

WINTERIZE

Take precautions before the threat of freezing temperatures increases the possibility of frozen and broken water lines on your property. If this occurs, it can mean an interruption of your water service. If a water line breaks it can damage your property, waste water, and cause a high water bill. ***If the Agency is required to make a service call to your property, you may incur a service charge.***

The Agency suggests you take the following measure to prevent frozen pipes:

- Protect your water lines:
Check all your water lines, from the meter to the house and be sure that they are not exposed. This includes lines that are in your build up area, attic, outside walls of the house, and garages. Pipes should be insulated to prevent freezing. Pipe wrapping materials are available at hardware stores.
- Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses:
All hoses should be disconnected from outside faucets.
- Install and utilize your shut off valves:
It is *mandatory* that each water connection have a shut off valve installed outside and immediately adjacent to the Agency meter box. You will prevent frozen pipes and water waste by utilizing your shut off valve when property is vacant. ***Do NOT access the Agency's shut off valve, only Agency personnel may access the Agency's meter box.*** The Agency's shut off valve is reserved for Agency use, and if damaged by unauthorized use, you will be charged for repair. In addition, damage to the meter may cause a delay in the event of an emergency turn off.
- Leaving your house:
Your shut off valves should be used any time the property is vacant.
- Minimize damages:
It is extremely important that you turn the water off at your shut off valve if you leave your house for a period of time. This will prevent water waste and the potential for a high bill due to frozen pipes.
- Fire Sprinkler Systems:
If you have fire sprinklers, you must be sure that your water lines and fixtures are protected from freezing.

The Agency also suggests that you have a plumber's telephone number handy before an emergency.

If you think you know where the frozen portion of a pipe is and you want to try thawing it yourself, do *NOT* use a torch with an open flame, overheating a single spot can cause the pipe to burst and possible house fire. In addition, heating a soldered joint could allow it to leak and

come apart completely. It is important to be careful when trying to defrost frozen pipes, as the pipe may be broken and full of frozen water. When the pipe thaws, the water will rush out of a broken pipe. If this occurs, be sure to use *your* shut off valve to turn off the water until the pipe is fixed.

It is the responsibility of the legal property owner to protect their premises from freezing weather and maintain their water lines. The Agency advises that the water lines, hot water heater, and fixtures be inspected on a regular basis. It is mandatory that you use your shut off valve any time the property is vacant throughout the year. Please remember that ***ALL*** water registered through the meter is the customer's responsibility.

If you have a water emergency, please contact the Agency office at (909) 338-1779.