


# WE ARE HELPFUL



OHIO  
AMERICAN WATER

A close-up photograph of a chrome water tap. A single, large, clear drop of water is suspended just above the spout, about to fall. Below it, another smaller drop is visible, having just fallen. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green and yellow, suggesting an outdoor setting. The tap is set against a blue background that transitions into the text area.

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Frozen pipes can wreak havoc and require costly repairs and cleanup. To help protect your pipes in cold winter weather, keep these helpful tips in mind.

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## **Before cold weather sets in:**

- Know what areas of your home, such as basements, crawl spaces, unheated rooms and outside walls, are most vulnerable to freezing.
- Eliminate sources of cold air near water lines by fixing windows, insulating walls, closing off crawl spaces and eliminating drafts near doors.
- Know where your main water shut-off valve is. If a pipe freezes or bursts, shut the water off immediately.
- Protect your pipes and water meter. Wrap exposed pipes with insulation or an electrical pipe heater; newspaper or fabric may also work. Keep the lid closed tightly on your meter and let any snow that falls cover it. Snow acts as insulation, so don't disturb it.

## **When temperatures fall below zero:**

- Allow a small trickle of water to run overnight to keep pipes from freezing. The cost of the extra water is low compared to the cost to repair a broken pipe.
- Open cabinet doors to expose pipes to warmer room temperatures to help keep them from freezing.

## **If your pipes freeze:**

- Shut off the water immediately. Don't attempt to thaw frozen pipes unless the water is shut off. Freezing can often cause unseen cracks in pipes or joints.
- Apply heat to the frozen pipe by warming the air around it, or by applying heat directly to a pipe. You can use a hair dryer, space heater, or hot water. Be sure not to leave space heaters unattended, and avoid the use of kerosene heaters or open flames.
- Once the pipes have thawed, turn the water back on slowly and check for cracks and leaks.

**To learn more about how to protect your pipes in cold weather, visit [www.amwater.com](http://www.amwater.com).**