



## **Don't Let Your Pipes Freeze and Burst**

As you are aware, we are entering an extended period of frigid weather. Indications are we may see record-breaking low temperatures this week and that this below normal pattern may be with us into January 2018. For these reasons, we are cautioning people to take steps to avoid the emotional disruption and financial pain of frozen and burst pipes. Damage from these situations very quickly run into thousands of dollars.

During this period of time, it is important that you think about your normal habits for heating your house and be certain that you are not putting your property at risk to have pipes freeze. Most people don't think about the fact that most of their heating pipes, and very often their plumbing pipes, are on outside walls and thermostats are always on an inside wall. You have to be aware that, in this type of weather, there can be a significant difference between the room temperature at the thermostat location and where the pipes are located on the cold exterior walls.

Here are some preventive measures for you to take which can help avoid these events.

- Keep your thermostats set at the same temperature both day and night in all areas of the house. If you normally turn back the thermostats at night, discontinue that practice until temperatures moderate. It is advisable to even keep the temperature of your home warmer during extreme cold periods.
- If you have a wood stove, be careful not to fool the thermostat into thinking there is plenty of warmth in the house and then pipes freeze on the outside walls. It is best to shut off the stove and use your central heating system until temperatures moderate.
- Do not isolate rooms by closing doors. This can make those areas much more likely to freeze.
- If you have water pipes that you think might be prone to freezing, let the hot and cold water drip overnight.
- Open doors to kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities to allow better air circulation.
- Look for air leaks around electrical wiring, dryer vents and piping. Be sure to seal them up. Small openings, especially if windy conditions exist, can allow in enough cold air to freeze a pipe.
- Insulate pipes that are in crawl spaces or in areas that could be prone to freezing.
- If your house is going to be unoccupied or vacant for any period of time, it is your responsibility to make sure you have an adequate supply of fuel and arrange for temperature monitoring of your home.
- If you are going to be away from your home, don't turn the thermostat down too low.
- Either have a friend or neighbor check your house daily or set up electronic temperature monitoring while the house is empty.
- Keep your garage doors closed in case there are pipes in that area or in the ceiling or walls that could freeze.