

# Winterizing Your Plumbing

Once temperatures drop your water pipes and meter can be susceptible to freezing. Frozen pipes cause expensive, frustrating, and unnecessary damage. Fortunately, it's easier than you might think to protect your home. Follow these simple steps to help prevent your water pipes and meter from freezing this winter, saving you time, money, and hassle.

## **Before Winter**

### **Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses**

This allows water to drain from the pipe instead of leaving it to freeze. Shut off the water supply to outside spigots if they have a separate shutoff valve. It only takes a single, hard, overnight freeze to burst either the spigot or the pipe connected to it.



### **Insulate water pipes in unheated areas**

Wrap the pipes in unheated area, like a garage or a crawl space, with an insulating material, such as a foam tube, or heat tape. Make sure to not leave any gaps without insulation.

### **Seal gaps and cracks in doors and windows**

Seal places where cold air gets in with caulking or spray foam. Be careful not to plug air vents that appliances need to function properly.

### **Find your main shut-off valve and label it**

Know where to access and how to use your main water shut-off valve. You can usually find it in your basement or crawl space near your water meter. Turning off your water quickly will limit damage in case a frozen pipe bursts.

## **During Winter**

### **Track your usage on your water bill**

Monitoring your water usage on a regular basis will help you know how much water you use on average and if something is out of the ordinary.

### **Leave a pencil-lead-thin stream of water flowing**

During the worst of a cold spell, allow a small flow of water to run from the faucet that is furthest from your meter. Continuous flow through the pipes can help prevent them from freezing. You can also leave your cabinet doors open to allow the heat of your house to circulate around plumbing under sinks.

### **Turn off the water if you are away for a long period of time**

If you'll be away from home for several days, turn the water off at the main valve and drain the outside faucets. Or, leave your thermostat set at 55 degrees or higher to ensure your home stays warm enough to keep interior plumbing from freezing.

## **CONTACT NUMBERS**

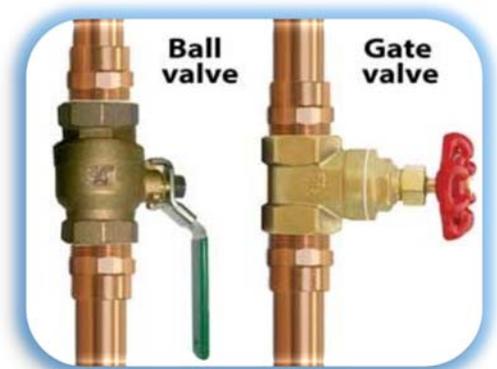
**Water Dept.** (440) 775-7293

Office Hours 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Utilities Dept.** (440) 775-7214

Office Hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Police Dept.** at (440) 774-1061



An increase in water main breaks is common during cold weather. While it does create an inconvenience to customers, we prepare for the increase each winter. If you see a water main break please report it to the Water Department or after normal business hours to the Police Department.

## **Responsibility for Repairs**

### **Customers**

Leaks that occur on private property are the property owner's responsibility to fix. This includes the water line that runs from the curb stop to the water meter, irrigation systems and all indoor plumbing. If cold temperatures cause a frozen water line or meter, turn off your water using your master shut-off valve to limit further damage, then contact a plumber or a private contractor to thaw your lines. If you choose to thaw them yourself, apply heat in the general area by increasing the room temperature where the pipes are exposed. You can also try to place a heating pad/blanket around the pipe that may be frozen.

### **City**

The Oberlin Water Department is responsible only for water mains and the service pipe that runs from the main to, and including, the curb stop. The curb stop is a shut-off valve typically located in the curb lawn or drive apron.