

For Immediate Release

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Water Tips to Avoid Freezing Pipes

Wichita Falls, Texas – With extended periods of below freezing temperatures in the forecasts, the City of Wichita Falls Department of Public Works would like to offer a few common practices to help homeowners protect their homes water pipes from freezing.

When water freezes, it expands. Water freezing 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. Here are some tips to help protect you and your home.

Start Outdoors

- 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, then wrap the faucet in t-shirts or rags, cover the fabric insulation with a couple of plastic bags and then duct tape it into place.
- 4) Insulate and/or heat tape any exposed water piping located outside.

Continue Indoors

- 1) It is a good idea to insulate any exposed piping under sinks and inside cabinets.
- 2) Sealing or caulking cracks near piping that could allow cold air in from the outside, such as dryer vents or water pipes, is another good idea.
- 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, you can call the City of Wichita Falls Utility Collections Division or the Water Distribution offices for an Emergency Turn Off at the meter.

Utility Collections (M-F, 8-5) 761-7414

Water Distribution (M-F, 8-5) 761-4333

Afterhours and Weekends 761-4333

This cost (\$30) of this emergency service will be added to your next month's utility bill.

NOTE: The service to turn the water back on and return you to service is free and will not incur a charge.

The City of Wichita Falls is committed to assisting its citizens in protecting themselves from inclement weather situations. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Daniel Nix, Utilities Operations Manager, at 940-691-1153.

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