

NEWS RELEASE

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Tips for Preventing Frozen Plumbing This Winter

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The City of Dubuque encourages residents to be proactive in ensuring plumbing and water meters in homes or businesses are properly protected from freezing during the winter months. The following are tips for preventing frozen plumbing:

- Keep your home or apartment thermostat temperature set to at least 55 degrees.
- Do not block heat to areas of your residence that contain plumbing or water fixtures. Keep doors open to bathrooms, kitchens, laundry rooms, and cabinets that contain pipes to expose the plumbing to warmer air inside the house.
- Cover pipes in unheated areas with heat tape or pipe insulation. Make sure heat tapes are properly installed and working safely.
- Prevent drafts of cold winter air by keeping windows and storm windows closed. Repair cracks or holes around doors and windows to keep cold air from blowing in.
- If you plan to be away from your residence for an extended period of time, ask someone to check your house or apartment periodically. Show them what to do if water pipes freeze and where to locate your water shut-off valve in case of an emergency.

If plumbing does freeze, attempt to thaw it naturally to avoid significant damage. Turn up the thermostat in your home and opening doors and cupboards to circulate warm air. Do not apply direct heat to pipes. Instead, try using a hair dryer or another source of indirect heat.

Another option for customers is to sign up for email and/or text water leak alerts through DBQ IQ, Dubuque's free online water management tool. DBQ IQ interfaces with a user's water meter and provides online access to water usage data specific to a user's utility account. DBQ IQ can also detect unusual water usage, like leaks, that occur in a frozen or broken pipe, if the leak occurs "after" the meter in the plumbing system. Customers can register for DBQ IQ at www.cityofdubuque.org/DBQIQ or call 563-589-4144 to register for text message alerts of unusual water usage. Please note there is a 24-48 hour delay in water data and alerts.

For questions about frozen pipes or for assistance with shutting off water, contact the City of Dubuque Utility Billing Department at 589-4144.

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