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American Water Resources Offers Tips for Cold Weather

Protecting your property during a deep freeze

VOORHEES, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The onset of winter compels homeowners to protect their homes from freezing weather. While insulating one's home can keep out cold air, water and sewer lines are exposed to the freezing/thawing temperature swings that put stress on pipes, which could lead to leaks or breaks.

Broken water service lines, as well as cracks or leaks to in-home plumbing can potentially cost homeowners thousands of dollars in unexpected repair expenses. Most homeowners' insurance policies do not cover repairs to these pipes. Homeowners can gain peace of mind in the event of broken pipes, by considering protection programs for in-home plumbing and external water service lines available from American Water Resources (AWR).

"It's important that homeowners take time to weather-proof their home against the cold to protect indoor plumbing against the threat of breaks," said Eric Palm, president of Homeowner Services at American Water Resources. "Another layer of security is offered through our protection programs that cover emergency repairs for leaks or breaks to the water service line and indoor plumbing. We often see our claims rise in the winter months."

In order to help homeowners reduce the risk of freezing pipes, American Water Resources suggests the following winter tips:

- | Locate main water shut-off valve to turn off water in an emergency. This could be in the basement, crawlspace, or utility closet.
- | Check for pipes that pass through unheated spaces or rooms, such as crawlspaces, basements, garages, or uninsulated exterior walls.
- | Protect exposed pipes by wrapping them with heat tape, pre-molded foam rubber sleeves or fiberglass insulation, available at hardware stores. If you have installed heat tape on exposed pipes, inspect the tape for cracks or fraying and make any needed repairs.
- | Eliminate sources of cold air near pipes by sealing openings or cracks that could cause drafts.
- | Close air vents in crawlspaces.
- | Turn off and drain your irrigation system.
- | If you are going to be away, leave your thermostat at 55 degrees to prevent freezing.

When temperatures consistently fall below freezing

- | For kitchen or other sinks up against cold, exterior walls, open cabinets to let warm air in your home reach the pipes.
- | Allow a small trickle of water to run overnight to keep pipes from freezing. The cost of the extra water is typically lower than the cost of repairing a broken pipe.
- | If your pipes do freeze, shut off the water immediately. Do not attempt to thaw frozen pipes unless the water is shut off.
- | Freezing can often cause unseen cracks in pipes or joints that will leak when thawed.
- | Apply heat to a frozen pipe by warming the air around it. Avoid the use of kerosene heaters or open flames.
- | Once the pipes have thawed, slowly turn the water back on and check for cracks and leaks.

Even the best efforts to prevent pipe leaks and breaks are not always successful. To help avoid the hassles associated with extended disruption of water service should an issue occur, American Water Resources fully manages in-home plumbing and water service line protection programs for homeowners. AWR has an established local contractor network, provides outstanding customer service, and educates homeowners about their responsibility to maintain their water and sewer lines.

AWR's protection programs provide a solution for the potential cost and hassle of unexpected repairs.

More information about AWR's protection programs are available online at www.AWRUSA.com/.

About American Water Resources

American Water Resources offers Service Line Protection Programs to homeowners in 43 states and Washington, D.C., and currently services more than 1.8 million contracts. The company has been providing protection programs for more than 16 years. More than 9 out of 10 customers are satisfied and the company holds an A+ Rating from the Better Business Bureau. American Water Resources also provides its Protection Programs to homeowners through municipal partnerships with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Orlando Utilities Commission, Nashville Metro Water Services and others.

American Water Resources is part of American Water Enterprises, a market-based subsidiary of American Water. For more information, visit the American Water Resources website at AWRUSA.com.

With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 6,800 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 15 million people in 47 states and Ontario, Canada. More information can be found by visiting www.amwater.com.

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