

Winter Weather PREPAREDNESS TIPS

Prepare for Freezing Weather



Locate your water shutoff

Make sure everyone in your residence knows where the water main shutoff valve is located and keep it clear of debris and obstacles at all times.

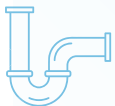
In an emergency, Stephens Regional Special Utility District recommends you always try to shut off your water at your property owner's cutoff valve first. For most homes in our service area, the property owner's shutoff valve is on your side of the water meter at the meter box. If you are not sure where, contact the District's office for assistance or view a meter diagram on our website to determine where the customer's shut off typically will be found.

If you cannot find the customer shutoff valve, or if it is damaged, then the District's shutoff valve in the meter box may be accessed after notifying the District. The District's shutoff is generally for the District's use only, and should only be accessed by the customer for emergency use only. It is not designed to be used frequently or it will damage the internal components, causing it to leak and require costly repairs. Therefore, it is important that the customer use their shutoff valve if at all possible, and if you do not have a shutoff valve on your side of the meter, please install or hire a plumber to install one for you downstream of the meter (refer to the diagram for best placement).



Keep out cold air

Tightly close doors and windows to the outside. Make repairs to broken or drafty windows, doors, and walls. Seal all leaks in crawl spaces and basements. Winterize unheated spaces and close garage doors for the duration of the freeze.



Exposed pipes and water heaters

Insulate meter boxes, pipes in unheated and drafty areas, such as an attic or garage. Also check manufacturer recommendations for your tanked and tankless water heaters. *A large heavy towel, feed sack, piece of foam, or similar item can be used to insulate the meter box. Hardware and plumbing supply stores carry insulation to help keep pipes from freezing.*



Outside faucets

Turn off outside faucets. Remove all connected hoses and wrap faucets with towels or a Styrofoam insulator. Turn off and drain automatic sprinkler systems.

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES to have on hand:

- **INSULATION** for meter box, indoor and outdoor pipes
- **HOSE BIB COVERS** for outdoor faucets



- Battery powered **RADIO** and **FLASHLIGHT**



- Have enough water for **1 GALLON PER PERSON PER DAY FOR 7 DAYS**



Note: After the chance of freezing weather has passed, please remove the insulation in your meter box until it is required again next winter. This makes the meter more accessible to for meter reading and routine maintenance. The District appreciates your cooperation and assistance with this matter.



Winter Weather PREPAREDNESS TIPS

During Freezing Weather (1-2 days)

■ Protect indoor faucets

Open cabinets beneath kitchen and bathroom sinks to allow warmer air to circulate around pipes. Be sure to remove any toxic substances located in these cabinets if there are children or pets living in the residence.

■ Drip only if needed

After the measures above are taken, drip one cold-water faucet slowly if you feel your pipes may still freeze. The faucet you choose should be the one that is the greatest distance from your main shutoff valve. It does not need to be a running trickle.

Power outages

- If you experience a power outage for more than 24 hours, stop dripping your faucets and turn off your water at the meter. If you turn off the water, you should also turn off your water heater to prevent potential damage.

For an Extended Freeze (more than 2 days)

Stephens Regional SUD will monitor conditions that impact our water infrastructure throughout the freeze. Instructions for the best guidance on protecting your pipes and the District's water system infrastructure can be found on our website at <https://stephensregionalsud.com/>, or by contacting the District's office at 254-559-6180 between 8am-5pm, M - F.

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254-559-6180

Thawing Pipes After a Freeze

After a period of freezing weather, if you turn on a faucet and discover only a trickle of water coming out, or no water at all, it is possible you have a frozen pipe or water meter. Take the following steps:

■ Test all faucets to see which are frozen

If you find that none of your faucets are working, then the frozen pipe is located near the main water pipe entering the residence. If none of the faucets on the same floor are working, then the frozen pipe is located between the different floors. If none of the faucets in the same room are working, then the frozen pipe is located between the main water pipe and where the water enters the room.

■ Find the frozen part of the pipe

After you figure out which pipe is frozen, trace along the affected pipe to look for signs of freezing like bulges, frost, or ice. If there are no visible signs, pay attention to the pipe's temperature and find where the pipe feels the coldest.

■ Thaw the pipe slowly

Even the faintest trickle of water will help thaw a frozen pipe. If any of your faucets can run any water at all, turn them on. Completely open the cold-water faucet closest to the frozen pipe to relieve pressure and reduce the chance of breakage. If the frozen pipe is only in one area, you may be able to thaw the pipe by opening cabinets and allowing warmer air to circulate around the pipes. Use warm water to soak towels, then wrap the towels around the frozen pipes. You can use a hair dryer or a portable heater to thaw a pipe, but DO NOT use electrical appliances if there is standing water. **NEVER** thaw a pipe using an open flame.

If these steps do not work, contact a licensed plumber or your property manager for assistance.

