

PVC Pipes Questions and Answers

This document has been issued by the BPF Pipes Group (August 2024) on behalf of its members <https://www.bfppipesgroup.com/members/member-listings/>

Where are PVC pipes used?

In the UK rigid PVC pipes are used for the conveyance of sewage, surface water, and cable protection for both electrical and non-electrical applications. In 2022 BPF Pipes Group members manufactured in excess of 23,223 km of buried PVC drainpipe.

Additionally, in mainland Europe PVC is widely used for drinking water pipes; in 2017 the volume of PVC used for pipes was 1,104ktonnes, with 254ktonnes being used for drinking water.

Source: https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/17233/rest_pvc_investigation_report_en.pdf/98134bd2-f26e-fa4f-8ae1-004d2a3a29b6?t=1701157368019

PVC pipe safety

Legislation such as REACH/UKREACH¹ restricts the addition of dangerous additives.

The PVC industry has worked with regulatory bodies to eliminate the use of certain chemicals and additives.

Note 1: Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals

Are PVC pipes long lasting?

Yes! Research from the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) stated: "The investigations on the PVC sewage pipes studied here confirm the common knowledge that the lifetime of PVC pipe systems will exceed 100 years under most service conditions."

PVC pipes were first produced in Germany in 1935, and many of these pipes are still in service today.

Are PVC pipes comparable to other materials?

Yes! The drainage industry is highly regulated and standardised with various British and European Product Standards ensuring that products compliant with these standards are fit for purpose by setting out minimum requirements.

Can PVC be recycled?

Yes! PVC is one of the most recycled polymers, PVC pipe is available with recycled content, and manufacturers in the UK are keen to increase the volume of recycled material they use vs virgin material.

Are buried PVC pipes chemically compatible with the environment they are installed in?

Yes! PVC has high chemical resistance, meaning that it can be installed in a wide variety of applications, including many brownfield sites.

Don't take our word for it – read the *PVC Questions and Answers, Supporting evidence* document which can be found here <https://bit.ly/4cnfNkH>

Disclaimer – this document is designed to be read in conjunction with the BPF Pipes Group *PVC Questions and Answers, Supporting evidence* document which provides additional detail and gives context to each of the statements made.