

PROTECT YOUR WATER PIPES FROM WINTER WEATHER

Many people welcome the crisp, cold winter weather, but nobody welcomes pipe-related headaches that can come with the dropping temperatures. On average, a quarter-million families have their homes destroyed each winter because of frozen pipes that have burst or cracked, soaking carpets, ruining furniture, and damaging walls.



You can prevent your pipes from freezing or bursting. State Farm Insurance offers these tips, so you can enjoy this winter headache-free.

Before the temperatures drop...

- ◆ **Insulate** pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic. These exposed pipes are most susceptible to freezing. The more insulation you use, the better protected your pipes are.
- ◆ **Wrap** pipes with heat tape or thermostatically controlled heat cables. Be sure to follow all manufacturers' installation and operation instructions.
- ◆ **Seal** leaks that allow cold air inside, near where pipes are located (i.e. around electrical wiring, dryer vents, other pipes), with caulk or insulation. When it's extremely cold, a tiny opening can let in enough cold air to cause a pipe to freeze.
- ◆ **Disconnect** garden hoses and, if practical, use an indoor valve to shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets.

When it freezes...

- ◆ **Let** warm water drip from your faucet overnight, preferably from a faucet on an outside wall.
- ◆ **Open** cabinet doors to allow heat to get into uninsulated pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.

If you're away...

- ◆ **Set** the thermostat in your house no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit (12 degrees Celsius).
- ◆ **Ask** a friend or neighbor to check your house daily to make sure it's warm enough to prevent freezing.
- ◆ **Shut off** and drain the water system if you don't want to have someone check your house. Remember, if you have a fire protection sprinkler system in your house, it will be deactivated when you shut off the water.

Finally, if your pipes do freeze...

- ◆ **Turn on** your faucets. If nothing comes out, turn off the water at the main shut-off valve, leave the faucets on, and call a plumber.
- ◆ **Thaw** frozen pipes with warm air from a hair dryer, if practical. Start by warming the pipe as close to the faucet as possible, working toward the coldest section of the pipe. Never thaw a pipe with a torch or other open flame.