American Water Newsroom

Pennsylvania American Water Shares Essential Tips to Help Prepare for Freezing Temperatures

MECHANICSBURG, Pa. (Jan. 6, 2025) – Pennsylvania American Water urges customers and the general public to follow these essential tips to help ensure you and your loved ones remain safe and comfortable during the colder months.

Don't let frozen pipes lead to costly repairs and unwanted stress. Take action now by preparing your plumbing:

- Know how to shut off your water: Locate your main water shut-off valve. In many homes, it is located near the water meter or close to where the water pipe enters the home. Hang an I.D. tag on the valve so you can find it quickly in an emergency. You can find a printable tag in the Leak Detection Kit on our website.
- Test your main water shut-off valve: Once you've located it, test your shut-off valve by closing it. If you have a ball valve, it generally only requires a quarter turn to close. Gate valves are generally closed by turning the handle clockwise and should turn easily. You may need to have it serviced if it does not close easily. Once completely closed, check sinks and other water fixtures to ensure that the shut-off valve is working properly. If no water comes out, then the valve is working properly.
- Check sprinkler or irrigation systems: Make sure everything is turned off and fully drained.
- Eliminate sources of cold air near water lines: Check for pipes in areas that might be prone to freezing, such as crawl spaces, unheated rooms, basements, garages, and exterior walls. Fix drafty windows, insulate walls around pipes and plug drafts around doors.
- Protect your pipes: Where pipes are exposed to cold, wrap them with insulation or heat tape (even fabric or newspaper can help).

When temperatures stay below freezing:

- Give pipes a helping hand: If pipes run through cabinets or vanities, open the doors to let warmer room temperatures flow in.
- Keep water moving through the pipes: Allow a small trickle of water to run. Consider catching the water in a container and reusing it for other uses, like watering plants.

If your pipes freeze:

- Shut off the water immediately: Don't attempt to thaw pipes without turning off the main water shut-off valve.
- Thaw a frozen pipe by warming the air around it: Do not leave space heaters unattended and avoid using kerosene heaters or open flames.
- Carefully turn the water back on: Once pipes are thawed, slowly turn the water back on and check pipes and joints for any cracks or leaks.

To report a water or wastewater emergency, visit pennsylvaniaamwater.com and click on the Report Emergency button in the upper right-hand corner.

About American Water
American Water (NYSE: AWK) is the largest regulated water and wastewater utility company in the United States. With a history dating back to 1886, We Keep Life Flowing® by providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water and wastewater services to more than 14 million people with regulated operations in 14 states and on 18 military installations. American Water's 6,500 talented professionals leverage their significant expertise and the company's national size and scale to achieve excellent outcomes for the benefit of customers, employees, investors and other stakeholders.

For more information, visit amwater.com and join American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram.

About Pennsylvania American Water
Pennsylvania American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility

in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and wastewater services to approximately 2.3 million people.

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