

Water, it's a big part of our daily routine, which makes it easy for all of us to take it for granted.

But it only takes one big freeze and you could have a burst pipe and that could mean no water - and potentially costly repairs.

That's why we've put together these simple steps to help make sure your water keeps flowing all winter long.

Get ready for winter.



Northern Ireland Water

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FROZEN PIPES DISRUPT LIVES

**SIMPLE WAYS TO PROTECT
YOUR WATER PIPES IN WINTER**



All pipework within your home or business boundary is your responsibility, and spending a little time on simple frost protection now could help you avoid trouble and expense during cold weather.

AVOIDING FROZEN PIPES

- Insulate water tanks and pipes in unheated areas like lofts, roof spaces, garages and outbuildings. This is also applicable to non domestic premises and holiday homes likely to be unoccupied and unheated for prolonged periods of time.
- Insulation is essential in helping to prevent water in pipes from freezing. It is also important to ensure there are no gaps in the insulation at bends, valves or fittings.
- Lagging material for pipes can be purchased in DIY/Plumbing stores. It should be noted that even with lagging, extreme weather conditions can result in water in pipes freezing. Without lagging however the potential for this to happen is greatly increased. Follow the link to find out how to lag your pipes – www.niwater.com
- Fix dripping taps – a small trickle of water can freeze and completely block the pipe.
- Find your internal stop tap/valve. It is usually but not always located under your kitchen sink and normally closes by turning clockwise. You may want to test it is working.

- Service your boiler regularly.
- Make sure doors and windows from unheated parts of your property are kept closed and minimise any draughts from outside.
- If you have tanks or pipes in the roof space, allow some warm air to circulate by opening the trap door.
- Leave the heating on low when you are away. Leave a key with a neighbour, friend or family member who can check the house regularly.
- Write down the contact details of a qualified plumber.
- If a property is not in use or occupied for a prolonged period of time it is advisable to turn the water supply off at the stop tap and even consider draining down the system to lessen the possibility of burst pipes going undetected causing property damage and the waste of water.

DEALING WITH FROZEN PIPES

- Turn off the water supply at the stop tap/valve.
- Thaw along the pipe, starting from the end nearest the tap.
- Don't use a blow lamp or naked flame.
- Put hot water bottles or a thick cloth soaked in hot water over the frozen pipe or use a hair dryer at its lowest setting to thaw pipes. Be careful not to warm them too quickly.
- Don't leave taps dripping or running. The water may not flush down the plug hole if the pipes below are frozen.

IF A PIPE BURSTS

- Turn off the stop tap/valve.
- Try to block escaping water with thick cloth like towels.
- Turn on all taps to reduce flooding.
- Call a qualified plumber. NI Water recommends you use an Approved Plumbing Contractor; refer to www.needaplumber.org or by telephoning the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation (SNIPEF) during normal office hours on 0845 224 0391.
- Don't forget to turn off taps once the problem is fixed to avoid further flooding.

If you have checked the pipes on your property and they are not burst or frozen, and you still have no water supply, contact NI Water on 08457 440088.

Plumbers name:

Telephone number:

Keep this leaflet in a safe place where you can refer to it quickly in an emergency.

