

News & Updates from
Des Moines Water Works
JANUARY 2020

H₂O LINE

THINK DOWNSTREAM

Preventing Frozen Pipes

Winter weather brings the threat of frozen pipes. The following tips will help prevent your pipes from freezing:

- On extremely cold nights, open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing.
- Let cold water drip from the faucet served by exposed pipes. Running water through the pipe – even at a trickle – helps prevent pipes from freezing because the temperature of the water running through it is above freezing.

If you turn on a faucet and only a trickle comes out, suspect a frozen pipe. To safely and effectively thaw frozen water pipes, you must first diagnose where the pipe is frozen.

- Start by checking water flow at every faucet in the house, including the bathtub faucets. This will help you determine the area of the blockage. If no water flows from the kitchen sink but the water in the bathroom sink works, then you are probably dealing with an isolated problem. Once you have figured out which faucets are affected by the frozen line you can figure out which pipe may be frozen.
- Locate the main water shut-off valve, which could be located in the basement. It is important to shut off the water prior to thawing the pipes as a pipe may already have broken under the extreme pressure caused by the frozen line.
- After the water is turned off, you have a few options to thaw the pipe. One is to use towels soaked in hot water. Wrap the frozen pipe with hot, wet towels and pour on additional hot water until the pipe has completely thawed. If the hot towel approach does not work, a hair dryer or heat gun may be the next solution. Turn on the hair dryer or heat gun and work up and down the length of the frozen line. Once the water starts to thaw and trickle out of the faucet and if you are sure the blockage hasn't caused a broken pipe, you can turn the main water supply back on. Keep working with the heat source and keep the water faucet turned on until full water pressure is restored.

If no water flows from any of the faucets in the house, you are probably dealing with a frozen water service line that supplies water to the house. Turn on all faucets in the sinks and bathtub and turn off the main water supply. Follow the suggestions above but apply the heat directly to the pipe that enters the house.

Never use a heat source with an open flame, such as a blowtorch or propane heater, to thaw a frozen water line, as an open flame in a home can present a serious fire hazard as well as the possibility of exposure to carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, excessive heat from a blowtorch applied to a frozen pipe can cause the water inside the pipe to boil and possibly explode.

If you have optional HomeServe water service line coverage, frozen water lines are covered. If you are interested in more information on HomeServe, visit:
www.dmwwaterplans.com or call 1 (855) 695-1493.

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Des Moines
Water Works
Water You Can Trust for Life

New Year's Resolution: Drink Tap

New Year's resolutions are usually about saving money, getting healthy or helping to make the world a better place. The perfect resolution that does all three? Reduce bottled beverages and drink tap water in a reusable water bottle.



Tap water is safe, affordable, sustainable and convenient.

- Studies show that bottled water is no safer than tap water. Des Moines Water Works performs up to 250 tests daily in its state certified laboratory, and must meet 90 regulations for water safety and quality. In addition, tap water has zero calories, sugar and fat. Calories and sugar in sports drinks (when you don't need them) and sodas can add up quickly.
- At approximately one penny per gallon, Des Moines Water Works' tap water is about 1,000 times less expensive than bottled water. An 8 ounce glass of tap water can be refilled approximately 15,000 times for the same price as a six pack of soda.
- Plastic bottles not recycled properly can end up in landfills or waterways and most of the environmental impact from bottled water comes from the manufacturing and transportation of the product. While producing and distributing water is an energy-intensive operation, Des Moines Water Works was the first water treatment plant in the United States to become certified for Superior Energy Performance by the U.S. Department of Energy.
- Quality water is available right at the tap. Invest in a quality reusable water bottle that keeps water cold for hours. Many public buildings, schools, and area attractions have reusable water bottle filling stations – fill, drink, repeat.

New Year's resolutions that involve minor changes to your daily life are the easiest to stick with. While drinking tap water might be a small step, it can have a big impact to your health, budget and the environment!

Preventing Frozen Pipes

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If your pipes have frozen once, chances are they will freeze again. Before the onset of cold weather, prevent freezing of your water supply lines and pipes by following these recommendations:

- Cover the pipes in your attic, crawl spaces, and unheated garage with pipe insulation, heat tape or heat cables. Make sure you use material safe for pipe insulation. The more insulation you use, the better your pipes will be protected.
- Disconnect garden hoses and store them indoors during the winter. Cover your outdoor faucets with faucet covers, or wrap them in old rags and cover with plastic. If possible, drain water from pipes leading to outdoor faucets by shutting off the indoor valve.
- Set the thermostat no lower than 55°F (12°C) if you are leaving your home for an extended period of time. Turn off the water and drain your pipes.
- Reminder for Winter Vacationers: Contact a Des Moines Water Works Customer Service Representative at (515) 283-8700 with your departure date if you would like to request that your water be shut off while you're gone. If you plan to leave your water on while you are gone, ask a trusted friend or neighbor to periodically check your home.

Automated Notification System

De Moines Water Works uses an automated notification system to notify customers of various emergencies via automated telephone message. The alerts are geographically defined and can include emergencies such as water outages, boil advisories and important public health or safety notifications. Recipients' caller ID will display Des Moines Water Works (515) 283-8700. If you miss the call or would like additional information, call (515) 283-8700 to speak with a Des Moines Water Works representative.

It is very important that Des Moines Water Works has your current phone number(s) on file. Update your account profile online at www.dmww.com with your current phone number (select log-in or create a new account at the top of the page) or call a Des Moines Water Works Customer Service Representative at (515) 283-8700 to ensure your phone number(s) on file is up-to-date.