



Water Pipes Freeze and Burst Due to Extreme Cold and Wind Chill

Roto-Rooter Plumbers Provide Professional Tips to Prevent Disaster

For Immediate Release

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January 8, 2015 – The extreme cold combined with frigid wind chill can cause pipes to freeze and burst in both residential and commercial buildings when temperatures and wind chill drop significantly below freezing. Be aware that [when pipes freeze](#), water pressure builds causing pipes to crack – no matter if the pipe is made of plastic, copper or steel. Even a tiny crack can unleash more than 200 gallons of water in a single day.

Roto-Rooter is North America's largest provider of plumbing repair and drain cleaning services and the company's plumbers thaw and repair more frozen pipes than any other plumbing company in North America.

Roto-Rooter technicians are repairing pipes and assisting customers with frozen or bursting pipes but plumbers say the worst problems start when temperatures begin warming. "It's not the frozen pipes that really get plumbers' phones ringing. It's the thawing pipes that leak and spew water after a hard freeze," said Paul Abrams, spokesman for Roto-Rooter.

Roto-Rooter offers the following tips for preventing frozen pipes, which can cause flooding resulting in expensive repairs. By taking a few simple preventive measures before pipes freeze, home and business owners can minimize their risk of a plumbing catastrophe.

- Disconnect outside water hoses. If left connected, water in the hoses will freeze and expand causing outside faucets and connecting pipes inside your home to freeze and break. Cover outside faucets using a faucet insulation kit found at home centers.
- If outside faucets are dripping or leaking, make the necessary repairs or call a plumber before freezing temperatures arrive.
- If your washing machine is in your unheated garage, turn off water supply lines leading to the washer and disconnect the hoses if temperatures are expected to drop below freezing.
- Allow a trickle of hot and cold water to drip overnight in sinks and bathtubs with supply pipes that run along outside walls. However, be careful not to run the water into a drain if the drain line runs through an under-insulated outside wall and is exposed to extreme cold because the drainpipe could freeze and cause back-ups.
- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinets underneath sinks to allow heat in the room to circulate around uninsulated pipes.
- Add insulation to water pipes in unheated areas, such as garages or crawl spaces. Apply heat tape or thermostat-controlled heat cables around water supply pipes that are exposed and prone to freezing but be sure not to attach these devices to flammable materials.
- Be sure the furnace is turned on and set no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

What to do if your pipes have already frozen

- Shut-off the water main leading into the structure. This will reduce pressure on the frozen pipes and minimize flooding if the pipes burst. This is particularly important if you are going to be away from home.
- If the frozen pipe is exposed and visible, use a hair dryer or space heater to thaw the ice blockage. Do not use an open flame!
- Examine exposed pipes for leaks. Even with the water main turned off, there will be enough pressure to reveal leaks once the pipe has thawed.
- Contact a professional plumber equipped with pipe-thawing equipment to get your pipes flowing again and if necessary, make repairs to damaged pipes.
- Even if no leaks are found, a plumber should examine pipes that experienced a hard freeze. Some pipes may need to be replaced since the material has experienced stretching and fatigue, putting the pipes at risk for future failure.

<http://www.rotorooter.com/> is a good source of information for all plumbing questions.

Roto-Rooter service technicians will be on the job day and night to respond to plumbing problems associated with the extreme cold.

Roto-Rooter was established in 1935 and is the largest provider of plumbing and drain cleaning services in North America. Roto-Rooter operates businesses in more than 118 company-owned territories and more than 500 franchise territories, serving approximately 90 percent of the U.S. population and 41 percent of the Canadian population. For more information about Roto-Rooter please visit www.rotorooter.com.

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