

Don't Let Water Damage Dampen Your Day



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Water damage can dampen your day. 250,000 families have their homes ruined and their lives disrupted each winter by water pipes that freeze and burst. When the outside temperature drops below freezing, water pipes with little or no insulation are likely to freeze and break. Recovering from frozen pipes is not as simple as calling a plumber. An eighth-inch (3 millimeter) crack in a pipe can discharge more than 250 gallons (946 liters) of water a day. And, the result can include damaged floors, furniture, appliances and treasured family heirlooms. There is an advantage to spending time preventing frozen pipes when you consider the soggy consequences of doing nothing. Minimize the chance your pipes will freeze with these simple, reminders.

Before the cold hits:

- **Insulate** pipes in unheated areas and those that run along outside walls, floors and ceilings.
- **Seal** leaks that allow cold air inside near where pipes are located.
- **Disconnect** garden hoses.



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When the mercury drops:

- **Run a small trickle** of water from hot and cold faucets during extreme cold.
- **Open** cabinet doors to allow heat to get to piping under sinks and vanities near exterior walls.

Before you go away

- **Set** the thermostat in your house no lower than 55°F (12°C).
- **Ask** a friend or neighbor to check your house daily to make sure it's warm enough or
- **Shut off** and drain the water system. Be aware that if you have a fire protection sprinkler system in your house, it will be deactivated when you shut off the water.

If your pipes freeze:

- **Don't take chances.** If you turn on your faucets and nothing comes out, seek the advice of a professional plumber. If you detect that your water pipes have frozen and burst, turn off the water at the main shut-off valve in the house; leave the water faucets turned on.
- **Never** try to thaw a pipe with a torch or other open flame. Seek the advice and assistance of a professional plumber. **Do not** use electrical appliances in areas of standing water because you could be electrocuted.

Don't let water damage dampen your day. Spend a few minutes protecting your water pipes to save time and expense down the road. Talk with an insurance professional for more tips and information for protecting your home or apartment.