



# Tips to avoid FROZEN PIPES in your home

## Thornton Utilities Division offers you a few suggestions to avoid frozen water pipes, and what to do when water pipes are frozen:

- Drain outside faucets by disconnecting garden hoses from them. If faucets are not self-draining, turn off the outside water.
- Turn off and drain irrigation sprinkler systems, especially the vacuum breakers, by opening the petcock valves.
- If water pipes are exposed to freezing temperatures in crawlspaces or from open or broken windows, wrap them with insulation or electrical heat tape.
- Make sure your water meter pit lid is in place.
- Turn off water and drain piping in vacant and unheated buildings.
- Locate and mark the main shut-off valve that turns off the water to your entire house. It is located just inside the home where the water service line enters, usually in the basement or crawlspace. To have the water turned off in the meter pit call 720-977-6500.

### Where to look for a frozen water line:

- Enclosures (crawlspaces and basements).
- Any area where the pipe is enclosed and the area is not heated, such as an external stairwell.
- Where the service line comes through the basement foundation and the pipe has been enclosed and not properly insulated.
- Exposed areas (crawlspaces and basements).
- Any area exposed to the cold.
- Pipes installed close to air vents in crawlspaces.
- Pipes located near partially open windows.
- An area on the service line where an outside hose bib connection is installed.
- Always check for breaks in the pipe before thawing. If a break in the pipe is located, make sure the shut-off valve is operational and closed before thawing the pipe.
- **Be sure to use safe working practices. Slow thawing is best.**  
A hair dryer aimed at the frozen area of the pipe is appropriate; a blowtorch is not. Pipes that warm too fast may break anyway.
- Beware of electrical shocks when using electrical appliances, and of fire hazards if an open flame is used.
- Have adequate ventilation when heaters are used. Use caution when handling metal with bare hands in sub-freezing conditions.



For more information on turning off water at the meter pit or if you think your water meter is frozen, call Thornton Utilities Division during or after normal operating hours at 720-977-6500.