

COLD WEATHER PLUMBING TIPS

Help Prevent Your Water Pipes from Freezing!

- Seal all air leaks that may let an icy blast reach your pipes.
- Insulate pipes that are prone to freezing, such as those near an outside wall or in unheated areas of your home such as a garage.
- If temperatures are expected to fall below 20 degrees, leave water dripping slowly from faucets.
- Keep the water meter box lid closed to prevent the meter from freezing. Report broken or missing lids by calling Winchester Municipal Utilities weekdays from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at (859) 744-5434. After business hours or on weekends, call (859) 744-6582.
- 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 you plan an extended vacation during cold weather, call Winchester Municipal Utilities at (859) 744-5434 to have the water turned off at the meter. Then, you may drain your water pipes; turn off the water heater and other water using devices, to give your pipes extra protection from freezing.

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. If you cannot locate the freeze and no water is coming out of any tap, there is a chance that your service line or your meter is frozen. Call Winchester Municipal Utilities weekdays from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at (859) 744-5434 and request someone to check your meter. After business hours or on weekends, call (859) 744-6582. Please be patient in inclement weather as there are probably many other customers in the same situation. If your meter is not frozen, it is likely that the service line to your home is. In this case, you may need the assistance of a plumber. All lines from the customer's side of the meter box to the residence are the property owner's responsibility.

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. DO NOT use a blow torch or any type of flame to thaw a frozen line. In addition to the danger of fire, extreme heat could thaw the pipe too rapidly, causing it to burst.

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 water cut-off valves are located on the wall where the water enters the house or near the washing machine or water heater.

