

Wrap up for winter

We all take our water supply for granted. But if your home or business suffers a burst pipe, you could be left with no water and a hefty bill to repair the damage to your property.

Safeguard your bank balance and water supply by following these simple steps to protect your pipework this winter.



- Insulate water tanks and lag pipes (lagging material is available from all good DIY stores). Make sure there are no gaps at bends, valves or fittings.
- Pay special attention to water tanks and pipes in unheated areas like loft spaces and garages, and check insulation in any property likely to be unoccupied for long periods.
- Ensure that loft insulation is laid over and under pipes.
- Fix dripping taps – even a small trickle can result in a frozen pipe.
- Find your property's internal stop tap and make sure you know how to turn the water off if necessary. Stop taps are usually under the kitchen sink – turning the tap clockwise will turn the water off.
- Make sure your boiler has been serviced.
- Minimise draughts from outside and close doors and windows to unheated parts of the property.
- Keep a couple of bottles or jugs topped up with tap water for emergencies.
- Heading to sunnier climes this winter? Leave your heating on low, and if severe weather is forecast, leave it on day and night.
- Ask someone to visit your home regularly while you're away, so if you do have a burst pipe, it won't go unnoticed. Make sure that they know where the stop tap is.



If a pipe bursts...

- Turn off the stop tap and boiler.
- Open all taps to drain the system quickly.
- Soak up/block off escaping water with thick towels.
- Call an approved plumber - visit www.watersafe.org.uk.
- If water has leaked near your electrics or into any electrical appliances, switch them off at the mains.
- Turn off taps once pipework is repaired to avoid further flooding.
- If you have your own plumber, make a note of their name and number on a sticker next to your stop tap so you have it handy in an emergency.



What if things go wrong?

- If you have a frozen pipe, turn off the water supply at the stop tap.
- Check to see if the pipe has burst.



- Open the affected tap. Slowly thaw the pipe with hot water bottles or a towel soaked in hot water, starting at the end nearest the tap.
- Never use a naked flame, hair-dryer or blowtorch to thaw the pipe.



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From health to heating...
where to find other useful information

Wrapping up for winter isn't just about your pipework. It's also about making sure you and your family are ready for the cold weather – and that's where the Met Office's Get ready for winter campaign comes in.

Visit the Met Office's website (www.metoffice.gov.uk) and you'll find practical information to help you survive the winter months. From essential tips on winter motoring to advice on keeping yourself well and your home warm, it's all there, along with useful links to many other organisations.

Visit our website for more information
www.southwestwater.co.uk

