

Cold Weather Tips

With the onset of winter, unpredictable weather can sneak upon you and wreak havoc on unprepared water pipes. Icy winds and dipping temperatures can do a lot of damage to your home by freezing pipes and leaving you without flowing water. There are several precautions you can take now to help minimize cold-weather impacts.

Before Freezing Weather

- ❄️ Disconnect and drain hoses from outside faucets
- ❄️ Turn off and drain irrigation systems and backflow devices. Wrap backflow devices with insulating material
- ❄️ Wrap outside faucets with insulation or newspaper
- ❄️ Cover foundation vents with foam blocks thickly folded newspaper or cardboard
- ❄️ Insulate hot and cold pipes in unheated areas, such as the garage, crawl space or attic
- ❄️ Show household members how to turn off water to the house in case of emergencies

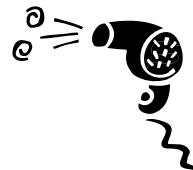


During Freezing Weather

- ❄️ Open cupboard doors under sinks, especially where plumbing is in outside walls, to let interior heat warm pipes
- ❄️ Temporarily, keep a steady drip of cold water at an inside faucet farthest from the meter. This keeps water moving, making it less likely to freeze
- ❄️ If you are away for any length of time, shutting off the water can reduce the chances of broken pipes. Leave the heat on at least 55 degrees. Shut off water to the house and open all faucets to drain pipes; flush the toilet once to drain the tank, but not the bowl. Call the City to turn off water at the meter
- ❄️ Be a good neighbor. If a neighbor is away or you are next to a vacant house, notify the City if you see or suspect a leak
- ❄️ Check on the elderly and make sure they are OK

If your Pipes Freeze

- ❖ **NEVER thaw a frozen pipe with an open flame.** You may start a fire and at the very least, your pipe will burst. Use hot air from a hair dryer, the exhaust from a vacuum cleaner, or a closely monitored heat lamp or electric heater



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- ❖ If your lines are frozen, assume they may be broken or split somewhere. Purchase leak clamps at a hardware or plumbing store. Be ready to shut off your water (see below) in a hurry when a line thaws
- ❖ If there is no water at all to your home, the problem may be at the street. If the water service is frozen at the meter or the service to the water main, it is the City's responsibility
- ❖ If your pipes break, shut off the water at the shut-off valve and turn off the circuit breaker or gas to the water heater
- ❖ If pipes are frozen, contact the City so we can ensure water is flowing from your meter correctly. However, our crews are not able to help repair frozen pipes inside your home

To contact the City about water issues call:

503 357-3011

Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

After-hours Emergencies call:

503 629-0111

Washington County Dispatch