



MYTH vs FACT | PEX

MYTH: PEX is a choice only for residential applications.

FACT: PEX is widely used in a variety of commercial, institutional, educational, and industrial applications for plumbing and hydronic heating and cooling, not just residential!

MYTH: PEX is too small for my project.

FACT: PEX is now made in sizes up to 2" to 4" for plumbing and hydronic heating/cooling applications.

MYTH: PEX cannot be used in non-combustible construction.

FACT: PEX can be fire-stopped to restore penetrations to original ratings, just as other piping systems. Depending on the manufacturer, certain configurations of PEX systems may be used in applications requiring fire-resistive construction.

MYTH: PEX plumbing systems are no different than the old polybutylene (PB) systems.

FACT: PEX is not like polybutylene and is subjected to much more rigorous testing requirements when it comes to resistance to oxidation from chlorine. PEX systems

also utilize a different fitting material that is not subject to chlorine attack.

PEX is a proven product with at least 35 years of use in Europe and 25 years of use in the US! For additional information, refer to PPI TN-31.

MYTH: I've heard that PEX has taste and odor issues, or releases chemicals in the water.

FACT: The experience of water taste and odor is subjective to each individual and his/her unique sensitivities and history. Despite publicized claims that may indicate the contrary, PEX is completely safe to use and complies with all existing potable water requirements, such as Standard NSF 61.

MYTH: Insert fittings used with PEX have a drastic effect on reducing pressure and cause reduced flow.

FACT: Generally speaking, PEX systems use fewer fittings than other traditional systems due to its flexibility. Insert fittings are easily accommodated in system designs, as their equivalent lengths are included in pressure loss calculations just as they are for traditional copper systems. Modern fixtures are restricted in flow, not the tubing.

MYTH: PEX has no resistance to sunlight exposure.

FACT: PEX tubing is rated for limited sun exposure, from one month to six months, and is also available in protective packaging! Exposure to direct sunlight should, however, be limited only to on the jobsite during installation. Ask your manufacturer for more specifics.

MYTH: PEX cannot be used in return air plenums.

FACT: PEX piping systems have been tested and listed for use with rated plenum wraps and insulation. Ask your manufacturer for listing and installation details.

MYTH: PEX is more difficult to design or engineer than rigid pipes.

FACT: PEX is flexible in the smaller diameters and well-suited to new installations and retrofits.

Refer to the PPFA website and contact your manufacturer for more information. <https://www.ppfahome.org/publications.aspx?prod=4>

MYTH: PEX expands and contracts more than other plumbing systems.

FACT: PEX does expand more than other products, but is also flexible, reducing surge pressures, noise, and strain. There are a number of options for designing around the expansion characteristics. Consult your PEX supplier for suggestions.

MYTH: PEX has water flowing at higher velocities than traditional piping materials and that could present problems, right?

FACT: PEX is very suitable for velocities up to 8-10ft/s. Indeed, the flow velocities permissible with PEX can often result in better performing plumbing systems by delivering hot water faster. PEX does not suffer from erosion/corrosion wear if hot water is flowing above 5 ft/s and surge pressures resulting in water hammer are greatly reduced by PEX tubing's ability to quickly absorb and defray these pressure spikes. Higher efficiency fixtures today are generally lower flow, further reducing flow velocities.

MYTH: PEX is not sustainable or “green” like other pipes.

FACT: PEX is actually one of the best choices for sustainability. PEX conserves resources, energy and water better than other systems by delivering hot water more efficiently.

See the PPFA LCA for more information: https://www.ppfahome.org/pdf/Peer_Reviewed_Pipe_Use_Phase_Report_combined_Final.pdf