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Caution Statement on Polyethylene Saddle Heat Fusion Joints Without Use of Mechanical-Assist Tooling

It is the recommendation of the Plastics Pipe Institute (PPI) that polyethylene saddle fusion joints be made only with a mechanical-assist tool, unless another method is expressly allowed by the pipe or fitting manufacturer. It is further recommended that such a mechanical-assist tool be designed to accomplish the following:

1. Round and straighten the main.
2. Position the fitting so that it is centered on the main and perpendicular to the centerline of the main.
3. Control the force and the alignment of the components during heat and fusion cycles.

General information about fusion joining is available in ASTM F 2620 Standard Practice for Heat Fusion Joining of Polyethylene Pipe and Fittings and the PPI Handbook of Polyethylene Pipe, Chapter 9, "Polyethylene Joining Procedures". Guidance is also available from the pipe or fitting manufacturers.

For applications such as gas distribution, information on joining, qualifying joining procedures, qualifying persons to make joints, and inspection of joints is found in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart F, Sections 192.271, 192.273, and 192.281 through 192.287 for information on joining, qualifying joining procedures, qualifying persons to make joints and inspection of joints. Additional information is available in the American Gas Association, "A.G.A. Plastic Pipe Manual for Gas Service", and in PPI TR-41, "Generic Saddle Fusion Joining Procedure for Polyethylene Gas Piping".

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