

# WHY?

## FROZEN PIPES ARE DANGEROUS



**FROZEN PIPES CAN LEAD TO WATER DAMAGE**



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**WHY**  
FROZEN PIPES ARE  
DANGEROUS





# SIGNS OF FROZEN PIPES

As winter approaches, it's important to recognize the signs of a frozen pipe. When water freezes it expands and can lead to a burst pipe. By knowing what to look for, you can take the proper action to thaw your pipes or call a professional before you encounter a burst pipe. Here are some tips to identify frozen pipes:

## 1. IS THERE VISIBLE FROST?

If you are expecting temperatures below 32 degrees, you'll want to check exposed pipes first, such as pipes found in unheated garages, crawl spaces and attics. If any of the water supply pipes have frost, this means that they're likely frozen or in the process of freezing. Shutting off the water supply to the affected section and opening a few faucets to a trickle will reduce pressure inside the pipe. Using a space heater or hair dryer to thaw the pipe will often work, but never use an open flame. Make sure that you have a mop, bucket and towels on hand just in case. You may not know the pipe cracked until the ice thaws in the pipe and signs of a water leak become obvious. You can also have a plumber thaw pipes and make any necessary repairs.

## 2. WATER PRESSURE ISSUES

For some homeowners, frost on the pipes may not be present. Instead, they may experience persistent water pressure issues. If nothing comes out when you turn on the faucet, or if it comes out slowly or unevenly, these signs could indicate that a pipe is frozen. A plumbing professional can locate the affected pipe and address the problem.

## 3. SMALL LEAKS AND DAMP WALLS

Freezing temperatures can lead to pipe leaks, and it's important to watch out for this sign in order to fix it quickly. Damp or wet drywall, carpeting or rings on the ceiling are major red flags that something's wrong. Homeowners should also call a professional plumber if there are signs of a leak. A plumber can locate the source of the issue and will have the expertise to properly take care of a frozen pipe.

**Homeowners with an understanding of the prospective damages associated with frozen pipes are much more likely to stop problems before it can become a major issue.**



# WHICH PIPES ARE VUNERABLE TO FREEZING



Homes in northern climates are built with their water pipes located on the interior of the building, which protects the pipes from freezing and subfreezing weather. Extreme cold weather and holes that allow cold air to come into contact with pipes can lead to freezing which can lead to bursting.

**“Homes in southern climates often are more vulnerable to cold winter.”**

Pipes are more likely to be in unprotected areas outside of the building insulation, and homeowners tend to be less aware of freezing problems, since it may occur only once or twice a season.

Pipes in attics, crawl spaces and exterior walls have a greater tendency to freeze, especially if there are cracks or openings that allow cold air to flow across the pipes. Research at the University of Illinois has shown that “wind chill,” the cooling effect of air and wind that causes the human body to lose heat, can play a major role in accelerating ice blockage, and thus bursting, in water pipes. Holes in an outside wall where television, cable, internet or telephone lines enter can provide access for cold air to reach pipes.



# TIPS FOR THAWING A FROZEN PIPE



If you've come home from an extended time away, or you wake up after a full night of freezing temperatures, turn on all the faucets in your home one at a time. If none of them produce water, you have a frozen pipe somewhere near the main water supply. If some pipes don't have water flowing, the frozen pipe is either connected to that faucet or is only on one side of the house, typically an uninsulated wall. If there's a frozen pipe in your home, you need to find it and thaw it fast.

- Keep all the frozen taps open during the thawing process until water starts to flow, then reduce to a trickle.
- Run your hands along the suspected frozen pipes until your hand hits a spot that is extremely cold. This is where it froze. Some plastic and copper pipes will split when frozen, so check your frozen pipe for damage. If you find a split, call a plumber before taking action as you will cause a flood by thawing the pipe.
- Apply heat to the spot with a heating pad, hair dryer or space heater. Never use an open flame source of heat.
- Apply heat until full water pressure returns.

If you are unable to find and/or reach the frozen pipe, or can't thaw it out, call a licensed plumber for assistance. Frozen pipes quickly turn into burst pipes, so act quickly.

# WILL INSURANCE COVER THE DAMAGE RESULTING FROM FROZEN PIPES?



Did you know that frozen and broken water pipes rank No. 2 behind hurricanes in terms of both the number of homes damaged and the amount of claim costs in the U.S.?

Water damage is among the most common causes of insurance claims. ... Most of you reading this want to know if your frozen pipe damages are covered by your insurance policy. In general, water damage from a burst pipe will be covered by a standard homeowners and commercial insurance policy. If you have any questions please read your homeowners policy or call your insurance provider.





# HOW TO LOCATE YOUR MAIN WATER SHUT OFF VALVE

## ARE YOU PREPARED FOR WATER DAMAGE?

Oh no! There's a leak somewhere in your house! You see the water pouring out; maybe it's the faucet leaking, or maybe it's the washing machine...Or maybe you don't know yet what's wrong, but you see the water on the floor and you need to stop it right away! Quickly, run to your water shut-off valve and turn it off to stop the leak! What? You don't know where it is? But the water is building up...You have to stop it NOW or could have thousands of dollars worth of damage!

## KNOWING YOUR HOUSE

Here at AdvantaClean we work with thousands of homeowners every year, and we've seen lots of instances of water damage; ruined drywall, mold growth, warped carpet and loss of family treasures. Sadly, in many of these cases the damage could have been much smaller, but no one in the family knew where the water shut off was. Precious time is wasted looking for the shut off, and in case of a water leak, time is definitely money - money you'll have to spend on repairs.

To avoid this situation, it's vital that you and your family prepare ahead of time and know where all of the water valves are in the house. Yes, that means that even your kids should know this information, to stop a bad situation in its tracks.



# WATER VALVES



## MAIN WATER VALVES

Main water valves are usually located near the water meter. If you live in a colder climate this meter will likely be in your house, while homes in warmer climates often have these meters in the ground outside of the house (often in the front yard, or by the sidewalk).

Typically, when you look at the water meter, you will notice that there is a main valve on either side. One shuts off water to the meter, and the other shuts off the water from the meter to the house. If you are experiencing a water leak and need to turn off the water to the entire house quickly, it's always a good idea to shut off the valve on the house side of the meter first. This will usually stop the water flow.

## EXAMPLE OF A WATER SHUT OFF VALVE



Above is an example of a water shut off valve, typically found in warmer climates. This valve will turn off the water to the entire home or building.

However, if there is something wrong and it does not work, you can shut off the valve that leads up to the meter. Usually, this valve is reserved only for the utility company's use, but if the house-side valve does not work in an emergency (perhaps it rusted out), you might not have any other choice.

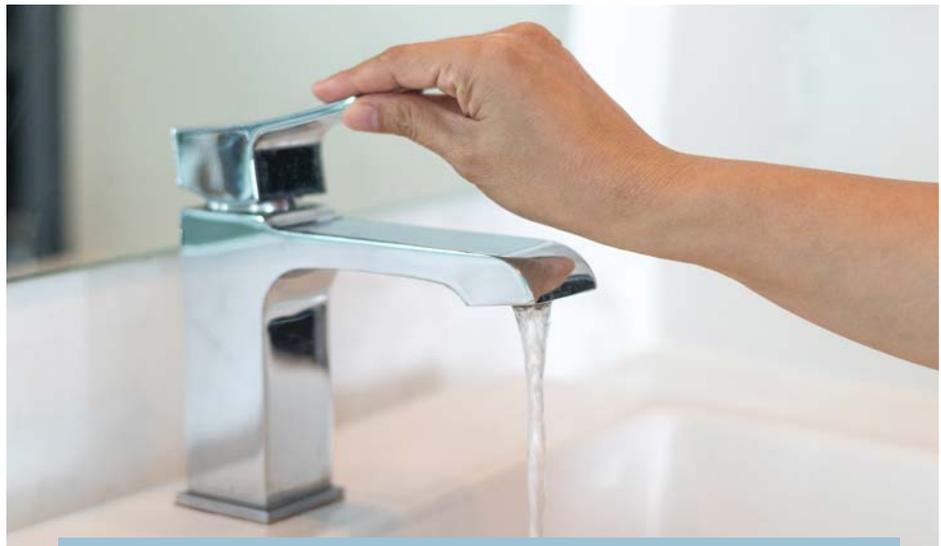


# WATER VALVES

To understand the best way to solve a water leak during an emergency, it's important to know that there are **two types of water valves**; main valves (which regulate water to your entire house), and fixture valves (which regulate water to a specific fixture, like a sink).

## FIXTURE WATER VALVES

Below is an example of a water fixture valve. Turning this valve off will only stop the supply of water to the single fixture, not the entire house.



**EXAMPLE OF A WATER FIXTURE VALVE**

Fixture valves can be found where the water pipe leads to a fixture, like a sink or a washing machine. These regulate water only to that particular fixture.

### **If you experience a water flooding emergency**

and know exactly which fixture is causing the problem, you may want to shut off that specific valve; thus leaving water for the rest of the house. Keep in mind, however, that fixture valves do tend to drip when shut off, so you'll want to have a bucket ready.



# WHEN IT'S TIME TO CALL A PROFESSIONAL



Here are AdvantaClean, we've helped thousands of home owners understand proper water damage prevention, and we can help you too!

If you'd like professional advice about water damage prevention, or if you need help with the damage that already occurred, give us a call at

**877-957-5670**