

Avoid Frozen Pipes

Avoiding Frozen Pipes:

- As temperatures reach freezing, close all air vents and other openings in the crawl space under your house. (Note: Monitor temperature, and open one or two vents in warmer weather for ventilation.)
- In freezing weather, never set your home's thermostat below 55 degrees.
- Insulate pipes that are prone to freezing, such as those near an outside wall, in unheated areas of your home, or that are exposed, such as outside spigots. In an emergency, several layers of newspapers or rags can be used for temporary insulation.
- Keep the cover to your water meter box securely in place to prevent the meter from freezing during cold periods.
- In extremely cold weather, leave cabinet doors under sinks open to keep warm air circulating.
- If temperatures are expected to fall below 20 degrees, leave water dripping slowly from faucets in your home.
- Locate your home's master valve so you can shut off the water temporarily in the event a line does break. The master valve is typically located where the water line from the meter enters the house. This can be in the crawl space under your house or in the utility room near the hot-water tank or clothes washer.

If Your Pipes Freeze:

- Open the cold-water faucet nearest the freeze to relieve pressure and reduce the likelihood of a line or connection bursting.
- Use a hair dryer set on low, heat lamp or light bulb to gradually warm and thaw the frozen pipe. Too much heat in one spot, however, can burst the pipe, so be sure heat is evenly distributed over a large area of the pipe. Be extremely cautious when using any electrical appliance to thaw a pipe. The appliance could become wet, increasing your danger of electrocution.
- **DO NOT** use a blow torch or any type of flame to thaw a frozen line. In addition to the danger of fire, extreme heat could thaw the pipe too rapidly, causing it to burst and resulting in potential injury.
- If you cannot locate where the pipe is frozen and no water is coming out of any tap, there is a chance that your service line or your meter is frozen. If this is the case, call the Dinwiddie County Water Authority on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at (804) 861-0998 and request a technician to check your meter. After normal business hours or on weekends, call (804) 861-0998 and follow the emergency service instructions. During periods of inclement weather, please be patient as there are probably many other customers in the same situation. If your meter is not frozen, it is likely that the service line to your home is frozen. In this case, since all lines from the house side of the meter box to the house are the property owner's responsibility, assistance from a plumber to thaw or repair the line may be required.