

# Water Line Freeze-Ups Questions & Answers



## **I've heard water pipes are freezing due to the weather and that I should run my water to keep the pipes from freezing. Is that true?**

It depends. Most water service lines going into the property are not going to freeze. About 20 pipes have frozen out of 7,400 accounts (about one quarter of one percent of all properties in our service area).

However, predicting which ones will and won't freeze is difficult. If the water service line to your property has frozen in the recent past or you are a very low consumer of water (one or two people in your home), you may be more susceptible to the risk of your service freezing.

## **If there is a chance of the water line freezing, why not just tell everyone to run their water?**

Currently we are only asking our very low volume water users to run water to their property because the chance of water failure is the greatest for them. Running water unnecessarily will waste water and cost our customers additional money on their upcoming water bills.

## **How do I know if I should run my water to keep my pipes from freezing?**

If you are a low volume user or have had your water service line freeze in the past, you may want to consider running additional water at your property.

You can always choose to run your water for your own peace of mind. However, you will be charged for the water used.

- Run your cold water at a rate of one gallon every four minutes—slightly smaller than the stream width of a pencil.
- This averages about 10-15 thousand gallons of extra water used a month. With combined water and sewer rates in Golden Valley, this could be \$100 a month in additional charges.

## **My neighbor's pipes froze and I don't want that to happen to me. What can I do?**

Consider using increased amounts of water at your property to prevent your line from freezing up as well. You may also consider running water continuously as discussed above.

## **My house never had frozen pipes before this year. Why did my pipes freeze now?**

Water service lines are buried in the ground approximately seven to eight feet deep. Currently, frost is below these lines in most areas. Due to this, some water service lines are freezing up and the problem is expected to get worse as the spring warm-up will temporarily push the frost deeper into the ground.

## **What can I do to keep it from freezing again?**

Once your line has been thawed out, it is essential to keep the water running continuously as instructed: one gallon every four minutes. Turning the water off, even for a few minutes, could cause the once frozen line to re-freeze. Remember this line already froze this year and is likely to re-freeze if you do not continue to run the water.

## **Should I be running hot or cold water?**

Run cold water from the lowest point in the house, usually a laundry room sink or tub. The idea is to keep the water flowing constantly at a rate of about one gallon every four minutes. Do not run your hot water.

## **The weather is supposed to get above freezing. Can I stop running my water now?**

No. You need to continue to run water at your property until all of the frost is out of the ground.

## **If my water service line does freeze, how long will it take for you to thaw it out?**

Depending on demand, it will take anywhere from one to seven days for us to get to your service. Once on site, it can take anywhere from two hours to upwards of eight hours or more to thaw it out, depending on the size of the pipe. Sometimes it may be impossible to thaw out a frozen line all together.

## **If I have a frozen water pipe and do not have water, who do I call?**

Contact Golden Valley Public Works at 763-593-8030 during normal business hours (8 am–4:30 pm, Monday–Friday), or contact the Golden Valley Police Department after hours at 763-593-8079. After hours, your property information will be taken and directed to the on-call Public Works supervisor.



This document is available in alternate formats upon a 72-hour request. Please call 763-593-8006 (TTY: 763-593-3968) to make a request. Examples of alternate formats may include large print, electronic, Braille, audiocassette, etc.



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