

MAHANoy TOWNSHIP AUTHORITY

46 North Main Street

Mahanoy City, PA 17948

(570) 773-0650 Fax (570) 773-3691

FROZEN WATER PIPES PRECAUTIONS

Now that winter is upon us, many area homeowners will face one of the winter's worst woes-frozen water pipes.

The Mahanoy Township Authority recommends that homeowners take some simple precautions to prevent the inconvenience and expense of frozen water pipes.

Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses.

Once you disconnect the hose, turn off the water from inside your house, and then drain the pipe.

Leave the outside valve open slightly so any water left in the pipe can flow out, and not freeze in the line.

Patch any cracks and holes in doors, windows and walls near pipes.

When temperatures drop to near zero, a high wind blowing through a small opening can freeze a nearby pipe, even though the temperature in the room is 70 degrees F.

When patching these openings, do not block the air vents that your furnace and water heater need for proper combustion.

Make sure that heat can circulate around pipes.

Pipes in or outside walls or in an enclosed area can freeze, especially when the wind-chill factor is well below zero, if heat is not circulating through these areas.

Insulate pipes and faucets in unheated areas.

Leaving the water running overnight will not prevent pipes from freezing. This practice also wastes water and increases your water bill. Instead, wrap pipes with pipe insulating material, which is available at hardware and plumbing supply stores, or use insulation. Be sure to protect all pipes in unheated areas such as crawl spaces and garages.

Check insulation around pipes regularly.

Older-model furnaces generate sufficient heat to warm basements in cold weather. Today's energy efficient heaters, however, limit wasted heat. Homeowners with wood stoves or other heat sources often turn down the furnaces, which could lower temperatures in the basement.

If, despite these precautions, your pipes do freeze, it is best to call a licensed plumber. If the licensed plumber determines that the freeze-up is on the Customer's side of the curb stop, there will be a charge to the customer for thawing the line by the Authority.

If you locate the frozen section of pipe and try to thaw it yourself, be sure to take the following precautions to protect yourself and your property.

Do not use a torch with an open flame.

You risk setting your entire house on fire. In addition, overheating one area can cause the pipe to burst. Heating a soldered joint can make it leak or rupture.

Use a hairdryer with a low-heat setting.

Do not concentrate the heat on one spot. Instead, wave the warm heat along the pipe.

Wrap the frozen section with rags or towels, and then pour hot water over them.

Be careful when thawing a frozen pipe – the pipe may already be broken.

Water will not leak from the pipe when it is frozen, but it could start pouring out once the pipe begins to thaw.

Be ready to turn off your master water supply valve if water starts flowing from a frozen pipe or if the pipe bursts. Knowing where your master valve is located can help you prevent more extensive property damage.

If the meter burst, there will be a charge for the cost of the meter.