

Cold Weather Concerns: Frozen Pipes

Bitterly cold temperatures have plagued New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut in recent years, and when temperatures drop, the risk of your pipes freezing and bursting skyrockets. You can help prevent the mess and costly damage of frozen pipes by taking steps to beat the freeze.

Preventing Frozen Pipes

The following simple preventative measures may help protect your pipes the next time temperatures drop:

- Eliminate sources of cold air near pipes by repairing broken windows; increasing insulation in walls; closing crawl spaces; and eliminating drafts near doors and windows, and around phone and electrical outlets.
- Cover pipes with insulation sleeves, particularly those pipes near exterior walls, windows, crawl spaces and in basements. Electrical heat tapes and thermostatically-controlled heat cables can also be used. *Caution: Closely follow all manufacturers' installation and operation instructions.*
- Disconnect all outdoor hoses. Turn off the water supply to exterior faucets and cover them with an insulated cup or install "freeze-proof" outdoor faucets.
- Keep garage and warehouse doors closed if those areas contain water supply lines.
- Open cabinet and closet doors to help to allow warmer air to circulate around pipes.
- Leave faucets dripping to allow water to flow through the system. If hot and cold lines serve a spigot, open each one, as both are vulnerable to freezing.
- Ensure that fire sprinkler piping is sufficiently insulated and maintain adequate heat for extra protection from the cold. *Note: Sprinkler pipes tend to freeze before other water pipes because the water is not moving; this represents a double risk because it impairs the fire protection capabilities of the sprinklers and can cause significant water damage if the frozen pipes burst.*
- Keep the thermostat at 55 degrees or higher, even when your business is closed.
- Know the location of your main water shut off valve. If a pipe bursts, shutting off the water promptly can help minimize the damage.

When Pipes Freeze

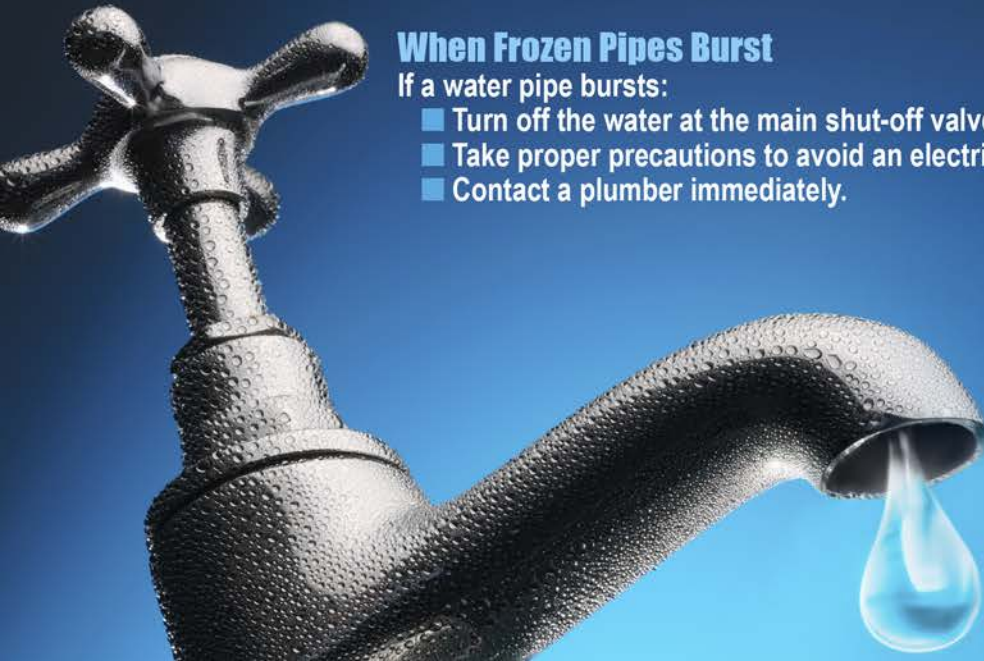
If you turn on your faucets and no water comes out:

- Keep the faucet open. As you treat the pipe and the frozen area begins to melt, water will begin to flow. Running water through the pipe will help melt ice in the pipe.
- Apply heat to the pipe using an electric hair dryer. Start by warming the pipe close to the faucet and work toward the coldest section of pipe. *Caution: Do not use electrical appliances in areas of standing water and never use an open flame to thaw pipes.*
- Apply heat until full water pressure is restored.
- If you are unable to locate the frozen area, if the frozen area is not accessible, or if you are unable to thaw the pipe, call a licensed plumber.

When Frozen Pipes Burst

If a water pipe bursts:

- Turn off the water at the main shut-off valve immediately to prevent additional damage.
- Take proper precautions to avoid an electrical shock from being in or near standing water.
- Contact a plumber immediately.



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