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Aqua Illinois encourages customers to take steps to prevent pipes from freezing

KANKANKEE, IL. – With temperatures well below freezing, Aqua Illinois is issuing an urgent reminder to homeowners that they should take steps now to prevent their water pipes from freezing.

“Each winter, we receive many calls from customers who are dealing with pipes that have frozen or ruptured due to extreme winter temperatures,” says Aqua Illinois President Craig Blanchette. “Frozen pipes become a concern anytime the high temperature drops below freezing for a sustained period. We want to make sure our customers know how to keep their home’s water flowing during the Arctic blast, and also what to do if their pipes do freeze this winter.”

Blanchette recommends that all customers take the following steps ahead of the severe winter weather:

- Make sure to have a supply of heat tape and pipe insulation, as well as a portable space heater and a hair dryer on hand.
- Locate and visibly mark the home’s master water valve. In the event that a pipe does break, use this value to turn off water to the home.
- Make sure the lids on outdoor meter pits are not broken or missing.
- Shut off **and** drain any outside faucets including those for lawn sprinkling systems.
- Prevent drafts in unheated areas, such as crawl spaces or basements, by replacing broken glass or making other repairs.

Blanchette also advises customers to take the following precautions **in any unheated areas** of their homes when temperatures drop below freezing:

- Wrap pipes with insulation material or heat tape. Wrap indoor water meters with a blanket. Proper and safe use of portable space heaters can also keep exposed pipes in drafty areas from freezing.

- For interior plumbing located on an outside wall such as a kitchen sink, install heat tape to the pipes beneath the sink. If no small children are in the house, open cabinet doors beneath the sink to allow the warm air in the home to reach the pipes.
- When temperatures remain near 10°F, customers may want to leave a very thin stream of water running continuously from at least one tap in their home—preferably the one farthest from the meter. The additional cost of the water is cheaper than the cost of repairing ruptured pipes.
- If a customer can locate the frozen area of a pipe, open a spigot and use a hand-held hair dryer (blow dryer) or heat tape to thaw the area. If this does not resolve the issue, contact a licensed plumber.

Aqua Illinois provides water and wastewater service to more than 62,000 homes and businesses in Boone, Champaign, Cook, Dekalb, Kane, Kankakee, Knox, Lake, Ogle, Vermilion, Will, and Winnebago counties throughout the State of Illinois. Visit AquaAmerica.com for more information, or follow Aqua on Facebook at facebook.com/MyAquaAmerica and on Twitter at [@MyAquaAmerica](https://twitter.com/MyAquaAmerica).

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