

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN....WINTERIZING TIPS!

When temperatures begin to lower in the fall, it's time to get ready for winter. Every winter season, homeowners in mountain communities are at risk of the damage and expense caused by frozen pipes. **Please remember that all water charges due to frozen/broken pipes are the homeowner's responsibility.** California law prevents us from making adjustments for these charges. However, just a few precautions can greatly reduce your risk. Check with the local hardware stores for winterizing supplies such as pipe insulation and heat tape!

★ DISCONNECT & DRAIN ALL OUTDOOR HOSES

Detaching hoses from outdoor faucets allows water to drain from the pipe.

★ INSULATE PIPES OR FAUCETS IN UNHEATED AREAS

If you have pipelines in an unheated garage or cold crawl space under the house, wrap the water pipes before temperatures plummet.

★ SEAL OFF ACCESS DOORS, AIR VENTS & CRACKS

Winter winds whistling through overlooked openings can quickly freeze exposed water pipes. Just don't block air vents used by your furnace or water heater.

★ FIND THE MASTER SHUTOFF VALVE

In case of a leak, everyone in the family needs to know where it is and what it does. It's usually where the water line comes into your house from the street. Also, know how to shut off the water at your meter box!

★ WINTERIZE A VACANT HOME

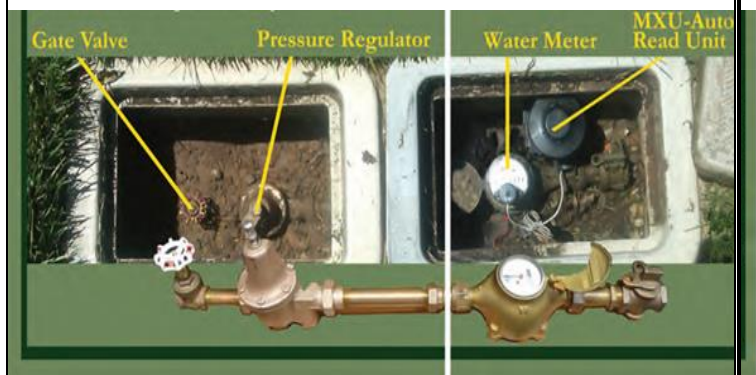
Before vacating your home for the winter, be sure to shut off water to your home. Most homes in Grizzly Flats have two shut off valves – one on the customer's side of the meter box and one at the home. If you are going to be away from your home for more than a day or two, both valves should be turned off. Call the District for assistance with finding your meter box if you don't know where it is.

- First, start at your meter box, usually located near the street at one of your property corners. Turn off the gate valve on your side of the meter (see illustration below).
- Second, open your indoor and outdoor faucets until all the water drains out of the pipes. Don't forget to flush your toilets!
- Close the faucets and shut off the valve at the home. This valve is usually located where the water line enters the home. It's best to leave both the meter gate valve and the home shut off valve turned off.

Once all the lines have been drained, it is important to close all household and irrigation lines so when the water is

restored, you don't have water pouring out of every faucet or hose! Also, check with the manufacturer of your hot water heater to see if they have any recommendations for maintaining the equipment while the water service is turned off.

Some people use antifreeze to help prevent freezing. If you choose to do so, pour **non-toxic RV antifreeze** into all traps and drains, including the dishwasher and showers. Do not use antifreeze made for vehicles...it is extremely toxic! Use 2 cups in toilet bowls and tanks, and about 1 cup in other drains.



Shown above is a typical water meter box installation. Not every service looks like this, so please contact us if you need assistance! The "Gate Valve" is what customers should operate when winterizing their homes. Do not turn the valves on GFCSD's side of the meter. Only District staff is authorized to do so.

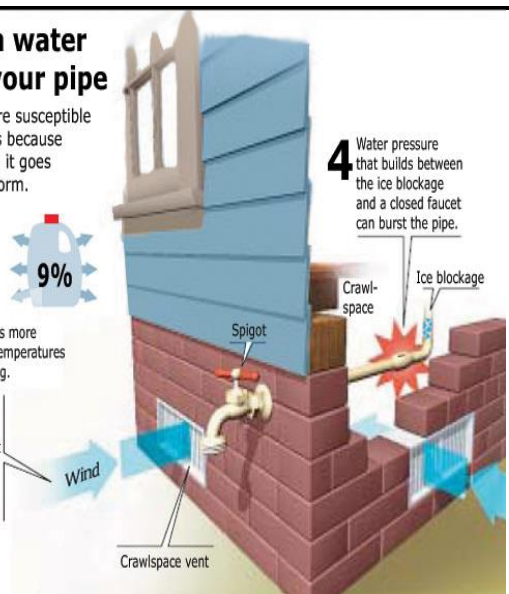
Why frozen water will burst your pipe

Unprotected pipes are susceptible to cold temperatures because water expands when it goes from liquid to solid form.

1 A gallon of water, when frozen, will expand to a volume 9% greater than the original gallon.

2 Ice blockage becomes more likely when outside temperatures drop to below freezing.

3 A cold wind reaching unprotected pipes quickly removes heat and increases the chance of ice formation.



★ WHAT IF IT'S TOO LATE AND YOU WAKE UP TO FIND THE PIPES ARE FROZEN?

We recommend that you keep a plumber's number handy in case of an emergency. We also recommend that you have a friend or neighbor check your home regularly if you are not in the area. Keep in mind that maintaining low heat in your home does not necessarily ensure that your pipes will not freeze. This is especially true if we experience long electrical outages.

If you think you know where the freeze-up occurred and want to try thawing it yourself, **do not under any circumstances use a torch with an open flame!** The whole house could catch fire. Also, overheating a single spot can burst the pipe. Heating a soldered joint could allow it to leak or come apart.

The easiest tool is a hair dryer with a low heat setting. Wave the warm air back and forth along the pipe, not just on one spot. If you don't have a hair dryer, you can wrap the frozen section with rags and pour hot water over them. It's messy, but it works. Be careful because the pipe may already be broken. It's not leaking because the water is frozen. When you thaw it out, water could come gushing out. Be ready to run for the master shutoff valve if necessary!

WATER EMERGENCY? CALL (530) 497-4666

The District has an operator on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to respond to water emergencies. Our operators' normal work hours are 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM and can be reached by calling the District office. **Customers who have an emergency outside of these hours can call the emergency on-call phone.** Our operators are paid to respond to these emergency calls, so to keep costs down for all of us, please be sure it's an actual water emergency. **Please stay by your phone until we call you back!**