

TIPS TO PROTECT PIPES

- Insulate exposed water lines - you can buy insulated sleeves from the hardware store which slip easily around exposed pipes in the garage, attic, basement, or outside. Pipes located in these areas are more susceptible to freezing.
- Seal leaks or cracks around pipes in the bathroom or kitchen - cold air can flood through the tiniest crevices. Insulate or caulk around pipes to keep them from freezing.
- Leave bathroom/kitchen cabinet doors open - this will allow warm room air to circulate around the pipes when cold weather invades. Also, let faucets drip to reduce pressure.
- Keep thermostat at same temperature day and night - the heating bill may be a bit higher, but it pales in comparison to paying for the damage of a pipe bursting.
- Remove hoses from outside faucets - if you leave hoses connected with water still in them, there's no place for water from the faucet or the water line to drain. The trapped water freezes and expands, creating a crack in the line INSIDE the wall of your home, spewing water everywhere. For the faucets, you can buy an insulated cover or just wrap a towel, foam, or even newspaper around the faucet, cover in plastic and then tape to hold in place.

IF YOUR PIPES FREEZE...

- Turn on all faucets to find out which ones are working - a small trickle of water from one faucet while others are gushing is a good indicator of a frozen line.
- Work from the faucet, back, to check for ice blockage - run a hair dryer or heat gun back and forth along the pipe, warming it gradually. Never put a heat source directly on the pipe, especially if it's PVC. It could rupture the pipe. Do not use any open flame.
- Check for leaks - if you see any leaks in the pipes, shut off the main water valve to the house and close all faucets.
- Add salt to drains - pour a tablespoon down the drain, but **DON'T ADD WATER**. The sudden temperature change could crack the pipe.