



NEWS SPLASH

WINTER 2006

BE WISE! WINTERIZE!

This autumn has brought colder temperatures than usual, and the long range forecast calls for a chilly winter. Now is the time to “be wise” and winterize! Here is a checklist of things you can do to winterize your home plumbing:

- ❑ Disconnect and drain all hoses. Cover all hose bibs with protective coverings. Hose bib covers are inexpensive and can be purchased at most hardware stores.
- ❑ Insulate any pipes or faucets in unheated garages or crawl spaces. Check with your hardware store for various types of pipe wrapping insulation and heat tape which can help prevent frozen pipes.
- ❑ If you have an in-ground irrigation system, the water should be turned off and the system drained or blown out. Many irrigation and landscape companies offer this service.
- ❑ Seal off all access doors and cracks with weatherstripping insulation.
- ❑ Promptly investigate any signs of water leakage that could indicate a burst pipe, such as suspicious water spots or running water noises.
- ❑ Locate the master water shutoff valve in your home and paint it a bright color or put a tag on it. The master valve is usually located where the water line comes into the house from the street. If you have any kind of a water emergency in your house such as a burst pipe, turn this valve off until you can locate the problem.
- ❑ Locate your water meter on your property and learn how to read it. Your water supply can be turned off at the meter. You can purchase a water meter key at most hardware stores that can be used to shut off your meter. Most meters have a leak indicator that can reveal a leak in your water pipes. The District has brochures available on locating and reading meters and leak detection.

- ❑ During very cold weather periods, leave your heat on a slightly higher setting when you are away from the house. You can also leave cabinet doors open under your kitchen and bathroom sinks to ensure warm air circulation around your sink pipes.
- ❑ A hair dryer on a low setting is useful for unfreezing pipes. You can also wrap frozen pipe sections in rags or towels and pour hot water over them. Frozen pipes that have been broken may not leak until thawed. Be ready to shut off the master valve. Never use a blow torch to heat pipes, since it can be a fire hazard.



WHOO thinks it's wise to winterize? I do!

- ❑ The District's jurisdiction stops at the water meter near the street. District personnel are not authorized to help you with frozen pipes on your property. However, we can shut off your meter until you fix the problem.
- ❑ Identify several plumbers in advance and keep their numbers handy in the event of an emergency. Plumbers are quite busy during cold spells.

If you would like further information about winterization of your home's water supply, please contact the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District office at (425) 392-6256, or visit our website at www.sammplat.wa.org.

WHAT'S NEW WITH CROSS CONNECTION?

The District's newly revised cross connection program is up and running. We currently have backflow assembly information for over 1,400 backflow assemblies in our database. Customers who have had test reports submitted in the past have been receiving letters from the District indicating that their assemblies are due to be tested. Annual testing of your backflow prevention assembly is required by state law and is an important water quality regulation. The Washington Department of Health is increasing enforcement of its cross connection control regulations, and the District is seeking to comply with those directives by ensuring that customers are testing their assemblies annually.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! Although we have a number of backflow assemblies in our database, we realize that there are many more assemblies throughout the District that need to be tested. These tests help to ensure the safety and quality of your drinking water. Our cross connection program includes several strategies to identify customers with landscape irrigation systems, fire suppression systems and other potentials for cross connection. These customers will be required to test existing backflow prevention assemblies or install them if none currently exist. We would greatly appreciate our customers taking a proactive approach and getting their assemblies tested as soon as possible. **If you have an irrigation system, fire prevention system, pool, spa or fountain, please locate your backflow prevention assembly and have it tested by a state certified tester and send the test results to the District as soon as possible.**

When selecting a tester, always verify the cost and the scope of work to be done. Please be sure your tester is not doing additional work on the system without prior verification from you. A list of backflow assembly testers is available on our website. Most backflow assembly tests cost between \$35 to \$70, depending upon the size and type of assembly and degree of difficulty encountered when testing. Major repairs or replacement for failing assemblies may involve additional costs. A copy of the backflow assembly test report must be sent to the District Office. Be sure to ask your tester if they will be submitting the report directly to the District for you. The District assumes no responsibility or liability for work performed by backflow assembly testers. Blank copies of test reports can be found on our website for your information. A short list of qualified testers who have expressed interest to test in our area is also available from the District office upon request.

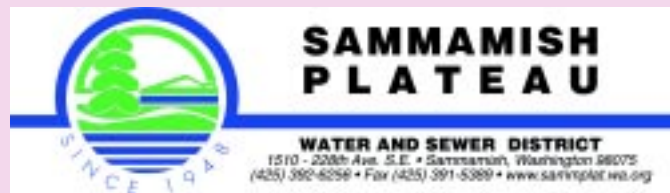
Remember, a cross connection hazard can still exist even if your irrigation water is shut off for the season. Backflow assembly testers can conduct tests even if you have winterized your irrigation system. Testing your backflow assembly will help protect your water quality as well as that of your friends and neighbors. For more information about the District's cross connection program, please contact Chic Nessly, Cross Connection Control Specialist at (425) 392-4931 x 213, or visit our website at www.sammplat.wa.org and look under the "Cross Connection" menu tab. Thank you in advance for your involvement in protecting our water quality!



COME IN OUT OF THE F.O.G.!

Fats, oils and greases (F.O.G.) can block sewer lines and cause nasty backups which can damage your home. Here are some helpful hints to help prevent sewer overflows:

- ❑ Never pour grease down sink drains!
- ❑ Scrape grease and food scraps into a can or trash for disposal.
- ❑ Wipe down greasy pans with paper towels prior to washing.
- ❑ Put strainers into your sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids.
- ❑ Tell your friends and neighbors to help keep grease out of the sewers!



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