



New Jersey American Water Urges Customers to Prepare Pipes for Winter Weather

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Water preparation tips for avoiding the cold, winter weather headache

VOORHEES, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 3, 2018-- As winter quickly approaches and temperatures continue to fall, New Jersey American Water urges homeowners to take action now to protect their pipes from frigid winter weather and prevent costly plumbing repairs.

"The best strategy in combating the cold winter months is a proactive one," said Tom Shroba, vice president of Operations for New Jersey American Water. "Taking preventive steps to winterize homes and learning how to properly maintain and conserve resources, particularly during the winter months, can help prevent pipes and meters from freezing in your home and causing larger problems in the long term."

New Jersey American Water encourages its customers to take the following precautions to reduce the risk of freezing pipes that can burst.

Preparation Before Cold Weather Sets In:

- Make sure everyone in your home knows where the main water shut-off valve is located so you can turn off the water in an emergency. When you locate the valve, mark it with an identification tag. The valve is typically located where the water line enters the home. This could be in the basement, crawlspace, or utility closet.
- Check for pipes that pass through unheated spaces or rooms, such as crawlspaces, basements, garages, or uninsulated exterior walls. Protect exposed pipes by wrapping them with heat tape, pre-molded foam rubber sleeves or fiberglass insulation, available at hardware stores. If you have installed heat tape on exposed pipes, inspect the tape for cracks or fraying and make any needed repairs.
- If your water meter is outside, make sure your meter lid is closed tightly.
- Eliminate sources of cold air near pipes by sealing openings or cracks that could cause drafts. Close air vents in crawlspaces.
- Drain all outdoor garden hoses, roll them up and store them inside to prevent cracking. If you have an indoor valve for the outside faucet(s), shut it off and drain water from pipes leading to the faucet(s).
- Turn off and drain your irrigation system.
- If you are going to be away for a few days or more, leave your thermostat at 55 degrees to prevent freezing.
- If no one will be home for an extended period of time during the winter months, consider contacting New Jersey American Water at (800) 272-1325 to turn your water off and hire a plumber to drain your system. By doing this, there will be no water in your pipes to freeze if your furnace stops working.

When temperatures consistently fall below freezing

- For kitchen or other sinks up against cold, exterior walls, open cabinets to let warm air in your home reach the pipes.
- Allow a small trickle of water to run overnight to keep pipes from freezing. The cost of the extra water is typically lower than the cost of repairing a broken pipe.
- If your pipes do freeze, shut off the water immediately. Don't attempt to thaw frozen pipes unless the water is shut off.
- Freezing can often cause unseen cracks in pipes or joints that will leak when thawed.
- Apply heat to a frozen pipe by warming the air around it. Avoid the use of kerosene heaters or open flames.
- Once the pipes have thawed, slowly turn the water back on and check for cracks and leaks.

Avoid Costly Repairs

- If your water meter is located in your home and freezes, the homeowner/business is responsible for the cost to replace or repair the meter. With a little attention and basic maintenance, you can help prevent pipes and meters from freezing in your home.

Report Leaking Pipes

- New Jersey American Water also advises that sub-freezing temperatures can hasten aging water mains to break and cause unsafe driving conditions. If you see a leak, or your water service is disrupted, please contact the company's Customer Service Center at 1 (800) 272-1325.

For more information and to view New Jersey American Water's [cold weather infographic](#), visit the Wise Water Use page, on the company's website at newjerseyamwater.com.

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 2.7 million people. More information can be found at www.newjerseyamwater.com. With a history dating back to 1886, American Water (NYSE: AWK) is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 7,100 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 15 million people in 45 states and Ontario, Canada. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable and reliable water services to our customers to make sure we keep their lives flowing.

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