

Cold Weather Plumbing Tips

Keep Water Pipes from Freezing!

Follow These Steps to Prevent Frozen Pipes

- Seal all air leaks that may let an icy blast reach your pipes.
- Water pipes located next to an outside wall are often subjected to sub-freezing temperatures. Any plumbing located in a garage or any other unheated building is susceptible to low temperatures. Any exposed pipes should be wrapped or insulated. There are other devices such as heat tape which can be used to keep pipes from freezing.
- Keep the water meter box lid closed to prevent the meter from freezing.
- Don't forget outside faucets. Turn off valves to outside faucets and then drain any water in the faucets. If there are no valves to outside faucets, they may be protected by insulating them and then placing a plastic bag over them to protect the insulation.
- Pipes in cabinets could be located against an outside wall. Even if these pipes have been insulated, you should consider leaving the cabinet doors open to allow the heat in the room to keep them from freezing.
- If your house has a crawl space located under it, close all air vents located in the foundation wall. This will prevent the pipes in the crawl space from being exposed to the cold air.

If Your Water Pipes Freeze

Even if all precautions are taken you still might find a frozen pipe in your house. Open the cold water faucet nearest the frozen pipe to relieve the pressure of expanding ice that may cause a pipe to burst.

Thawing a Frozen Pipe

Be careful! Gentle heat from a light bulb, hairdryer on warm setting or heat tape is good. If the pipe is already cracked from freezing, as the water thaws, it may begin to spray out risking danger of electrocution if it sprays the appliance you are using for thawing. **Do not use a torch or other open flame.**

Find Your Main Water Cut-off Valve

Look for this now! Imagine the panic, if water was pouring through the house from a broken pipe. Locate the main water cut-off valve, mark it, and make sure everyone in the house knows where it is. Most main water cut-off valves are located on the wall where the water enters the house or near the washing machine or water heater.

If you decide to let your faucet drip during cold weather, don't forget to place a bucket or cup under the faucet to use the collected water on plants, for pets, etc. Letting your faucet drip should only be used on pipes that are vulnerable to freezing.



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