

Press Release

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Prevent Freezing Pipes

Waukesha, WI, - January 11, 2024, Cold weather and wind chills are on the way and that means we can expect frozen water pipes and water damage if exposed areas aren't properly insulated or we aren't careful about winter heating. Here are some problem areas, warning signals and tips to minimize the chance of freezing water pipes.

PROBLEM AREAS

- Pipes near broken or open basement windows
- Unheated crawl spaces and equipment rooms
- Pipes near the foundation or cracks in the basement wall
- Pipes near exterior wall in unheated room
- Inadequate heating in un-insulated or uncovered outside pit
- Pipes under kitchen sinks or cupboards

WARNING SIGNS OF FREEZE

- Unusually cold water temperature (less than 35° F) at any fixture
- Unusually low water flow at a fixture
- Discolored water at a fixture
- Low water pressure at a fixture
- Extremely cold piping at a fixture
- Sputtering sound when opening a fixture

THAWING FROZEN PIPES

- It's safest to use hot air from a hair dryer or exhaust from a vacuum cleaner
- Use heat tape, but with caution, and unplug when finished

PREVENTION

- Check water temperature and run a little water if unusually cold
- Shut off and drain outside water faucets before freezing occurs
- Run small amounts of water from highest faucet until full flow returns
- Insulate walls near exposed piping
- Repair cold air leaks to reduce drafts on piping and meter

CAUTION

- To prevent fires, never thaw with an open flame or torch
- Be careful if pipe is cracked, it will spray water into electrical appliances when thawed
- Check and clear drains to prevent basement flooding in case of pipe burst
- Know where the main shut-off valve is located so you can turn it off quickly in case a pipe bursts

If you need additional information, please contact the Customer Service Department of the Waukesha Water Utility at (262) 521-5272.