

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**PIPELINE**

**(Feet)**

**Code 516**

**Placement.** Pipelines shall be placed so that they are protected against hazards imposed by traffic, farm operations, freezing temperatures, or soil cracking. Other means of protection must be provided if the depth required for protection is impracticable because of shallow soils over rock or for other reasons. Abrupt changes in grade must be avoided to prevent rupture of the pipe.

Trenches for plastic pipelines shall be free of rocks and other sharp-edged materials, and the pipe shall be carefully placed to prevent damage.

Plastic pipelines may be placed by plow-in equipment if soils are suitable and rocks and boulders will not damage the pipe. Plastic pipelines installed by the plow-in method require surface compaction and shaping in addition to the normal plow-in operations.

**Testing.** Pipelines shall be pressure tested by one of the following methods:

1. Before backfilling, the pipe shall be filled with water and tested at design working head or a minimum head of 10 ft., whichever is greater. All leaks shall be repaired, and the test shall be repeated before backfilling.
2. Pipelines shall be pressure tested at the working pressure for 2 hours. The allowable leakage shall not be greater than 1 gallon per diameter inch per mile. Should the test exceed this rate, the defect shall be repaired until retest show that the leakage is within the allowable limits. All visible leaks shall be repaired.

**Backfilling.** All backfilling shall be completed before the line is placed in service. For plastic or copper pipe, the initial backfill shall be of selected material that is free from rocks or other sharp-edged material that can damage the pipe. Deformation or displacement of the pipe must not occur during backfilling.

All installation and backfilling shall be done in a workmanlike manner. Provisions shall be provided for stabilizing disturbed areas and controlling erosion, as necessary.