

Taking Winter by Storm

2002-2003 Winter Preparedness

Water Pipes

Frozen water pipes aren't life threatening, however frozen or broken water pipes do cause damage to homes each winter. If pipes in the walls aren't properly insulated, they can freeze and rupture. (An eighth-of-an-inch crack in a pipe can release up to 250 gallons of water a day, soaking floors, rugs, and furniture.) To prevent the mess and aggravation frozen pipes cause, protect your home or apartment by following the simple steps below.

Before Cold Weather

- Locate and insulate pipes most susceptible to freezing--typically those near outer walls, in crawl spaces, or in the attic. Insulation made especially for this purpose is available.
- Wrap pipes with heat tape (UL approved).
- Seal any leaks that allow cold air inside where pipes are located.
- Disconnect garden hoses and, shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the short span of pipe just inside the house.

When It's Cold

- Let hot and cold water trickle at night from a faucet on an outside wall.
- Open cabinet doors to allow more heat to get to uninsulated pipes under a sink or appliance near an outer wall.
- Make sure heat is left on and set no lower than 55 degrees.
- If you plan to be away: (1) Have someone check your house daily to make sure the heat is still on to prevent freezing, or (2) drain and shut off the water system (except indoor sprinkler systems).

If Pipes Freeze

- Make sure you and your family know how to shut off the water, in case pipes burst. Stopping the flow of water can minimize the damage to your home. Call a plumber and contact your insurance agent.
- Never try to thaw a pipe with an open flame or torch.
- Always be careful of the potential for electric shock in and around standing water.

For additional winter preparedness information contact the nearest office of the National Weather Service, local American Red Cross Chapter, local emergency services office, or the Virginia Department of Emergency Management at 10501 Trade Court, Richmond, Virginia 23236.



CITY OF STAUNTON VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
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COLD WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

Cold weather is here. Very cold temperatures and wind may cause frozen and broken water pipes in homes and businesses. This can be avoided if the owners or occupants take reasonable precautions. As a public service, the Public Works Department recommends several tips that can prevent pipes from freezing during the winter:

- 1. Close in any open crawl spaces and underneath porches where pipes may be exposed.**
- 2. Insulate pipes in areas likely to be exposed to below freezing temperatures.**
- 3. Allow an outside faucet to trickle during very cold weather, especially at night when there is no water flow in a building for many hours, or if you are out of town. Moving water is not likely to freeze and the cost to run a trickle is minimal.**
- 4. If a building is vacant, call the Public Works Department at 332-3860 to disconnect the water service, and then drain the system.**

If pipes burst, shut off the main valve immediately to prevent costly waste of water and further damage. Call the Public Works Department at 332-3892 during regular business hours or 332-3896 after hours/weekends for emergency assistance.