



Tennessee American Water's Top Ten Winterizing Tips

1. Search for pipes that are not insulated, or that pass through unheated spaces such as crawlspaces, basements or garages. Wrap them with pre-molded foam rubber sleeves or fiberglass insulation, available at hardware stores.
2. Consider wrapping pipes with electric heating tape, but follow manufacturers' instructions carefully, and purchase heat tape with a built-in thermostat that only turns heat on when needed.
3. Seal cracks and holes in outside walls and foundations with caulking to keep cold wind from pipes. Look for areas where cable TV or phone lines enter the house, to be sure holes are tightly sealed.
4. If your home is heated by a hot-water radiator, bleed the valves by opening them slightly. Close them when water appears.
5. Before freezing weather sets in, prevent burst pipes by making certain that the water to your hose bibs is shut off inside your house (via a turnoff valve), and that the lines are drained.
6. Drain any hoses and air conditioner pipes. Make sure you don't have excess water pooled in equipment.
7. If you suspect a pipe has frozen but it has not yet broken, turn on the faucets connected to the pipe, and trace backwards from the faucet feeling for the coldest spot. Thaw the pipe with a hair dryer or even a hot water bottle.
8. Wrap your water heater. Nearly 15 percent of an average home energy bill goes to heating water. The Alliance to Save Energy recommends wrapping your water heater in an insulation blanket to help reduce heat loss.
9. Keep your water temperature around 120 degrees and install inexpensive water efficient shower heads to reduce hot water use. Lowering the temperature to 120 degrees helps reduce water heating costs.
10. Know where your water main is located in case you need to shut it off during an emergency.