
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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Protect Your Pipes This Winter: Useful Tips for Winter Weather

Dec. 7, 2021 - The City of Beloit Public Works Department's Water Resources Division is offering these winter maintenance tips to prevent pipes from freezing:

- **Check the temperature of your water.** Normal groundwater temperatures are typically in the upper 40s and lower 50s, so check the water temperature in your homes. To do so, you can use a simple digital thermometer and place in a cup of tap water. If it's getting close to 32 degrees Fahrenheit you should take action to prevent freezing.
- **Prevent freezing of service lateral by keeping water moving.** During a prolonged, severe cold snap, you may want to consider letting your water run continuously if you live in an area that is susceptible to freezing such as a dead-end street or cul-de-sac. A pencil-wide stream is typically sufficient to prevent freezing. You may also simply run the water on a frequent basis throughout the day and night to minimize risk of freezing.
- **Check Heating Components.** Maintain furnaces to make sure they're operating correctly and replace filters regularly. Also check heat tapes and space heaters used with control elements. For less expensive items, you may consider purchasing back-ups should something fail.
- **Be careful when thawing frozen pipes.** For exposed pipes in buildings you can use a simple hair dryer. For underground metal pipes, it's best to call a professional. Newer methods of pipe thawing use recirculating hot water or steam. These methods are much safer than an electrical current and they also have the additional benefit of being effective on non-metallic pipes such as plastic or PVC.
- **Check empty and vacant buildings.** Check vacant properties and ask neighbors or relatives to check homes if you're on vacation. A great deal of frost or condensation on windows may indicate that a heating system has failed and water may be running due to frozen and broken pipes.

- **Make plans while traveling.** If you plan to be away for any length of time, have a friend or neighbor run water for you.
- **Check for cold air drafts.** Cold air blowing on your pipe can cause it to freeze even if your house and basement are warm. Cold air drafts could be caused by a window or a small gap in you wall. Run your hand along your pipes to see if there are any cold drafts. If any are found, repair immediately to prevent the pipes from freezing.

This notification is for informational purposes only. Water Resources will closely monitor winter weather conditions and frost depths in an effort to minimize impact to the system. In the event of a run-water requirement, you will be notified via door hanger or other direct method. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Water Resources at 608-364-2888.

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