Get Ready for Freezing Temperatures

Water pipes and water meters can freeze within hours if exposed to cold air, especially when temperatures are below 32°F and remain below freezing for an extended period of time. If your pipes or meter freeze, you will not have water. It can be expensive to repair or replace them.

Frozen pipes are one of the biggest risks of property damage when the temperature drops. A burst pipe can cause more than $5,000 in water damage.*

Property owners are responsible for protecting both water pipes and the water meter from damage. If you own vacant residential or commercial property, check that pipes and water meters are exposed to heat and circulating air in the building and are not closed off behind cabinets and doors. If there is no heat in the building, contact us to have the water shut off to the building.

The money-saving suggestions in this brochure may help you avoid a bill for damaged pipes or a water meter, and charges for plumbing work.

* *Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety*

Milwaukee Water Works
Safe, Abundant Drinking Water.

Contact Us

Milwaukee Water Works Customer Service Center
841 N. Broadway, Room 409
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Open Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Visit milwaukee.gov/water

Phone (414) 286-2830
TDD (414) 286-8801
Fax (414) 286-5452

Email for non-emergency contact watwebcs@milwaukee.gov
After 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and weekends, please call the 24-hour water control center, (414) 286-3710.

Para una explicación en español, por favor llame al (414) 286-2830.

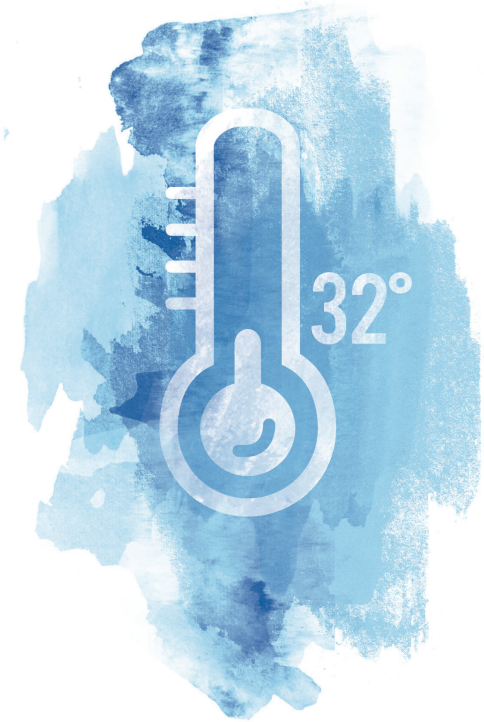
The Milwaukee Water Works is recognized nationally as a leader in providing high-quality drinking water and for its comprehensive water quality monitoring program. We purify Lake Michigan water with a multiple-step process including ozone and chlorine disinfection and biological filtration. These processes destroy and remove micro-organisms and contaminants, providing pure, safe water.

The Milwaukee Water Works provides drinking water to Milwaukee and all or parts of these communities in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Waukesha Counties:

Brown Deer	Menomonee Falls	Wauwatosa
Butler	Mequon	West Allis
Franklin	New Berlin	West Milwaukee
Greendale	Shorewood	Milwaukee County Grounds Facilities
Greenfield	St. Francis	
Hales Corners	Thiensville	

Established in 1871, the Milwaukee Water Works is proud to serve as the longest continuously operating water utility in Wisconsin.

PREVENT FROZEN WATER PIPES AND WATER METERS



milwaukee.gov/water

Milwaukee Water Works
Safe, Abundant Drinking Water.

Prepare for Winter Cold

Once the temperature outside begins to drop for winter, take these steps to prevent pipes and meters from freezing:

- **Most importantly,** make sure the interior temperature of your home or building AND the basement never drop below 32°F.
- **Tightly close doors and windows to the outside.**
  Fill cracks in walls and around windows.
- **Eliminate cold drafts** near water pipes and the water meter.
- **Install storm windows** on basement windows.
- **Close up crawl spaces** to eliminate drafts.
- Before freezing temperatures set in, **turn off the water to garden hose connections** at an interior valve and drain the exposed piping.

Protect Your Pipes and Meters

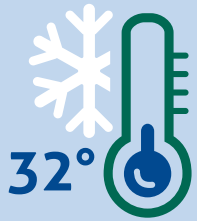
It is colder near the floor and along the walls of a basement than at the ceiling, so make sure warm air is allowed to circulate around water pipes and the water meter. The pipes most likely to freeze are nearest a wall, door, window, and along the floor.

- **Wrap pipes** with insulation or heat tape.
- Open the doors to the rooms where the pipes and water meter are located to **allow warm air to circulate** around them.
- If your kitchen or bathroom sink is located against an outside wall, **insulate the wall** to prevent pipes from freezing.

IF YOUR PIPES OR METER FREEZE, YOU WILL NOT HAVE WATER.

It is cheaper to let a trickle of water flow from at least one faucet to prevent freezing than to pay for plumbing repairs.

Frozen and burst pipes can cost you thousands of dollars.



This is the freezing point for water. It's important to keep your home and basement warmed above this temperature.

- **Open the cabinet doors below sinks** to allow warm air to circulate around the pipes.
- **You may choose to let a trickle of water run from a faucet** such as a laundry sink, as moving water in pipes helps to prevent freezing. Make sure the sink drain is not clogged. While you would be charged for the additional water use, the charge will be lower compared to the cost to you to repair a frozen or burst pipe.
- If the water meter is in an **outdoor pit,** check to see that the pit cover fits properly and there are no cracks into which cold wind could blow. The pipes, valves, and the water meter inside such pits should not touch the concrete walls.

The Milwaukee Water Works is here to assist you if you have no water or your water meter is frozen or damaged. Please use these phone numbers to contact us:

No water

Please call (414) 286-2830, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After 5:00 p.m. and on weekends, please call (414) 286-3710. TDD (414) 286-8801.

Frozen or damaged water meter

Please call (414) 286-8000, Monday-Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After 4:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and at any time on Sunday, please call (414) 286-3710. TDD (414) 286-8801.

After-hours water emergency

Please call (414) 286-3710.

Damaged water pipes

Please call a licensed plumber for assistance.