

Winter Freeze-ups Can Be Costly!



Everyone knows that exposed outdoor water pipes are subject to freezing and bursting during subzero temperatures, but many people are surprised to learn that pipes and meters *inside* the home are often vulnerable to winter damage. Since meters and their associated piping are often close to an outside wall, they are particularly vulnerable to freezing if the heat fails or a window is left open during a cold snap. Meters contain water and, in the event of a freeze, damage could occur requiring replacement of the entire unit. The customer is responsible for the pipe and meter repair costs, as well as the cost of repairing any water damage caused when a pipe thaws.

Outdoor meters are installed in meter pits which, if properly maintained, are designed to withstand subzero temperatures. Whether installed indoors or outdoors, however, the meter is the responsibility of the property owner. Connecticut Water is authorized by the Connecticut Department of Public Utility Control to charge for the removal and installation of a replacement meter or repair of a damaged meter.

Protecting Your Meter and Pipes from Freezing

- **Allow room heat to freely circulate around meters and water pipes.** Meters and pipes installed in an enclosed area or cabinet, or on an outside cellar wall restricted from heat circulation, can result in freeze-ups when outside temperatures drop below freezing.
- **Seal cracks or holes in windows, walls or doors near the meter or pipes.** Outside air from a crack or small hole can quickly cause a freeze-up, particularly if high outside winds create a further chilling effect. This type of freezing can occur even though the rest of the room may be considerably above freezing.

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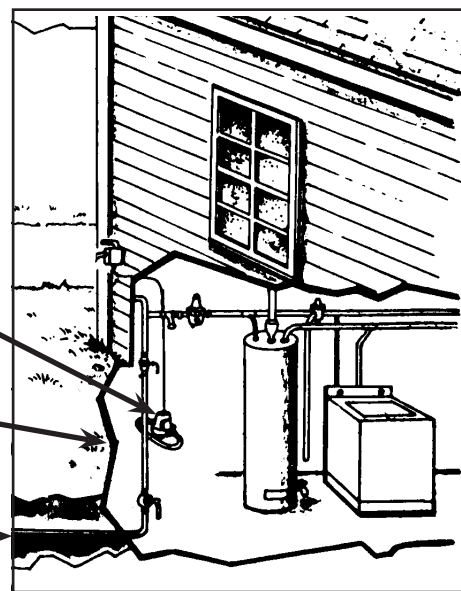
- **Consider placing a small heater near pipes located in a particularly vulnerable location when the forecast is for bitter cold temperatures.**
- **Wrap pipes with insulation.** Insulating pipes is helpful when basement temperatures are reduced because of lower thermostat settings, an energy efficient furnace or use of a wood stove or other sources of heat. Check the insulation regularly to make sure it stays dry. Wet insulation can freeze and damage the pipes it was intended to protect.
- **Check for cracks in the vault cover of outside meter installations.** A cracked cover permits cold air to enter and all insulation value is lost. The double cover is then unable to protect against freezing.
- **Make sure that underground pipes are not too close to the surface.** Water pipes need to be buried at least five feet below the ground surface. Pipes buried less than five feet are vulnerable to freezing and splitting that may result in costly repairs.

Where To Look For Potential Problems!

Room heat should circulate freely around water meter and pipes.

Seal cracks in walls, windows and doors near meter and pipes (insulate if necessary, periodically check to make sure insulation is dry).

Service line buried a minimum of 5 feet.



If you need additional information on this topic or have specific questions, please feel free to contact Connecticut Water Company Customer Service staff at 1.800.286.5700.

Connecticut Water Company

93 West Main Street
Clinton, CT 06413-1600
www.ctwater.com