

Maxons – Pipe Breaks

Ice forming in a pipe does not typically cause a break where the ice blockage occurs. Rather, following a complete ice blockage in a pipe, continued freezing and expansion inside the pipe causes water pressure to increase downstream -- between the ice blockage and a closed faucet at the end. Usually the pipe bursts where little or no ice has formed.

Here are some tips to help avoid this common cause of winter property damage:

How To Prevent Frozen Pipes

- Pipes that have frozen in the past, or near exterior walls, are obvious candidates for special attention.
- Insulate areas where vulnerable pipes are located.
- When insulation isn't enough, consider pipe wrappings embedded with electrical coils (heat tape) that provide an outside source of heat.
- Remove hoses from outside yard faucets. The faucets can't drain properly with a hose attached and will freeze and break if the hose is left attached.
- During severe cold weather, resist the urge to lower your thermostat to save money while you are gone for the day.
- Open the doors to kitchen and bathroom cabinets under your sinks so heat from the room will help warm the pipes.
- Running water doesn't freeze very readily. During severe cold weather, keep a stream of water trickling out of faucets or spouts attached to vulnerable pipes.
- If you have a sprinkler system, drain all outdoor pipes and turn off the water supply to the system.
- Know where your main water emergency shut-off valve is located.



Winterizing Your Home If You'll Be Away For An Extended Period

- Turn off the water supply at the main shutoff valve by the street.
- Remove garden hoses from outside faucets and open these faucets to drain them.
- Drain the water heater. Turn off the pilot light on gas water heaters and be sure to turn off the electricity to electric water heaters before you drain them.
- Use an air compressor to blow any trapped water from the water pipes. Open all faucets and leave them open. This will help keep condensation from freezing and bursting the water lines.



Maxons - Pipe Breaks (cont.)

- Flush all toilets (to empty the tank) and every faucet (to drain water from pipes) in the home, including outdoor faucets.
- Empty all toilet bowls by siphoning or bailing and sponging. Pour a mixture of food grade antifreeze and water into all toilet bowls and traps of all sinks, showers and bathtubs. Don't drain these traps. The water in them keeps sewer gases out of your house.
- If your water supply is from a well, switch off the pump and drain it along with the above ground pump lines and the tank.



What To Do If A Pipe Freezes

- To prevent a frozen pipe from bursting, open the faucet it supplies with water. Then add heat to the area where the pipe is located.
- Turn off the water supply to that line.
- If a pipe does burst, immediately turn off the water to your home.
- Know where your main water emergency shut-off valve is located.

