



NEWS

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PVC PIPE COST SAVINGS CONFIRMED

WAYNE, N.J., October 7, 1991 -- Contractors can save up to 40 cents on every dollar by using PVC (polyvinyl chloride, or vinyl) pipe when they install plumbing systems, a newly completed study by a leading independent research firm shows. The same study found that PVC used in drain, waste and vent (DWV) applications can result in savings of up to 42 cents per dollar over competitive materials.

The study, based on 1991 material and installation costs and labor rates in estimating the savings advantages of PVC pipe, was conducted by IFT Technical Services, Berkeley, California.

Updating an earlier cost/benefit report completed several years ago, the new study looked at actual building costs in Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, Houston, San Francisco and Seattle. Plumbing and DWV systems were evaluated for four types of structures: a wood frame townhouse, a strip shopping center, a high-rise residential building and a high-rise office building.

On average, the study found that CPVC (chlorinated PVC) plumbing pipe systems cost between 14 and 40 percent less than copper in new hot and cold water installations, according to Joseph B. Zicherman, Ph.D., president, IFT Technical Services.

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When PVC was compared to cast iron pipe in drain, waste and vent installations, the savings varied from 29 to 42 percent, he said.

"This study reconfirms that there are significant cost advantages in using PVC pipe," said Roy T. Gottesman, executive director of the Vinyl Institute, which funded the IFT study. "Further, it is significant to note that vinyl's cost advantages endure over time. Our original report, based on data gathered in 1988, showed cost savings which ranged from 23 to 44 percent in plumbing installations and from 16 to 37 percent in DWV installations."

While PVC pipe has a tradition of safe, proven performance and is capable of meeting existing building codes, little concrete evidence of its superior economic advantages existed prior to the IFT studies, according to Michael K. (Mike) Barish, chairman of the Vinyl Institute's Pipe Resource Organization.

"Moreover, this study doesn't even examine the total lifetime costs and the related replacement costs of the various systems," Barish noted. "When you consider that PVC can easily outlast competitive materials, its advantages become even greater."

PVC pipe has found broad use in plumbing applications and commands approximately three-fourths of the total plastic pipe market. It is expected to maintain a strong hold on the market well into the next century.

Further information on this study is available by contacting the Vinyl Institute, 114 Mayfield Ave., P.O. Box 3053, Edison, NJ 08818-3053.

The Vinyl Institute, a division of The Society of the Plastics Industry, is a national trade association representing the leading U.S. manufacturers of vinyl, vinyl feedstocks, additives and film and sheet products. It is headquartered in Wayne, New Jersey.