Plumbing Tips for Cold Weather

Follow these helpful tips from Montgomery County Environmental Services to prevent expensive plumbing repairs and possible water damage to your home.

Locate Your Shut-Off Valve
Before it gets cold, locate your main water shut-off valve. If your water springs a leak, knowing the locations of your shut-off valve could save you thousands of dollars in water damage or plumbing repairs. The shut-off valve is usually located near the point where the water enters your home.

Every six months, turn your shut-off valve off and on to keep it working smoothly.

Keep Water Flowing in Extreme Cold
During periods of extended below freezing temperatures, turn your faucets on every few hours. You can also stagger your water usage throughout the day by doing laundry, running a load of dishes, or showering at night.

Insulate Your Pipes
Insulate pipes in unheated portions of the home, such as exterior walls, crawl spaces, basements or other areas where warm air does not circulate. Look out for damp insulation, which can lead to additional freezing.

Open Sink Cabinets
If a sink is located against an outside wall, open the cabinet doors. This allows warm air to circulate around the interior pipes.

Protect Your Water Meter
If your meter is located outside, check your water meter cover to ensure it is not cracked, broken or out of place. Call Customer Service for a replacement lid if necessary.

Vacant Property
Leaving for the Winter?

Take the following steps if your property is vacant or you are leaving home for an extended period of time:

**Turn off the water.** Use the shut-off valve to turn your water off completely. Ensure that you have completely drained all the water lines. Many plumbers offer this service.

**Drain stagnant water.** Make sure to drain any item that has stagnant water, such as swimming pools, spas, fountains, and ponds.

**Check your insurance coverage.** A lot can go wrong with a vacant property (e.g., burst water pipes, leaking heating systems), so check your insurance coverage to ensure that your vacant property is covered to your satisfaction.

**Leave your keys.** Give a spare key to a family member, neighbor or friend, and have them check on the property every couple of days, especially when the temperature drops.

**Call Customer Service.** Even with no water usage, your water bill will still reflect quarterly charges. Have your bills forwarded by calling Customer Service at (937) 781-2688.

Don't let frozen pipes ruin your winter fun! Follow these tips to avoid expensive plumbing repairs.
Online Resources

- Montgomery County Environmental Services at www.mcohio.org/water
- The American Water Works Association at www.awwa.org
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov
- The Saving Water Partnership at www.savingwater.org

Our Vision
Improve the quality of life through our environmental services

Our Mission
We manage water, wastewater, recycling, and solid waste

Our Values
Leadership
Communication
Credibility
Customer Service
Empowerment
Relationships
Safety

Cold Weather
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Water Services Building
1850 Spaulding Road
Kettering, OH 45432
www.mcohio.org/water

Solid Waste District
2550 Sandridge Drive
Moraine, OH 45439
www.mcswd.org