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Todd Grafenauer  Murphy Pipelines, WI
Andrew Schipper, PE  City of Ft. Wayne, IN
Greg Scoby, PE  City of Palo Alto, CA (past) and Crossbore Consultants, CA

MUNICIPAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

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Jessie Allen, PE  Arlington Water Utilities, TX
Alan Ambler, PE  City of Casselberry, FL (past), AM Trenchless, FL
Marisa Boyce, PE*  East Bay Municipal Utility District, CA
John Fishburne, PE  Charlotte Water (past), Fishburne Pipeline, NC
Ed Lambing, PE  San Jose Water Co., CA
Holly Link*  Colorado Springs Utilities, CO
Ryan McKaskle, PE*  City of Tulsa, OK
Greg Scoby, PE  City of Palo Alto (past), Crossbore Consultants, CA, Utility Chair
Eric Shaffer, PE*  City of Duluth, MN
Dave Stewart*  City of Lago Vista, TX
Matthew Wirtz, PE  City of Ft Wayne, IN

UNIVERSITIES
Dr. Alan Atalah, PE  Bowling Green State University, OH
Dr. Tom Iseley, PE  TTC, Louisiana Tech University, LA
Dr. Mark Knight, PEng  CATT, University of Waterloo, ON
Dr. Mo Najafi, PE  CUIRE, University of Texas at Arlington, R&D Chair

CONTRACTORS
Todd Grafenauer  Murphy Pipelines, WI
David Mancini  David Mancini & Sons, FL
Kevin Miller  Miller Pipeline Co., IN, Education Chair

CONSULTANTS
Joe Castronovo, PE  AECOM (ret.), ASCE UESI, GA
Steven Kramer, PE  COWI North America, Inc., NJ
Ernest Lever  Infrastructure Sector, Gas Technology Institute, IL

PPI
Camille Rubeiz, PE  Municipal & Industrial Division (M&I), TX, Co-Chair

FORMER MEMBERS
Dr. Sam Ariaratnam, PE  Arizona State University, AZ
Mike Heitmann  Garney Construction, MO
Milton Keys  Indy Water/Veolia, IN
Matthew Klein  Veolia/ Citizens Energy, IN
Jonathan Leung, PE  Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, CA
George McGuire  Ditch Witch, OK
Dr. Ken Oliphant, PEng  JANA, ON
Rafael Ortega, PE  LAN, TX
Collins Orton  TT Technologies, CA
Fred Ostler, PE  Joint Powers Water Board, WY
Chad Owens, PE  City Utilities, MO
Dr. Larry Slavin  OPCS, NJ
Dan Smolik  Garney Construction, FL
Serge Terentieff, PE  EBMUD, CA

* Denotes others who contributed to development of this document which includes the following non-MAB members:

Ron Collins  JCM Industries, TX
Angelo DuPont  City of Arlington, TX
Robert Item, PE  City of Palo Alto, CA
Jim Johnston  McElroy Manufacturing, OK
Robert Justus  City of Palo Alto, CA
Rick Van Kesteren  WAGA, NL
Rick Ponder  Integrity Fusion, GA
Jeff Wright  GF-Central Plastics, OK
The MAB-4 Basic HDPE Repair Options document was developed by the Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) and published with the help of the members of the Plastics Pipe Institute, Inc. (PPI).

The MAB-4 Basic HDPE Repair Options is intended as a guide for engineers, users, contractors, code officials, and other interested parties for use in the repair of high density polyethylene (HDPE) pressure water piping systems. The local utility or engineer may need to modify these guidelines to adapt the document to local conditions, operations, and practices.

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The MAB serves as an independent, non-commercial adviser to the Municipal & Industrial (M & I) Division of the PPI. Once adopted, MAB will consider revising this document from time to time, in response to comments and suggestions from users of the model specification. Please send suggestions of improvements to Camille George Rubeiz, PE, F.ASCE, at crubeiz@plasticpipe.org.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. If you are able to eliminate water through the pipe, then fusion should be the first choice of repair.
2. Squeeze off tools can create dry conditions for fusion.
3. All mechanical couplings should include pull out resistance/restraint or be used with external restraint clamps when using non-restraint mechanical couplings.
4. Internal stiffeners should be used for all mechanical couplings.
5. Corrosion protection should be provided for all underground metallic fittings.
6. Fabricated fittings should always be at least one SDR thicker than pipe and have the same Pressure Rating as the pipeline.
7. Illustrations for repair with fabricated fittings are appropriate for molded fittings.
8. For mechanical connections, contact the fitting manufacturer to verify that these connections are designed to work specifically with HDPE.
Leak Discovered on HDPE Pipe

Determine Leak Type

Puncture one pipe wall

Size of Hole

≤ 1”

≤ 1”

See Fig. 1, 2, 3

> 1”

Puncture both pipe walls

Remove damaged section and install new pipe with two Electrofusion (EF) Couplings

See Fig. 4

Severed Main

Mechanical Fitting

Remove fitting and replace with appropriate fitting

See Fig. 4, 5, 7

Mechanical Saddle

Remove saddle and replace with EF Saddle or replace pipe segment with new section and 2 EF couplings

See Fig. 3 or 5

Butt Fusion

Remove pipe segment with butt fusion and install new segment with 2 EF couplings

See Fig. 4

Electrofusion Coupling

Remove pipe segment with EF coupling and install new segment with 2 EF couplings

See Fig. 4

Electrofusion Saddle

Reheat EF saddle, remove and install new EF saddle or remove pipe section containing saddle

See Fig. 5

HDPE Line Fitting (Tee Ell, Cross, Valve) Molded or Fabricated

Remove leaking fitting and install new fitting with 2, 3 or 4 EF couplings

See Fig. 6, 8, 9, 10

Pull out Mechanical Joint (MJ)

Cut out appropriate length of existing pipe to fit new MJ adapter, use EF coupling

See Fig. 7

Service Line (≤ 3”)

Repair or replace service line

See Fig. 11, 12, 13
ELECTROFUSION REPAIR OF LEAKING SADDLE FUSIONS:

Leaks due to suspect electrofusion saddle joints can be repaired by removing the leaking connection and replacing the saddle. A weak or leaking fusion is likely due to contamination in the fusion zone or the lack of pipe preparation at the time of initial installation. In such cases, the saddle can be removed by re-energizing the heating coil to the point that the PE material becomes melted and softened. Once re-melted, the old saddle can be pulled from the pipe and a new saddle can be installed in the same location.

PROCEDURE:

Excavate to expose the suspect saddle and depressurize the system. Disconnect the service line and clean the pipe surfaces immediately surrounding the suspect saddle.

If the saddle has a “permanent” clamping device, such as a bolt-on strap or plastic underpart, the clamp must be removed. Connect the electrofusion control box to the suspect saddle and start the fusion cycle.
When the fusion cycle is complete, immediately pull the saddle from the pipe. Wear gloves and use caution to avoid burns from hot plastic or wires. Small tapping saddles can normally be removed by hand, but if necessary a suitable rubber mallet may be used to strike the fitting.

Inspect the pipe surface for damage. Remnants of PE material from the saddle will likely remain on the pipe surface and can be removed with a rasp to re-shape the pipe curvature. Once the remnants are removed, the pipe can be prepared for fusion by peeling/scraping using approved procedures. The tap hole may require that the peeler blade be manipulated to allow it to pass over the hole in the pipe as it revolves over that area.

Place the new fitting over the tap hole carefully to ensure that the hole is inside of the fusion zone boundary. A mandrel or guide may be inserted into the tap hole to aid in aligning the replacement fitting over the hole. Clamp the fitting in place and fuse per normal procedures.

Allow the fitting to cool per normal procedures prior to removing the clamp, reconnecting the service line, and returning to service.
Leak Discovered on HDPE Pipe

Determine Leak Type

Puncture one pipe wall

Size of Hole

≤ 1"

See Fig. 14, 15, 16, 17, 26

Puncture both pipe walls

> 1"

See Fig. 18

Severed Main

Mechanical Fitting

Replace fitting

See Fig. 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22

Mechanical Saddle

Remove saddle and replace

See Fig. 16, 17, 23, 25

Butt Fusion

Remove section of pipe containing butt fusion and replace with new pipe section and 2 mechanical Pull Out Resistant couplings or encapsulate

See Fig. 18, 24, 26

Electrofusion (EF) Coupling

Remove pipe segment with EF Coupling, install new pipe segment with 2 mechanical Pull Out Resistant couplings

See Fig. 18

Electrofusion (EF) Saddle

Remove pipe segment containing EF saddle, install new pipe segment with 2 mechanical Pull Out Resistant couplings, install service saddle on new pipe segment

See Fig. 18

Line Fitting (Tee, Ell, Cross, Valves)

Remove leaking fitting and install new fitting with 2, 3 or 4 mechanical Pull Out Resistant couplings

See Fig. 27, 28, 29

Pull out Mechanical Joint (MJ)

Cut out appropriate length of existing pipe to fit new MJ adapter

See Fig. 22

Service Line (≤ 3")

Repair or replace service line

See Fig. 30

See Fig. 18

See Fig. 18

See Fig. 18

See Fig. 18

See Fig. 18, 24, 26

See Fig. 14, 15, 16, 17, 26

See Fig. 18
MECHANICAL

Fig. 14 Band Clamp
Fig. 15 Band Clamp w/Pull Out Restraint
Fig. 16 Repair Sleeve requires outlet plug

Fig. 17 Repair Sleeve Flanged Outlet
Fig. 18 HDPE Pipe Spool Replacement w/Mechanical Couplings
Fig. 19 HDPE Flange

Fig. 20 Pull Out Resistant Coupling by Flange
Fig. 21 Fabricated Ell w/Flanges
Fig. 22 Restrained Mechanical Joint

Fig. 23 "Mega-Lug" DIP Spool
Fig. 24 "Mega-Lug" Connection to DIP Ell
Fig. 25 Service Saddle

Fig. 26 Band Clamp capable of Encapsulating Butt Fusion
Fig. 27 Fabricated Tee
Fig. 28 Fabricated Ell

Fig. 29 Fabricated Cross
Fig. 30 Service Leak - Stab Type Coupling
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **ASTM F1041**: Standard Guide for Squeeze-Off of Polyolefin Gas Pressure Pipe and Tubing
- **ASTM F1055**: Standard Specification for Electrofusion Type Polyethylene Fittings for Outside Diameter Controlled Polyethylene and Crosslinked Polyethylene (PEX) Pipe and Tubing
- **ASTM F1563**: Standard Specification for Tools to Squeeze-off Polyethylene (PE) Gas Pipe or Tubing
- **ASTM F2620**: Standard Practice for Heat Fusion Joining of Polyethylene Pipe and Fittings
- **ASTM F3190**: Standard Practice for Heat Fusion Equipment (HFE) Operator Qualification on Polyethylene (PE) and Polyamide (PA) Pipe and Fittings

- **MAB-1**: MAB Generic Electrofusion Procedure for Field Joining of 12 Inch and Smaller Polyethylene (PE) Pipe
- **MAB-2**: MAB Generic Electrofusion Procedure for Field Joining of 14 Inch to 30 Inch Polyethylene (PE) Pipe
  [https://plasticpipe.org/pdf/mab-02-generic-electrofusionn.pdf](https://plasticpipe.org/pdf/mab-02-generic-electrofusionn.pdf)
- **MAB-3**: MAB Model Specifications for PE 4710 Buried Potable Water Service, Distribution and Transmission Pipes and Fittings
- **MAB-4**: MAB Basic HDPE Repair Options