:

7.5.1 *Summary of Test Method*—This test method describes a pass-fail test for thermally cycling PEX tubing and system component assemblies over a critical temperature range for a selected number of cycles while subjected to a nominal internal pressure. This test method provides a measure of resistance to failure due to the combined effects of differential thermal expansion and creep for PEX tubing and fittings intended for continuous use up to and including 180°F (82°C).

7.5.2 *Apparatus*—A nitrogen or air source capable of maintaining a nominal internal pressure of 100 ± 10 psi (0.69 ± 0.069 MPa) on the specimens is required. The immersion system shall consist of two water reservoirs controlled at 60 ± 4°F (16 ± 2°C) and 180 ± 4°F (82 ± 2°C). The specimen shall be cycled from one reservoir to the other or the hot and cold water shall be alternately cycled over the test specimens automatically and returned to the proper reservoirs.

NOTE 3—Automatic cycling may be accomplished by pumping from each reservoir, through a delivery system having timer-actuated valves, to a specimen water trough having synchronized, timer-actuated return drains. Any automatic apparatus shall provide for complete immersion of the test specimen in the trough.

7.5.3 *Sampling and Specimen Preparation*— Select at least six joints from randomly selected specimens assembled per the manufacturer’s instructions. Close the specimen assembly with any suitable end closures that allow “free-end” mounting and will not leak under the thermocycling conditions, and connect the specimen assembly to the pressure source.

7.5.4 *Procedure*—Pressurize the specimen assembly with nitrogen or air to 100 ± 10 psi (0.69 ± 0.069 MPa) . Immerse in 60 ± 4°F (16 ± 2°C) water to determine if there are any initial leaks. All leaks shall be eliminated before the thermocycling test is started. Thermally cycle the specimen assembly either manually or automatically and under an internal pressure of 100 ± 10 psi (0.69 ± 0.069 MPa), alternately between 60 ± 4°F (16 ± 2°C) and 180 ± 4°F (82 ± 2°C) by means of immersion in water using the following test cycle:

Water immersion at 180°F (82°C)	— 2 min (min)
Water immersion at 180 °F (82 °C)	2 min (min)
Air immersion at ambient	2 min (max)
Water immersion at 60°F (16°C)	— 2 min (min)
Water immersion at 60 °F (16 °C)	2 min (min)
Air immersion at ambient	2 min (max)