

THE BUFFALO NEWS

September 1, 2016

LETTER IS QUITE MISLEADING ON THE ISSUE OF PVC PIPES

An Aug. 24 letter, "Let's consider all options when replacing water pipes," contains serious inaccuracies.

The author references a University of Michigan study sponsored by the ductile iron pipe industry, a connection which should have been disclosed to readers. The study falsely claims Utah State University's Dr. Steven Folkman, who has extensively analyzed the break rates of different pipe material, stated the life expectancy of PVC pipe is limited to between 41 to 60 years. But Folkman said no such thing, and wrote a letter telling the study's authors that he made no such statement. The letter goes on to say that Folkman's research, along with at least 15 other published studies from around the world, all conclude that "properly designed and installed PVC will have an expected life in excess of 100 years" and has the lowest water main break rate.

Additionally, a recent City of Detroit analysis shows that the pumping efficiency for ductile iron pipe continually declines with age. In moderately corrosive soils the American Water Works Association says it may only last 11 to 14 years. With 75 percent of all utilities containing corrosive soil conditions, it is a rather important fact.

It's true the best type of pipe should be used in Western New York and elsewhere. Which is precisely why PVC pipe is the leading material used by municipalities across our nation to replace corrosion-prone iron piping.

*Bruce Hollands
Executive Director
PVC Pipe Association
Dallas, Texas*