

WINTERIZE YOUR HOME PLUMBING!

This winter 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.
- ❑ 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.