

Keep Your Pipes from *Freezing*

Frozen pipes can be a problem at this time of year. While in most cases, water pipes are situated inside the building insulation, holes in the insulation or an especially brutal cold front may cause your pipes to freeze. When water freezes in the pipes, it expands. Continued freezing and expansion will not only stop the flow of water, it will also build pressure and cause the pipe to burst, which may be expensive to repair. Here's how to avoid it:

- 1 In the fall, turn off the valves that supply your outside water lines.
- 2 Once you've turned off your outside water lines, open the tap to drain the water.

Are you going to be leaving your home for most of the winter? If so, turn off the water to your entire home and open the taps to drain the water from the pipes before you leave.

- 3 Insulate the pipes in your home with fiberglass or preformed pipe-sleeve insulation. Pay special attention to the pipes in unheated rooms, attics, crawl spaces and those along exterior walls.
- 4 Heat your pipes, both hot water pipes and cold water pipes, by wrapping them with electrical heating tape.
- 5 If you think that a pipe is frozen, call your plumber. If it has already burst, turn off the water at the main shut-off valve and leave the faucet open.

Don't try to imitate the professionals and use a blowtorch to thaw your frozen pipes. You could cause the pipes to burst. Contact your plumber instead.

