

# “BID QUESTIONS” ARE YOU MONITORING THEM?

The Wisconsin DOT uses Federal authority to allow contractors to choose the pipe type in certain situations under Class IIIA or Class IIIB pipe where 12” to 36” RCP has been designed.

In November 2020, the plastic pipe industry began asking this question during the bid letting stage.

“Per updated FDM Chapter 13 (updated Feb 18, 2020) the use of Class IIIA and Class IIIB storm sewers shall be used at every opportunity possible, regardless of ADT, when installations are:

- 12-36 inches in diameter
- located on non-interstate or divided US Highways (except for use in temporary use or maintenance crossovers in the median)
- Maximum cover heights are 15 feet or less for Class IIIB and 11 feet or less for Class IIIA storm sewer pipe.
- Minimum cover heights are greater than or equal to 2 feet.

Based on this design guidance, will the contractors be permitted to bid with proper competitive bid items for SSP Class IIIA and/or IIIB in lieu of the sole specified SSPRC Class III and/or IV?”

## “RCP Questioned”

		Asked	Changed to plastic
2020	November	5	4
	December	9	7
2021	January	6	2
	February	1	1
	March	5	3
	April	3	0
	May	0	0
	June	0	0
	July	0	0
	August	0	0
	September	2	1
	October	0	0
	November	1	0
	December	1	0
2022	January	0	0

## Actions taken have an impact:

- Contacted designers and/or Public Works Directors to make them aware of the questions. **Several big projects resulted in RCP staying as designed.**
- On April 14, 2021, a virtual presentation was made on the changes occurring at the bid opening stage to members of the Wisconsin American Public Works Association **A draft of the presentation was provided to WisDOT staff and suggested edits were made.**
- The WCPA continues to work with WisDOT on the the risks associated with these late changes.



LinkedIn post by County Materials Corporation: “Due to increasing traffic demands in Kenosha County, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation expanded State Highway 50 and further developed the area’s storm water system. With reliability and a service life that can exceed 100 years, reinforced concrete pipe is the preferred choice of many municipalities. **County Materials delivered 75,000 feet of reinforced concrete pipe and 1,200 precast structures during this two-year project.**”

Mandrel lowered to test 24” HDPE pipe



## Not so successful:

Racine Wisconsin project where more than 5,000’ of RCP was changed to plastic pipe just weeks prior to bids being opened!

Per WisDOT, The city did not meet the 50% threshold of funding for sewers, so the City had no impact on the pipe type used.

The Consultant overseeing the construction for WisDOT said, **“this project should never have gone plastic!”**.

## A successful story:

**Over 5,000 feet of pipe requested to be changed were kept as RCP due to action taken during the bidding process just weeks before bids were open!**



Clark Wantoch, P.E.  
WCPA  
Executive Director

Wearing my “City of Milwaukee Hat” after 34 years working with WisDOT: “If we at the City of Milwaukee were not able to get the pipe type wanted, we would have considered using Sewer Enterprise funds to cover the 50%. A decision that could be made at the 60% or 90% plan stage but not when the change is weeks before the bid opening.”