

Wrap up for winter



Essential information
to help protect your
home from burst pipes



We all take our water supply for granted. But if your home or business suffers a burst pipe this winter, 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.



All pipework within your home or business boundary is your responsibility, so it really is worth protecting it properly to avoid serious problems during cold weather.

Avoiding frozen pipes

- ❄ 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.
- ❄ Fix dripping taps – even a small trickle can result in a frozen pipe.
- ❄ Find your property's internal stop tap and make sure you can turn it off if necessary. Most stop taps are fitted under the kitchen sink and close by turning clockwise.
- ❄ Check your boiler has been serviced.
- ❄ Minimise draughts from outside and close doors and windows to unheated parts of the property.
- ❄ Leave the heating on low when you are away and get a friend or neighbour to check the property regularly.
- ❄ If a property (such as an office or school) is going to be unoccupied for long periods, turn off the water at the stop tap and consider draining down the system so there is no water left in the pipes.
- ❄ Keep a separate supply of drinking water for emergencies.



If a pipe freezes

- ❄️ 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.
- ❄️ Don't leave taps dripping or running as the water may not drain down the plughole if the pipe below is frozen.





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 a qualified plumber. Local water industry recommended plumbers can be found at www.wras.co.uk/WIAPS.
- ❄ 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 below so you have it handy in an emergency.

Your plumber's name

Telephone number

Keep this leaflet in a safe place where you can refer to it quickly in an emergency.

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 Government's Get Ready for Winter initiative comes in.

Go to www.directgov.org.uk and you'll find a mine of practical information to help you survive the winter months. From essential tips on winter motoring to finding out what benefits and allowances you can claim to meet heating costs, it's all there, along with useful links to many other organisations.

How to Contact Us

Our Customer Service Centre is open:

Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm

Saturday from 8am to 1pm

We are closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays

Email

www.southeastwater.co.uk/contact

Call

Water supply and general enquiries

0333 000 0002

Out of hours emergencies

0333 00 00 365

Leak line

0333 000 3330

Write

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