



Mayor
Scott Harden

Council President
Patricia Smith

Councilor
Bruce Nissen

Councilor
John Miner

Councilor
Brian Loy

Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Committee Members,

The Wood Village City Council has many duties. One of the duties that is central to preserving excellent constituent service is maintaining a safe, durable, cost-effective utility infrastructure. A second duty is preserving home rule. Our ability to do both is under threat from HB 4043.

HB 4043 would prevent our city from establishing any ordinance, code or rule determining the best pipe to use for water and sewer projects. It will force us to spend additional resources evaluating pipe types each time we have a project. It will ignore the expertise of our public works staff and leave project evaluation up to outside engineers who have little knowledge of our existing facilities or how those facilities might be adversely impacted by introducing different pipe types.

In Wood Village we have already spent the time and dollars necessary to do an evaluation of the cost, safety, durability and functionality of different pipe types. Our standard is Ductile Iron.

Ductile Iron has a greater impact strength, tensile strength and burst strength than PVC. It is also less susceptible to degradation due to changes in temperature. As a result, Ductile Iron pipes have a lifespan of 100 years, compared to 50-75 years for PVC pipe. This increased durability also means Ductile Iron is easier to handle in the field. It is less susceptible to scratch and fracture so it is safer, easier and less expensive to fit in the field or tap in the field when our city needs to add users to the utilities. Ductile Iron's superior strength makes it more disaster resilient as well.

As our city expands, we have to do frequent "locates" for pipes in the ground. Because it is made from metal, Ductile Iron is much easier to locate. PVC requires a tracing wire to be easily discovered. This saves us time and makes our locates more accurate, leading to fewer unintended consequences such as hitting a water pipe with a backhoe.

Being made from metal thereby making it easier to locate is not the only reason why metal is a better choice than plastic. Ductile iron is made from recycled steels. It is SMaRT certified by the Institute for Market Transformation to Sustainability (MTS). MTS is an ANSI-accredited standards developer that gave Ductile Iron its certification based on an evaluation criterion that includes assessing its environmental, social and economic benefits throughout the supply chain and the environmental impact the product will have throughout its lifespan.

PVC is not made from recycled metals or an environmentally conscious process. It is made from petro-chemicals, vinyl chloride and dioxins.

If your intent is to ensure that cities are making safe and economical pipe choices, I would say you are being redundant. We are making those choices. We are making them without the need for outside engineers. We are making them without advice and/or campaign contributions from the American Chemistry Council. We are making those decisions with service to our constituents and the safety of our constituents at the forefront of the decision-making process. We encourage you to kill HB 4043 in your committee.

T. Scott Harden

T. Scott Harden: Mayor of Wood Village