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## "On the Waterfront"

by Jim Reed



This month's article from the Keller-Bleisner Engineering report on "Designing, Operating, and Maintaining Piping Systems Using PVC Fittings" is on "Installation Considerations". This section is one that you will want your irrigation specialist to read.

One of the characteristics of PVC piping systems that makes them attractive is the ease of installation, due to their light weight and ease of fabrication. However, precautions must be taken, as with other materials, in storing, handling, joining, laying, blocking, backfilling, filling, and pressure testing.

### Handling

Because of the light weight of PVC, there may be a temptation to handle it roughly. Care should be taken to avoid dropping pipe or fittings since undetected fractures could result, causing later problems. Also, physical damage to the pipe or fittings in terms of scratches or gouges may significantly reduce the long term strength of the component, especially under cyclic surge conditions. Special care should be taken in cold weather to avoid impact damage due to the increased brittleness of the material at reduced temperatures.

If pipe and fittings are going to be stored for extended time periods, they should be shielded from direct sunlight by some opaque covering, allowing air circulation around the components to avoid over-heating. Storage at high temperatures may cause some distortion of the components of the piping system and should be avoided.

### Solvent Welding

Solvent weld joints require care during assembly. ASTM Standard D2855 should be followed, as well as any manufacturer's recommendations. Common problems associated with solvent cement joints are:

1. Inadequate primer or poor priming techniques which fail to provide sufficient glaze breaking and softening of the joining surfaces.
2. Improper application of cement, resulting in non-uniform coverage, e.g. dry places on either of the joining surfaces or puddling inside the joint.
3. Allowing the cement to become too dry before assembly, resulting in poor bonding.
4. Incomplete insertion of the spigot into the socket on assembly, reducing the solvent weld contact area.

If problems such as these occur, inadequate bonding between the spigot and socket occur, which may lead to failure.

Next month: "Installation Considerations (cont'd.)"