

# Learn How to Winterize Your Home Now!

## Before Winter

Know where your emergency water shut-off valve is located and teach everyone in your household where it is and how to turn off the water. Most shut-off valves are located in the crawl space, basement, garage, or outside near the foundation of single-family residential homes. If a pipe bursts inside your home during the winter, this valve will turn the water off. Disconnect and drain hoses from outside faucets and turn them off if they have their own shut-off valve. This type of shut-off valve is typically located in the basement or crawl space. If your home does not have an outdoor faucet shut-off valve, be sure to empty the water lines to your faucet by turning on each outdoor faucet after you've closed the shut-off valve. If your home does not have a separate shut-off for outside faucets, then you'll need to insulate each spigot with a foam cap or another insulating material like newspaper.

Turn off and drain automatic sprinkler systems and backflow assembly devices. Wrap back-flow devices with insulating material. Insulate hot and cold pipes that are located in unheated areas in your home such as the garage, crawl space, or attic. Cover foundation vents with foam blocks, thickly folded newspaper, or cardboard.

## During Winter

If you haven't already – make sure you complete the “Before Winter” steps above. Locate your emergency water shut-off valve, keep your pipes safe and insulated, cover foundation vents, and disconnect and drain outdoor hoses, sprinkler systems, and backflow devices. When temperatures dip below freezing, temporarily turn on your faucet located furthest from your water meter so that it has a slow and steady drip – this will keep water moving and make it less likely to freeze in your pipes.

Periodically open cupboard doors in the kitchen and bathroom to allow pipes behind the walls and under the floors to get additional heat from inside your house.

## Think you have a frozen pipe? Here's how to tell if you do:

Turn on faucets located throughout your home; if some of them work and others do not, it is likely that you have a frozen pipe. If there is no water to your home, it is likely that the issue may be at the street and you should notify West Slope Water District so we can locate the break or frozen pipe.

## Thawing frozen pipes:

To thaw plumbing lines safely, use a hair dryer on a low setting. Move the hair dryer back and forth, moving in 12” – 16” sections until water flows freely from the affected tap. NEVER thaw a frozen pipe with an open flame. Remember to leave a little water on once the pipe has thawed so that it doesn't refreeze. Turn on the faucet(s) in your home to a steady, slow drip to keep water moving through your pipes.

## Repairing a broken water pipe:

If your burst pipe is located in or around your home, then it is your responsibility to repair the pipe. If the break is at the street, contact West Slope at (503) 292-2777 and we will come and repair it.