









# Cold Weather Water Tips




## Before Freezing Weather Sets In

-  *Wrap exposed pipes*  
Cover any exposed pipes with insulating material. If you do not have commercial insulating material use plastic, newspaper, rags or blankets.
-  *Secure basements against the cold*  
Plug up drafty cracks and repair broken window panes.
-  *Block air passages into crawl spaces*  
Check crawl spaces to be sure pipes are protected. Use cardboard or rags to block air passages.
-  *Check outside faucets*  
Remove hoses from outside faucets and check the washers to be sure there are no leaks, which could freeze and back up into the household plumbing.
-  *Locate your shut-off valve*  
Make sure every member of the household knows where your main water shut-off valve is located. The shut-off valve should be used in the event of a burst pipe or if you have a significant leak. The shut-off valve is usually located where the water pipe enters your house or on a vertical pipe leading from the point of entry inside your basement wall or crawl space. In some homes, it can be found in the utility room. If you do not have a main shut-off valve, you should install one for your protection.

## During Freezing Weather

-  *Keep meter box lids closed*  
Do not open your meter box, as injuries can result from lids, which are not properly secured. Also, cold air can freeze the meter. If you notice a meter box lid, which is not properly secured, please call your local water company.
-  *Make sure heat reaches your pipes*  
If your pipes are enclosed in a cabinet under the bathroom or kitchen sink, leave the doors open so the heat can get in.
-  *Keep a trickle of water running*  
During periods of low usage and particularly on sub-zero nights, keep a trickle of water running from the faucet highest in the home. This trickle should be a steady stream the size of the lead in a pencil.

## If You Have a Frozen Pipe

-  *Wait for the pipes to thaw*  
If you have some running, the safest and cheapest thing to do is wait for the frozen pipes to thaw.
-  *Never use an open flame*  
Never try to thaw a pipe with a flame, because you may start a fire.
-  *If all else fails, and you're on a public water system, call your local water company. If you're on a private well, call a plumber.*