

Be Winter-Ready Inside and Outside the Home



With cold weather on its way, homeowners are encouraged to take a few simple steps to prevent damage to household water pipes caused by freezing. Property owners are responsible for the maintenance of the water service line from the curb to the house, as well as any in-home piping including meter repair costs.

While customers commonly protect outdoor water pipes that are subject to freezing and bursting during subzero temperatures, they should also take steps to protect pipes and water meters inside the home that are also vulnerable to damage from freezing as well.

Meters and the pipes connected to them are often close to outside walls and are particularly vulnerable to freezing if heat fails or windows are left open during a cold snap. Water inside the meter can freeze, damaging it and requiring replacement of the meter at the homeowners' expense!

We encourage customers to take the following precautions to reduce freezing or bursting pipes, as well as any damage to the water meter.

Before Frigid Weather Sets In

Know What Areas of Your Home are Most Vulnerable to Freezing – Basements, crawl spaces, unheated rooms, and outside walls are at higher risk of having temperatures affect pipes.

Eliminate Sources of Cold Air Near Water Lines – Allow room heat to freely circulate around these areas. Seal cracks or holes in windows, walls, or doors near the meter or pipes.

Know the Location of Your Main Water Shut-Off Valve – If a pipe freezes or bursts, you will want to know where to shut off the water immediately.

Protect Your Pipes and Water Meter – Wrap Exposed Pipes with insulation or use electrical heat tracing wire; newspaper or fabric may also work. For outside meters, keep the lid to the meter pit closed tightly and let any snow remain on the cover. Snow is an insulator.



When Temperatures Reach Freezing

If you have pipes that are vulnerable to freezing, allow a small trickle of water to run overnight to keep from freezing up. The cost of extra water is low compared to cost of repairing a broken pipe.

Expose pipes to warmer room temperatures by letting warm air to freely circulate the area. Set up a small space heater for pipes that are more likely to freeze.

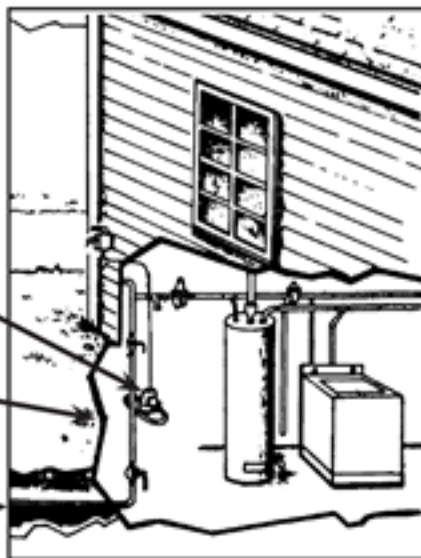
Check for cracks in the vault cover of outside meter installations – A cracked cover permits cold air to enter and all insulation value to be lost. The Double cover is then unable to protect against freezing.

Where to Look for Potential Problems

Room heat should circulate freely around water meter and pipes.

Seal cracks in walls, windows and doors near meter and pipes (insulate if necessary, periodically check to make sure insulation is dry).

Service line buried a minimum of 5 feet.

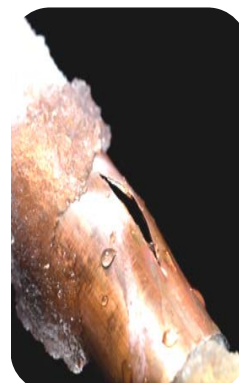


If Your Pipes Freeze

Do Not attempt to thaw frozen pipes with running water – Immediately shut off water!

Apply heat to the frozen pipe by warming air around it – Applying heat directly to a pipe works as well, use a hair dryer or space heater. *Be sure to never leave space heaters unattended, avoid use of kerosene heaters and open flames.*

Once pipes have thawed – Turn water back on slowly and check for cracks and leaks.



Key Reminders

If You Are Away – Have a friend, relative, or neighbor check the property to ensure that the heat is functioning correctly and pipes have not frozen.

Report Leaking Pipes – Heritage Village Water advises that sub-freezing temperatures can influence aging water mains to break and cause unsafe driving conditions. If your water service is disrupted, or you see a water running in the road that does not appear to be caused by snow melt, rain, or any other obvious source, than it may be a sign of a damaged water main, please contact our 24-7 customer service center at 203-264-8100.