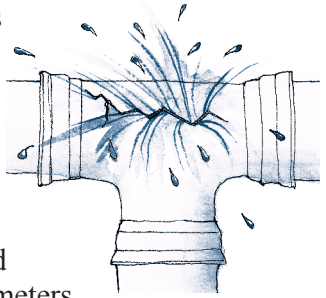


Protect Your House From Frozen Meters and Pipes

Every winter hundreds of water meters and pipes freeze in area homes. You can take easy and inexpensive steps to prevent the damage, expense, and inconvenience associated with freezing pipes and meters.



While the utility owns the meter and the couplings on either side of it, the responsibility to protect the meter from damage lies with the homeowner. If we need to replace a damaged meter, including damage caused by freezing, the homeowner will be charged for the meter.

Water meters sit several inches off the floor in the basements of most homes. Particularly in Saint Paul, many basements are partially finished and not used for main living quarters, so you might not notice colder temperatures or frosted areas along

Don't forget your outdoor faucets!

To prevent the outside faucet from freezing, turn off the water connection at the valve inside the house and drain the exposed pipe before temperatures drop.

walls. But you can take several actions to prevent meters and pipes from freezing in your home.

Temperatures are colder along the floor

and the cement block wall of the basement than they are near the ceiling. Circulating the warmer air can help prevent frozen meters.

In some homes, meters are in separate, unheated rooms; keep the doors to that room open.

Through remodeling, meters may have been boxed in with gypsum board. Add vents to allow warmer air to the meter. When remodeling, install vents, louvered cabinet doors or other methods of allowing air to circulate around the meter.

Continued on back

Prevent Frozen Pipes

Continued from front

Be aware that, for a number of reasons, meters may need to be repaired or replaced, in which case access to the meter will be required.

If the meter is in a pit in your home, make sure that the cover fits properly and has no cracks through which cold air can enter. The pipes, valves, and water meter in the pit should not touch the concrete walls, where it is colder. In addition:

- Keep your basement warm enough to keep the meter and pipes from freezing
- Check along the foundation for places cold wind can waft into the basement or into crawl spaces and plug them with insulation
 - Close off crawl space vents and doors
 - Replace or repair broken or cracked basement windows
 - Install storm windows or cover basement windows with weather insulation kits
 - Make sure that basement doors and windows close tightly
 - Seal or caulk cracks in the wall
 - Insulate pipes

Make sure the valves on either side of the water meter work and can be turned off if the meter freezes or the pipe bursts.

If the pipes near the meter are frozen, use a hair dryer to slowly apply heat to the pipe.

If your water meter freezes, the bottom plate will crack. Do not try to repair the meter yourself, just call us.

If you suspect damaged or frozen water pipes or water meter, call the SPRWS 24-hour dispatch office at 651-266-6868.



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