

# Preventing Frozen Pipes



## What Causes Frozen Pipes?

The water inside pipes can freeze when outdoor temperatures drop below freezing. As freezing water expands, it causes the pressure inside the pipes to increase, possibly leading to bursting pipes.

## Preventing Frozen Pipes

- Insulate pipes, especially those close to outside walls, attics or crawl spaces where the chance of freezing is greatest
- Seal air leaks surrounding or near pipes
- Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage
- Disconnect all outdoor hoses and turn off water to exterior faucets and sprinkler systems
- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing
- Keep heat at 55 degrees F. or higher even when you are out of town
- During a cold spell turn on both hot and cold faucets near outside walls to allow a small trickle of water to run during the night
- If you need to be away from home, leave the heat on and drain your water system before you go
- Identify the locations of shutoff valves so that you are prepared to stop the flow of water as soon as possible when a pipe bursts

## What to Do When Pipes Freeze or Burst

If pipes freeze:

- Open all faucets
- Apply heat to the section of pipe using an electric heating pad wrapped around the pipe, an electric hair dryer, a portable space heater (kept away from flammable materials), or by wrapping pipes with towels soaked in hot water
- If all else fails, call your plumber

If pipes burst:

- Shut off the water immediately to prevent additional damage
- Take proper precautions to avoid an electrical shock from being in or near standing water
- If all else fails, call your plumber