

3 October 2019

BPF PIPES GROUP PRODUCES GUIDE TO BRANCH CONNECTIONS FOR WATER AND GAS MAINS

Making effective branch connections in live water and gas mains is now supported by new guidance from the BPF Pipes Group.

The guidance has been produced in direct response to a request from water companies working with the Plastic Pipes Liaison Group, a collaboration between the BPF Pipes Group and Water UK. It combines best technical practice with the need to maintain normal services to customers during operations on live distribution mains. Installing a branch connection and tapping into the main under pressure eliminates the need for squeeze-off or flow-stopping, and the working space required is small so excavation works can be minimised.

Branch saddles can be installed on PE pipes to provide spigot or flanged outlets; to introduce air valves onto a system, or to create a by-pass during the installation of a new branch on an existing main.

Branch saddles are available with electrofusion or mechanical jointing solutions. When installing a branch saddle on a polyethylene main, the BPF Pipes Group and its members recommend that an electrofusion saddle is always used. This is a highly successful method of fitting a strong connection, delivering fully end loaded, homogenous connections, wholly resistant to corrosion and designed and tested to be compatible with existing standards. It can be used for new connections or for existing infrastructure; and for live by-pass systems to enable pipe sections to be altered, diverted or abandoned without loss of supply to any downstream users.

This new guidance is part of a growing resource provided by the BPF Pipes Group to maximise the benefits of polyethylene piping systems for water and gas mains.

Equipment and processes using this guidance are covered by industry documents such as WIS 4-32-08, and this method is designed and tested to EN 12201, EN 15555 and GIS PL2-4.

Clive Ingram of Severn Trent Water commented on the guidance: “This guidance highlights a jointing method that is very efficient and minimises disruption to customers. By making technically sound choices, we will go a long way towards ensuring we have a leak-proof network for future generations.”

The guidance is available at <https://www.bfpipesgroup.com/support-downloads/guidance-notes/> and contact details for BPF Pipes Group members who manufacture and supply branch connections for water and gas applications can be found at <https://www.bfpipesgroup.com/members/member-listings/>