



Press

Release



wichitafallstx.gov

For Immediate Release

February 10, 2021

Protecting Pipes From Freezing

Wichita Falls, Texas – With extended periods of below freezing temperatures in the forecast, the City of Wichita Falls Department of Public Works suggests some common practices to help homeowners protect water pipes from freezing. When water freezes, it expands and frozen water inside house piping puts the homeowners plumbing at risk of rupturing. Pipes located in unheated interior spaces are especially prone to freezing, such as pipes in attics, garages and even under cabinets.

Outdoor Prevention

- 1) Disconnect drain and garden hoses from water faucets. This will help prevent the faucets from freezing.
- 2) Cover outside faucets with an insulating faucet cover.
- 3) If faucet covers cannot be found, wrap the faucet in t-shirts or rags, cover the fabric insulation with some plastic bags and then duct tape it into place.
- 4) Insulate and/or heat tape any exposed water piping located outside.

Indoor Prevention

- 1) Insulate any exposed piping under sinks and inside cabinets.
- 2) Seal or caulk cracks near piping that could allow cold air in from the outside, such as dryer vents or water pipes.
- 3) Keep garage doors closed completely. This will keep cold air from entering the house.
- 4) Open cabinet doors to allow heat from the house to circulate and keep the pipes warm.
- 5) As a last resort, let the faucets drip. As water conservation is important in Wichita Falls, this should only be used as a last resort to prevent freezing pipes.

What To Do If Your Pipes Freeze

One of the obvious signs that you have a frozen water pipe is when no water comes out of your faucet when you turn it on.

- 1) The best course of action is to contact a plumber so the pipe can be safely thawed and any ruptures repaired immediately.
- 2) If your water pipes rupture and water is entering the house, use your private shutoff valve to turn off the water. If you do not have a private shutoff valve, or if you cannot find it, call the City of Wichita Falls Utility Collections Division or the Water Distribution offices for an emergency turn off at the meter. There is a \$30 fee for emergency service, which will be added to the next month's utility bill. Service to turn the water back on is free.

Utility Collections: _____ Monday - Friday, 8am – 5pm, (940) 761-7414

Water Distribution: _____ Monday - Friday, 8am – 5pm, (940) 761-4333

Afterhours and Weekends: ____ Call (940) 761-4333

Media Contact: Daniel Nix, Utilities Operations Manager, at 940-691-1153.

###