Cold Weather Tips

Don't let winter sneak up on you! Remember a frozen water meter and/or frozen pipes are not only inconvenient, they can be expensive. Here are a few tips to keep your water flowing freely all winter.

Check your outside faucets:

- Disconnect all hoses from outside faucets
- Shut off and drain all outside faucets and lawn sprinkler systems OR
- If you don't have a separate shut-off valve for outside faucets, protect them with insulated covers. You'll find covers at hardware and building supply stores.

Eliminate drafts:

- Close all windows and doors near water lines
- Caulk around pipes where they enter the house.
- Close foundation vents not needed for residential use.
- Seal cracks in basement, crawl space, and other outside walls

Insulate pipes:

- Wrap pipes in unheated areas with weatherproof insulation or heat tape products

Protect the water meter:

- If your water meter is in an unheated area or near drafts from outdoors, insulate it to keep it from freezing.

What to do if your pipes freeze:

- Locate your private property main shut-off valve, which is typically located where the water service enters the home (not the valve on the City side water meter). If a water line has broken or split, you don't want to waste time looking for the shut-off when the water begins flowing again!
- Test the shut-off to make sure it's working.
- Find where the pipe is frozen. Look in unheated areas where pipe insulation is loose or missing.
- Open a faucet downstream of the frozen area to provide an outlet for the water after thawing.
- Thaw the pipe using a hair dryer on the low-heat setting. Move the dryer back and forth across the frozen section. Be patient! This is a slow process.
- NEVER USE AN OPEN FLAME TO THAW A FROZEN LINE!!
- If none of your faucets work and you can't find where the lines are frozen, it's possible your service line is frozen. Call Maintenance Services to arrange for a serviceman to visit the property.
- If the service line is frozen between the water main and the outside shut-off valve (curb stop), our Maintenance Services Department will thaw the line. There is no charge for this service..
- If the service line is frozen within your property, thawing the line is your responsibility.

Take a few minutes to prepare your home for winter and avoid these problems!

Source URL (retrieved on *04/18/2015 - 8:17am*): http://www.ci.oswego.or.us/publicworks/cold-weather-tips