

# BEAT THE FREEZE

Protect your water pipes this winter.  
Don't wait. Insulate.



**Simple steps to  
help you beat the freeze**

For more information visit  
**[niwater.com](http://niwater.com)**

northern ireland  
**water**  


**Water supply pipes can be damaged by winter weather leading to leaks and even loss of supply.**

**While NI Water has responsibility for the public water mains the pipework within your home or business is your responsibility. It's important to protect yourself, your property and your interests from the damage and inconvenience of a burst water pipe.**

## **AVOIDING FROZEN PIPES**

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- Insulate water tanks and pipes in unheated areas like lofts, roof spaces, garages and outbuildings. This also applies to non domestic premises and holiday homes that will be unoccupied and unheated for long periods of time.
- Insulation is essential in helping to prevent water in pipes from freezing. Make sure there are no gaps in the insulation at bends, valves or fittings.
- Lagging material for pipes can be purchased in DIY/Plumbing stores. Be aware that, even with lagging, extreme weather conditions can result in water pipes freezing. Without lagging, however, the potential for this to happen is greatly increased. Find out how to lag your pipes at: [www.niwater.com](http://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 located under your kitchen sink and normally closes by turning clockwise. It's a good idea to test that 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 for short periods of time every day, 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, turn the water supply off at the stop tap and consider draining the system to lessen the possibility of burst pipes going undetected and causing property damage.

## **DEALING WITH FROZEN PIPES**

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- 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 drain down the plug hole if the pipes below are frozen.

## IF A PIPE BURSTS

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- 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. When you are looking for a plumber or plumbing business, we recommend you select one that is an eligible member of an Approved Contractors' Scheme such as the WaterSafe or SNIPEF. Contact details for both Approved Contractor Schemes are: **WaterSafe** – [www.watersafe.org.uk](http://www.watersafe.org.uk) – Tel: 0333 2079030  
**SNIPEF** – [www.needaplumber.org](http://www.needaplumber.org) – Tel: 0845 2240391.
- 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, and your neighbours have no water also, check the NI Water website for known supply problems by doing a postcode search at [www.niwater.com](http://www.niwater.com). The status information on the website is the most recent available.**

**Alternatively, customers can contact Waterline on 03457 440088.**

**Customers can expect to be serviced by an automated call answering system at times of high call volumes. It's important that you do not end your call prematurely so please follow the system prompts as this will provide you with information relevant to your area, provide us with a record of your call and dispatch a crew if necessary without the need to speak to a call agent.**

**It only takes one big freeze to cause a burst pipe, and that could mean no water and damage to your personal property and possessions.**

**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.  
Beat the Freeze.**



Get ready for winter and protect your property by following these 3 simple steps:

**Step 1. Insulate water tanks and pipes**

**Step 2. Check all lagging is secure**


**Step 3. Isolate any unused supplies by turning off at the stop-tap**

# BEAT THE FREEZE

**Northern Ireland Water**

PO Box 1026, Belfast BT1 9DJ.

 **www.niwater.com**

 **Waterline: 03457 440088**

 **Text Relay Service: 03457 440088**

 **Email: waterline@niwater.com**

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Registered Office: Westland House,  
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Keep this leaflet in a safe place where you can refer to it quickly in an emergency.

Plumber's name:

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Telephone number:

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