

# What to do if Your Water Line Freezes

One of the hazards of winter that a lot of people have experienced is frozen water pipes. Since water expands as it freezes it creates tremendous pressure on the pipes, which in turn can cause them to break and damage. To safely and effectively thaw frozen water pipes you must first diagnose where the pipe is frozen.



## \*Identify where the water line is frozen

Inside the house or building or from the water main to the house or building.

**\*Step 1.** Start by turning on every faucet in the house, including the bathtub faucets. This will help you determine the area of the blockage. If the water in the kitchen sink is frozen but the water in the bathroom sink works, then you are probably dealing with an isolated problem. Once you have figured out which faucet contains the frozen line, turn off all other faucets.

Open the cabinet doors so heat can get to the pipes. A hair dryer can be used to provide additional heat, but use with extra caution. **Never** use an open flame, such as blowtorch or propane heater to thaw a frozen water lines. This can cause damage to pipes, meter can and water meter. This can present a serious fire hazard as well as the possibility of exposure to carbon monoxide poisoning.

You may be able to thaw a frozen pipe with the warm air from a hair dryer. Start by warming the pipe as close to the faucet as possible, working toward the coldest section of pipe. **Do not** use electrical appliances in areas of standing water because you could be electrocuted.

**\*Step 2.** If there is water in one part of the house, but not another, the pipes supplying water are frozen someplace inside the house, possibly under the kitchen or bathroom cabinets, under the trailer or in the basement. Determine which pipes are frozen and get heat to them immediately. **NEVER** use a torch or open flame of any kind.



**\*Step 3.** No water anywhere in your house? Go to the place where the water service from the water meter. Check to see if the entrance valve turns freely, if not that indicates the meter yoke is frozen.

\*This is when you call [NTUA Toll Free 1-800-528-5011](tel:1-800-528-5011)

## \*Step 4 – Call a Plumber, indicating it is for frozen water service

It is recommended you call a plumber who offers a thawing service using either a steam or hot water thawing system. Thawing is done by feeding a tube through the water service usually from inside the house, trailer or building out toward the water meter. Broken pipes in the home may also be repaired by the homeowner.

## Have You had Problems with Your Meter or Pipes Freezing Before?

You can do one or more of the following:

\*Let a trickle of water run from a faucet to keep water moving through the line. This water does go through the water meter and you will be charged for it just as if you were using it for any other purpose.

\* Open cupboard doors under sinks in kitchens and bathrooms to allow more heat to reach water pipes.

\*Use Heat Tape the water pipes and meter. Be sure not to let the heat tape touch the plastic face of the meter or meter can. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using Heat Tape.



For more information, contact your local NTUA office:  
**Shiprock** 505-368-4634; **Red Mesa** 928-656-3212; **Kayenta** 928-697-3574;  
**Chinle** 928-674-5470; **Dilkon** 928-657-3258; **Tuba City** 928-283-5421;  
**Ft. Defiance** 928-729-5727; **Crownpoint** 505-786-5566; and **Nageezi** 505-960-8022