Protect Your Pipes During Freezing Temperatures

It is very important to protect the pipes in your home from freezing when the temperatures dip below 32˚. Freezing can lead to pipes bursting or cracking and costly repairs.

Some pipes are more prone to freezing than others because of their location in the home:

- Pipes located in exterior walls (usually bathrooms and kitchen sinks)
- Any plumbing located on the exterior of your home (hose bibb)
- Exposed pipes, especially those in unheated areas (attics, crawl spaces, garages, and water heaters)

The best way to protect your home from frozen water lines and costly repairs is to winterize your home before the temperatures drop below 32˚.

Suggestions:

- Shut your irrigation systems off at the main valve.
- Disconnect garden hoses and install insulation or faucet insulators on outside spigots.
- Have insulation from your hardware store on hand to install over pipes at risk of freezing.

When Freezing Temperatures are Imminent

- Let the cold-water drip from any faucet served by exposed pipes or those in exterior walls. Running water through the pipe, even at a trickle, helps prevent pipes from freezing.
- Open all cabinet doors on exterior walls to allow your pipes to warm up from your home's heating system.
- Keep the thermostat set to the same temperature day and night.

What happens if my pipes freeze?

Once temperatures rise, frozen pipes generally thaw, and water will flow again. In some cases, however, the expansion of the ice causes the pipe to crack or burst. After a freeze, it is important to inspect pipes for damage.

Suggestions:

- Know how to shut off the water main to your home. (If you are able stop the flow of water immediately from the ruptured pipe, you will reduce the damage drastically.)
- Use warm towels to wrap around a pipe that may be frozen. Barely turning on your faucets along exterior walls helps to alleviate pressure from building up between the faucet and an ice blockage, which can prevent pipes from bursting.
- Call a Professional for assistance.
- **NEVER** try to thaw a pipe with an open flame or torch.
- Remember that where there is standing water there is serious potential for **ELECTRIC SHOCK** so be very cautious with any electrical equipment.