PLASTIC PIPING DATA COLLECTION INITIATIVE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
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The Plastic Pipe Database Committee (PPDC), composed of representatives of the American Gas Association (AGA), American Public Gas Association (APGA), Plastics Pipe Institute (PPI), National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and U.S. Department of Transportation’s (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), coordinates the creation and maintenance of a database (“PPDC Database”) to proactively monitor the performance of plastic pipe and metal and/or plastic appurtenances contained within plastic piping systems. While AGA provides administrative services to the PPDC, it does not independently test, evaluate, or verify the accuracy or soundness of any statements contained in the PPDC database or made by the PPDC.

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All questions, requests for revisions, or other communications relating to the PPDC, the PPDC database or this document should be sent to the PPDC c/o American Gas Association, 400 N. Capitol St., N.W., Suite 450, Washington, D.C. 20001.
Frequently Asked Questions on PPDC Data Reporting

Note: highlighted text and areas with strike through text indicate updated information.

1. Who do I contact at AGA if I have a question on the data to be submitted?

   Please contact Kate Miller at AGA; (202) 824-7342, kmiller@aga.org  
   or visit the PPDC website at https://www.aga.org/plastic-pipe-database-collection-committee

2) Who is collecting the data and how will the confidentiality of participating operators be guaranteed?

   AGA will collect all data and keep it in a secure database file. Operator-specific identifiers are not entered into the database. Only PPDC members or those expressly designated by the PPDC will review the data.

3) Will my company’s name be included in the PPDC database?

   No. All references to the volunteering operator will be destroyed after entry of the submitted data into the PPDC database. The operator name will not be tied to the data in any way. However, the PPDC will keep your company’s name as part of a separate list of voluntary participants and periodically publish the list of active participants.

4) Will the PPDC provide a list of names of operators participating in the data collection initiative?

   Yes, the PPDC will publish a list of operators who are actively submitting data or negative reports. The anonymity of the operator’s data will still be preserved. There will be no link between any operator and the database.

5) Why does the PPDC data entry form request a contact name and phone number of the person submitting the data to AGA?

   If incomplete or insufficient data are submitted, AGA will contact that person to clarify or to provide adequate data so that the data can be entered into the AGA PPDC database. The contact name and phone number will not be entered into the AGA PPDC database.

6) Will the PPDC database be accessible to my company? The general public?

   With the exception of the AGA staff who is responsible for the database, the database will only be viewed by members of the PPDC or those expressly designated by the PPDC, during scheduled meetings. The data will not be published or available in print.

7) What information will be made available to interested parties?

   The PPDC will periodically review the data and make status reports available based on joint conclusions about the data.
8) How often should I be sending the data to AGA?

The reporting period is monthly including reports that no plastic piping system and appurtenance failures and/or leaks have occurred during that reporting period (negative reports). AGA sends a monthly reminder e-mail to all operators who have volunteered to submit data.

9) Can I use email to submit my data to AGA?

Yes, but, AGA cannot ensure confidentiality if the data is emailed. To ensure confidentiality, it is recommended that you fax the data, or put the data on a CD and mail it to AGA. We are asking that at the end of each month, all data for a monthly period either be faxed to (202) 824-7136 or mailed to the American Gas Association, 400 N. Capitol Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20001, Attention Ms. Kate Miller.

10) Do I have to submit a separate form for each failure and/or leak data point?

Yes, if you use paper forms. Otherwise, you can send AGA a report on a CD that will allow you to consolidate your reporting by entering multiple data points on one form. Contact Kate Miller at AGA at (202) 824-7342 for a blank multiple data entry form.

11) What if I don't have any plastic piping system and appurtenance failures and/or leaks during the reporting period?

Submit a negative report for each reporting period, stating that no plastic piping system and appurtenance failures and/or leaks have occurred during that reporting period. This helps AGA keep track of the flow of data and completes the database for each reporting period. If you already are a participant in the program, you should have received a blank negative report form electronically, as part of the AGA response to you. The form is also available on the AGA website.

12) What is the difference between the PPDC and the PHMSA Mechanical Fitting Failure Report?

The two reports are separate and independent of each other. PHMSA is only collecting mechanical fitting information. The PPDC is collecting data on all plastic failures and leaks. It is important to report to both organizations. The PHMSA Mechanical Fitting Failure Report is a mandatory report and the PPDC is voluntary for all leak classifications of in-service plastic piping systems and appurtenances.

13) What types of failures and/or leaks are reportable under the PPDC initiative?

Only report plastic piping system and appurtenance failures and/or leaks of in-service pipe, fittings or joints (this includes installation errors that fail and/or leak after the pipe is put in service). Do not report failures and/or leaks of piping before the piping is put into service. Report failures and/or leaks of any plastic pipe and metal and/or plastic appurtenances contained within plastic piping systems. For a better understanding of how to complete the form and data
entries, please access a presentation on the AGA website at: https://www.aga.org/plastic-pipe-database-collection-committee

14. Are third-party damages to be reported under this initiative?

Only under certain circumstances. Report only plastic piping system and appurtenance failures and/or leaks that you suspect are a delayed result of previous third-party damage. Do not include third-party impact failures and/or leaks that were discovered at the time the damage was done by the third party.

15. Is “Outside Force” acceptable as a descriptive cause of a failure or leak, to be entered under the Other category in Item 8 of the PPDC Report form?

No. The description “outside force” is not sufficiently specific and, in some cases, may inadvertently duplicate items included under other categories in Item 8, where specific data are being sought by the PPDC for specific causes. Examples of such are:

- tree roots which fall under category 8(b) Point Loading,
- excessive earth loading which falls under category 8(d) Excess External Earth Loading, or
- delayed third-party damage which falls under category 8(f) Previous Impact.

Therefore, if you use outside force, as the failure and/or leak cause, please be more specific and describe what caused the outside force. For example, if it is lightning or static electricity, please specify as such.

16. Do we have to use the PPDC Report form?

For ease of administration and to enhance the consistency of data entered into the database, it would facilitate data input if all volunteer gas companies used the same report; however, if you prefer to use your own company report, you may send that to AGA. Be sure to include a description of the entries if they are not self-explanatory when using your own report.

17. Must all areas of the form be completed in order to submit it to AGA?

You should complete as much of the form as you can, but blank spaces are acceptable if you do not have the information.

18. What will the Committee look for when reviewing the data supplied by our companies?

The PPDC will review the data submitted by the volunteer gas companies with the primary goal of determining if there are trends associated with plastic piping systems. See Status Report https://www.aga.org/plastic-pipe-database-collection-committee

19. If I have an incident under investigation by my company, the Federal Government, or the State Government, when should I send in my information to the PPDC?
Operators should not submit plastic piping system failure and/or leak information to the PPDC until the investigation has been completed.

20. Do I report a failure and/or leak of a metallic fitting used on a plastic line?

Yes, this information provides valuable information about fittings used in plastic piping systems.