

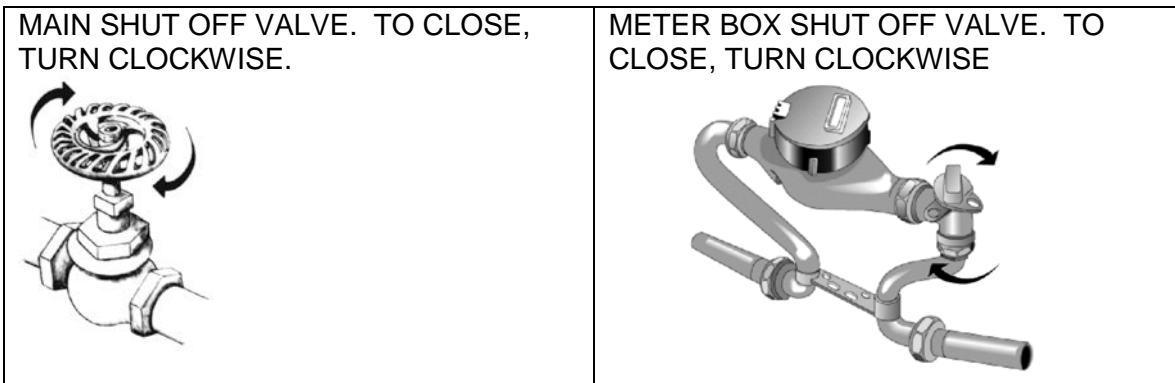
How to prevent frozen pipes and what to do if a pipe freezes or breaks.

Before an emergency, find the main shut-off valve that controls the flow of water into your home or building.

If a pipe breaks, stop excessive water loss and flooding by turning off the water. The shut-off valve is commonly located in the basement, garage or outdoor by the foundation, often near the front faucet. If you cannot locate your main shut-off valve, Utilities can come out to your home and help you locate it (during a non-emergency time). Call Utilities at 425-452-7840.

If your property does not have a main shut-off valve or it is broken, you should have one installed/repaired by a plumber. There is also a shut-off valve in the meter box that you can use in an emergency. This can be turned clockwise with an adjustable wrench. Since the meter box shut-off valve may not be easy to access, we recommend using the main shut-off valve to turn off water (if your home or building has one).

Test the valve to be sure it is working and mark the valve with a tag. To close the valve, turn clockwise.



Insulate Exposed Pipes and Faucets. Outdoor faucets and pipes and pipes in unheated attics, garages, and crawl spaces are most vulnerable to freezing. To prevent faucets and pipes from freezing, wrap them with rags, newspapers or other insulating materials. cover the insulation with plastic and secure with string or wire.

Protect Pipes that Freeze. Pipes that have frozen before even when insulated can be wrapped with electric heat tape. In severe cases, you can let one indoor faucet slowly drip warm water when the temperature is below freezing. Do not leave water running in a vacant building.

What to do if your pipes freeze or break:

Thaw frozen pipes and faucets by wrapping them with rags and pouring hot water over the rags until the water is flowing. After thawing, remove the wet rags and wrap pipes with dry insulation to prevent refreezing.

Never use an open flame or electric device to thaw frozen pipes because you could cause a fire or electric shock. After thawing the pipes, you may discover leaking from a broken pipe.

When a pipe breaks, immediately close the main shut-off valve to stop excessive flooding. The valve is usually in the basement, garage or outside by the foundation, often near a faucet.

Winterize Vacant Buildings. If you leave your home or business property unheated for extended periods of time, do the following to protect pipes from freezing:

- Turn off the main shut-off valve.
- Turn off the water heater.
- Open indoor and outdoor faucets to drain the pipes.
- Drain irrigation systems.
- Flush toilet to drain toilet tanks, but not toilet bowls.

You are responsible for protecting water pipes from freezing and for repairing broken pipes on your property. If you lose all water service during a freezing period, thaw the pipes as suggested or call a plumber. **If you suspect the problem is at the meter, call Bellevue Utilities at 425-452-7840.**