

Protect your home against a frozen meter and pipes

The following tips will help reduce the risk of frozen or broken pipes:

Outdoors:

- Disconnect and drain the garden hose when not in use.
- Close all outside vents, crawl spaces and doors so cold air doesn't seep inside.
- Fix broken windows and seal cracks in the walls.

Indoors:

- Wrap the meter and water lines in commercial insulation. Pipes subject to cold or freezing temperatures can be wrapped in heat tape, which is available at most local hardware stores.
- Make sure the shutoff valves on either side of the water meter are working properly. Place a tag on the main shutoff valve and make sure everyone in the house knows where it is and how to operate it in case of an emergency.
- Check the water meter periodically to look for damage. Contact the Merrilan Water Utility if you detect a crack. 715-333-7702 or 715-333-2332
- If you have had pipes freeze in the past, you may want to keep a trickle of water running from the highest faucet in your house. You will be billed for the water used, but this may help prevent more costly plumbing repairs that result from broken pipes.

If you won't be home:

- If you're going away for an extended period, keep the heat on low inside the house. This will help protect the pipes in the event the temperature drops.
- If you plan to turn the heat off, be sure to drain all the water from the pipes, toilets and water heater, and turn off the power source to the water heater.

If the pipes freeze:

- If your pipes freeze, it's important to clear blockages as soon as possible to minimize damage. We recommend calling a licensed plumber.
- If a water pipe has frozen and burst, turn off the water at the main shutoff valve in the house.
- Open a nearby faucet slightly so the pipe can drain as it thaws.
- Do not use electrical appliances in areas of standing water.
- Never use hot water or a blowtorch on a frozen pipe or water meter.