



## Frozen Water Lines

During the winter months, some water lines in the City may freeze. This can happen when the already cold water within the service lines encounters the frost in the ground. If the ground surrounding the pipes becomes frozen and the water within the pipes doesn't move for extended periods of time, it can freeze inside the pipes. There is a higher risk of frost going deeper into the ground and freezing water lines when the temperature drops before there is sufficient snow cover.

There are a few specific properties that are approved to run a bleeder line to prevent freezing because the service lines are not as deep and are at greater risk of freezing. These properties will have an adjustment made to their water bills to account for the extra usage.

### **Who is responsible for water service lines?**



The City is responsible for the service line from the water main to the property line. The homeowner is responsible for anything that happens to the service line from the property line to the house.

### **What should I do if my water service freezes?**

It is always a good idea to call a plumber if you experience problems with your water services. Under the City's Water & Sewer Bylaw, the City will thaw a frozen water line once per winter season at no charge to the homeowner. Service fees will be charged if the City is required to return and thaw the line again.

### **Steps you can take to prepare your water pipes for winter:**

- Ensure you know how to find and operate the main water shut-off valve in your home. For most homes the shut-off valve is located near the water meter at the point where the water line comes into your home, normally in the basement.
- Insulate pipes most prone to freezing, especially near outside walls and in crawl spaces.
- Winterize outside faucets: detach outdoor garden hoses, turn off the outdoor water supply, and allow taps to drain.
- Seal air leaks to stop cold air from getting in. Check around windows and doors, wiring, dryer vents and pipes.
- If you are leaving for an extended period of time, keep the thermostat set at 15 degrees or higher. You may want to turn off the water at the main service valves and drain the water from your plumbing lines, or have someone check on your home regularly.
- If you are concerned about your water line freezing, you can run a thin stream of water to ensure movement in the water pipes. The best practice is to run cold water from the lowest point in the house. However, please note that you will be charged for the extra water used if you choose to take this step.

### **Additional Considerations:**

- Mobile homes are at a greater risk for pipes freezing. Mobile home owners should ensure pipes are insulated and proper skirting is installed to avoid having pipes freeze and break. If water services need to be turned off because of a broken line, they will not be turned back on until a licensed plumber has completed all necessary repairs.
- Under the Water & Sewer Bylaw, if a water meter is frozen and damaged the homeowner will be responsible for the cost of repairs or replacement.