For uncertain or demanding applications, CISP is the more durable choice.

Ralph Ferrell, CPD, on the False Economy of PVC Firewall/Floorslab Penetrations

"We had a college dormitory project—multiple bathrooms per floor, in five connected buildings that were four-stories each, housing 750 students. I specified cast iron waste and vent throughout the building and the owner value-engineered it out in lieu of PVC solid wall piping as suggested by the plumbing contractor. They said, 'we can't afford it, we have to go with PVC.'"

"PVC is allowable, but the penetrations have to be properly sealed. And that can often cost more than the shift from CISP to PVC saves you."

"By substituting PVC for the cast iron, the contractor was giving the owner a credit for $100,000. Changing the fire-stopping to accommodate PVC piping increased cost dramatically exceeding what the owner expected."

"It only seemed like it made sense because they didn't take the full cost into account in their VE process. That's not saving money, it's just shifting cost to a different line item."

For more case studies on cast iron and the perils of value engineering, go to charlottepipe.com/VE.

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