New Jersey American Water Shares Essential Tips to Protect Pipes and Save Water This Winter

CAMDEN, N.J. – DEC. 4, 2024 – Temperatures are steadily dropping in New Jersey, and New Jersey American Water is urging homeowners to prepare their plumbing and continue conserving water this season, especially during the ongoing drought conditions. Small adjustments around the home can help customers save money by saving water and avoiding the cost of broken pipe repairs when freezing temperatures persist.

“Nobody wants extra expenses or repair bills, especially this time of year,” said Ben Morris, Vice President of Operations for New Jersey American Water. “Preparing your home’s plumbing now can help to avoid costly frozen pipe repairs, and continuing to save water indoors will also help lower your water bill,” said Morris.

Property owners are responsible for maintenance of the water service line from the curb to the house, as well as any in-home piping. New Jersey American Water encourages customers to be mindful of the following tips and take the necessary precautions as we enter the winter season:

To prepare now, customers should:

- Check sprinkler or irrigation systems.Make sure you have turned everything off and fully drained the systems.
- Identify your home’s freezing points. Check your home for pipes in areas that may be prone to freezing, such as crawl spaces, unheated rooms, basements, garages, and exterior walls.
- Know the location of the main water shut-off valve. If a pipe freezes or bursts, shut off water immediately.
- Protect your pipes and water meters. Customers are encouraged to wrap exposed pipes with insulation or use electrical heat tracing wire; newspaper or fabric might also work. For outside meters, keep the lid to the meter pit closed tightly and let any snow that falls cover it. Snow acts as insulation, so don't disturb it.

When temperatures stay below freezing, customers should:

- Prevent pipes from freezing. If you have pipes that are vulnerable to freezing, allow a small trickle of water to run overnight to keep pipes from freezing. Capture this in a container for watering indoor plants and other uses.
- Open cabinet doors to expose pipes. Opening cabinet doors exposes pipes to warmer room temperatures to keep them from freezing.

If pipes freeze, customers should:

- Shut off the water immediately. Don't attempt to thaw frozen pipes unless the water is shut off. Freezing can often cause unseen cracks in pipes or joints.
- Apply heat to the frozen pipe by warming the air around it, or by applying heat directly to a pipe. You can use a hair dryer, space heater or hot water. Be sure not to leave space heaters unattended.
- Do not use kerosene heaters or open flames to thaw pipes inside your home.
- Once the pipes have thawed, turn the water back on slowly and check for cracks and leaks.

When customers are away, they should:

- Have a friend, relative or neighbor regularly check their property to ensure the heat is working and the pipes have not frozen.
- Set your thermostat at 55 degrees to prevent freezing.
- Consider purchasing a freeze alarm. The alarm will call a user-selected phone number if the inside temperature drops below 45 degrees.

Additionally, the state of New Jersey is under an active Drought Warning, and New Jersey American Water’s Mandatory Conservation Notice is still in effect for all customers. New Jersey American Water customers

can monitor their water usage and find ways to use water wisely online through their MyWater account. More indoor and outdoor water-saving tips can be found on New Jersey American Water's website at newjerseyamwater.com/conservation and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Water Conservation Website.

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