

Pipe Splitting vs. Pipe Pulling: Selecting the Proper Tooling



Acme provides pulling cables in various sizes and lengths along with splitting or pulling head options to ensure unmatched flexibility, accommodating a wide range of pipe diameters and host pipe materials.

When using the host pipe as a conduit trenchless method, you will choose between two methods: Pipe Pulling or Pipe Splitting. The method you choose will be based on factors such as pipe material, soil conditions, pull length and your previous experience in that region.

When to Choose Pipe Pulling

- Best for: Short pulls, in compressible/moist/clay-rich soil. Typical method for replacing lead, galvanized or copper.
- Process: The entire length of the host pipe is removed.
- Tool: Puller Head

When to Choose Pipe Splitting

- Best for: Long pulls in dry/gravelly/low-compressible soil. Typical method for replacing lead or plastic pipes.
- Process: The host pipe is split in place using a single or double blade splitter head.
- Advantage: May require less pulling force since the host line does not need to break loose
- Tool: 1-Blade or 2-Blade Splitter Head

Recommended Methods by Pipe Type

Replacing	Recommended Method	Tool
Lead Water Lines	Split or Pull	1-Blade Splitter Head or Puller Head
Plastic Water Lines	Split	2-Blade Splitter Head
Galvanized Water Lines	Pull	Puller Head
Copper Water Lines	Pull	Puller Head



Lubrication for Splitting

For successful splitting, lubricate the entire interior length of the host pipe before pulling. Use vegetable oil or liquid dish soap to reduce friction and binding.

Best Method: Use the ACME Suction Machine.

The machine's high suction pulls the lubricant through the entire length of host pipe, enabling a smooth split.

Without lubrication, friction between the host pipe's inner scale and the Splitter Head may cause binding, reverting the splitting process into a pulling process.

Splitter Heads and Puller Heads

Splitter Heads	Cable Size	LEAD 5/8"	LEAD 3/4"	LEAD 1"	Plastic 3/4"	Plastic 1"	Plastic 1.25"	Plastic 2"	Copper 3/4"	Copper 1"	Galvanized 3/4"	Galvanized 1"	Description	Back Diameter	Nose OD
511	7/16	x	x						x	x	x	x	1 blade, splits lead, copper	1.75	0.600
512	7/16		x						x	x	x	x	1 blade, splits lead, copper	1.85	0.700
513	1/2		x	x					x	x	x	x	1 blade, splits lead, copper	1.85	0.700
514	9/16			x						x			1 blade, splits lead, copper	2.00	0.920
521	7/16				x	x							2 blade splits plastic	1.75	0.600
522	1/2					x	x						2 blade splits plastic	2.25	0.830
523	1/2				x	x							2 blade splits plastic	1.80	0.652
524	9/16					x							2 blade splits plastic	2.00	0.845
525	9/16					x							2 blade splits 1" plastic	2.50	0.845
526	9/16					x							2 blade splits 1" plastic	3.00	0.845
527	11/16							x					2 blade splits 2" plastic	2.50	1.55
528	11/16							x					2 blade splits 2" plastic	3.00	1.55

Puller Heads

531	7/16	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	No Blade, pulls lead, copper, galvanized	1.85
532	1/2		x	x					x	x	x	x	No Blade, pulls lead, copper, galvanized	1.85
533	9/16			x						x		x	No Blade, pulls lead, copper, galvanized	2.00



ADDRESS:
W13355 CO RD. KK
RIPON, WI 54971



PHONE:
920-376-4222



WEBSITE:
www.acmetrenchless.com