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Frost Should Nip at Your Nose, Not Your Pipes

10 Tips to Prevent Frozen Pipes

If homeowners don't winterize their homes before Old Man Winter arrives, he could bring a flurry of high repair bills as well.

"Frozen pipes can be a costly problem if proper precautions are not taken," said Mary Kennedy Thompson, president of Mr. Rooter Corporation. "Often times, homeowners are unprepared when the winter weather hits."

The best way to prevent frozen pipes is to take the necessary precautions now. It can save homeowners time and money later.

Mr. Rooter Plumbing has 10 simple tips that will help homeowners keep their pipes from bursting when temperatures plummet this winter:

1. Insulate pipes

- Cover faucets and exposed pipes with insulation or wrap thick towels around them.

2. Secure basement doors, windows and crawl space openings

- Caulk, seal and weather-strip.

3. Drain outside water lines

- Remove garden hoses from outdoor faucets, close interior valves that lead to outside hose taps and then open outside hose taps to drain.

4. Apply electrically-powered heat tape to pipes

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions or call a plumber to do this.

5. Wrap water heater with an approved manufacturer's blanket

- Use the appropriate type of blanket for your water heater

6. Open cabinet doors

- Allows heat to circulate and keeps interior pipes warm.

7. Keep faucets running

- Either a small trickle of water or constant drip is recommended when temperatures drop below freezing for more than 24 hours.

8. Do not set thermostat lower than 55 degrees when travelling

- Have a neighbor check during below freezing temperatures

9. Locate the main water shut-off valve

- Learn how to use it in case pipes freeze and burst.

10. Have a hair dryer handy if pipes freeze

- Heat pipe's exterior with a hair dryer by applying heat slowly and moving constantly.

The first step to safely thawing frozen pipes is turning off water at the main water shut-off valve. Next, open the nearest faucet to allow water to drain as the ice melts. Now it's time to use the hair dryer to heat the pipes, or you can wrap a hot, wet rag around pipes. Do not attempt to thaw exposed frozen pipes with an open flame, such as an acetylene torch.

If you're not a do-it-yourselfer or your pipes burst, call a qualified plumber.

"We'll be available 24/7 to help those having a plumbing emergency," Thompson said. "This can be a stressful time for homeowners, and we understand the urgency they feel."

About Mr. Rooter®:

Established in 1970, *Mr. Rooter* is an all-franchised, full-service plumbing and drain cleaning company with approximately 300 franchises worldwide. Recognized by *Entrepreneur* magazine among its "Franchise 500" and Franchise Times Top 200, *Mr. Rooter* franchisees provide services to both residential and commercial customers. *Mr. Rooter* began franchising in 1974 and is a subsidiary of The Dwyer Group, Inc. For more information or to find the location nearest you, please visit our Web site at www.mrrooter.com.