

## **FREEZING TEMPERATURES COULD LEAD TO FROZEN WATER LINES**

**Welland, ON** - As extreme cold temperatures in the forecast continue over the next few days, The City of Welland is reminding residents how to prevent drinking-water pipes in their homes from freezing.

### **How to prevent water service lines from freezing**

- Ensure areas that contain indoor water pipes are kept above 8°C, especially near the water meter
- Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage
- Open kitchen, bathroom and laundry cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around the plumbing
- If leaving for an extended period of time:
  - Close the main valve that supplies water to your internal plumbing. It is typically located in the basement on the foundation wall where the drinking water pipe enters your home. Once the valve is closed, open a cold water tap in the basement, or the lowest point in the residence, to drain any remaining water from the pipes
  - You may also wish to have someone check your home regularly
- You may choose to run a pencil-thin stream of water to ensure some movement of water in the pipes; however, this will be charged to your water account
  - Run cold water from the lowest point in the house, usually a laundry room sink or tub
  - Ensure the drain is kept clear of debris to prevent overflowing or flooding

### **How to Thaw your frozen pipes**

If you turn on your taps and have no water, the pipes in your home may be frozen. Likely places for frozen pipes include:

- Against exterior walls
- Where the water service pipe enters the home through the foundation wall

### **Here are some tips and precautions when thawing frozen pipes**

- Do not use a torch with an open flame to thaw pipes – this is a fire hazard
- Ensure you know the location of your master water shut-off valve. If the pipe breaks you will need to immediately shut off the water in your house until the pipe is repaired

### **Steps to thaw frozen pipes**

- Turn on a tap in the basement, preferably the cold water faucet in the laundry room
- Apply heat to the suspected frozen pipe by warming the air around it or applying heat directly to the pipe. You can use an electric heating pad, hair dryer, space heater or warm towel or rag
  - Do not leave electrical devices unattended, or use kerosene or propane heaters, charcoal stoves or any open flame to thaw a frozen pipe
- Depending on the outside temperature and the extent of freezing within the pipe, the thawing process could take between one and six hours
- Once the pipes have thawed, turn the water back on slowly and check for cracks and leaks

**If the above steps do not resolve the issue and you are unable to thaw the pipes or locate the frozen area, you may wish to contact a licensed plumber for advice.**

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