

Great Tips to Keep Pipes from Freezing

Tip #1 – **Keep the heat on** – Constant internal temperature should be above 12°C, especially in areas where pipes run.

Tip #2 – **Drain and Shut off outside water supply taps** – These pipes are common culprits for freezing. Shut the valve and drain off excess water to prevent ice buildup in these pipes.

Tip #3 – **Allow a Faucet to Drip** – Allow a cold water faucet to flow water at a steady stream; a flow equivalent to the width of a pencil. This will ensure water movement and reduce pressure build up in the pipes.

Tip #4 – **Keep Interior Doors Open** – Pipes are often located in cabinets. If you open the doors the heat of the home can better circulate around these pipes. Also, keep interior doors in your home open to facilitate the circulation of warm air throughout the home.

Tip #5 – **Keep Exterior Doors Closed** – Some pipes run along walls adjacent to garages. Garage doors should be kept closed to reduce cold air intake and warm air loss.

Tip #6 – **Seal Up Cracks and Holes** – Use caulk to fill holes or cracks that are near pipes on interior and exterior walls. Pay special attention to the water line that comes into your home. Good insulation in this area is a must.

Tip #7 – **Apply Foam Insulation around Pipes** – Visible pipes can benefit from added foam insulation which can be cut and wrapped around your pipes.

Tip #8 – **Add Extra Insulation** – Basements and attics are typically not well heated and insulation may have pulled away from pipes over time. Check to make sure that those areas have insulation and if need be, add more insulation.

Tip #9 – **Have your home checked regularly** – If you are planning an extended time away from your home, ensure that someone is regularly checking it to verify the heat has remained on and that water flows when checking the faucets.

DID YOU KNOW?

That when a pipe freezes it is pressure that builds up in the pipe that causes a pipe to break? The break typically occurs at the weakest point in the pipe which is generally not the same area where the freezing occurred. The first thing to do if you suspect a freeze in the pipe is **open a faucet** to relieve the pressure.

Best Practices for Thawing a Frozen Pipe

Tip #1 – **Locate the Frozen Pipe** – Check pipes along the exterior walls of your home, behind cabinets and other less heated areas. Pipes that are frozen tend to have frost on them or a slight bulge.

Tip #2 – **Open the Faucet** – Open both cold and hot water faucets to relieve pressure in the pipe and allow water to flow once the thaw of pipe occurs.

Tip #3 – **Begin at the Faucet** – Begin the thawing process from the faucet to the area suspected to be frozen. This will allow melted water and steam to escape and allow for the constant relief of pressure in the pipe.

Tip #4 – **For Exposed Pipes** – Use a **hair dryer** to add warmth to the pipe. Begin at the faucet and slowly move the air along the pipe to the blockage. Use a **space heater**, position a regulated and fully compliant space heater in the area where the frozen pipe is and allow the added heat to warm the space and slowly thaw the pipe. *Follow all manufacturer directions for the space heater operations.* **Hot towels** can be wrapped around the pipe and **electrical tape** can be purchased and used according to manufacturer instructions to aid in a thawing process.

NEVER attempt to thaw a pipe with exposed flame such as a propane torch, kerosene or charcoal heaters. This could damage the pipe and potentially cause a fire in your home.

Tip #5 – **If a Pipe Bursts** – Immediately shut the main valve for the water line entering your home.

Tip #6 – **Call a Professional** – A licenced plumber is qualified to assist you to resolve your plumbing needs.