

beat the cold

- **keep your home warm:** make sure heaters are well-maintained and working properly. Keep furniture away from radiators and other heat sources so they don't block heat from circulating freely. Thick, lined curtains are very effective at slowing down heat loss. You can also fit aluminium foil behind any radiators which are on outside walls to reflect heat back into the room.
- **keep a small emergency pack handy** in case of loss of power or other services – include items such as a torch, radio (with batteries), candles and matches. Keep it in an easily

- accessible place where you can find it when you need it, even in the dark.
- You may also want to include repair putty or a repair clamp in your pack for those temporary pipe repairs.
- **keep a note of the telephone numbers** of your local licensed plumber, electrician, council and insurance company for emergency use (you may want to keep a copy in your emergency pack).
 - **be a good neighbour:** when cold weather hits, keep an eye out for your neighbours, especially the frail and elderly or disabled.

remember: Any pipework within your property boundary is your responsibility, and spending a little time on simple frost protection now could help you avoid trouble and expense during cold weather.

free stop valve sticker:

Think ahead: why not contact us to get a quick reminder sticker which you can write the name and number of your local licensed plumber on, so you've got it handy for an emergency?

Write to **Customer Marketing, Free Stop Valve Sticker, Free Stop Valve Promotion, PO Box 8855, Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ;** or email customermarketing@scottishwater.co.uk quoting Free Stop Valve Promotion, giving us your name and full address (we can only send one sticker per household. This is only available in Scotland).

You can write to us at:

Scottish Water
PO Box 8855
Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason where you will need special assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and special requirements to our confidential Additional Support Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.



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For more information on Scottish Water and our services call our Customer Helpline **0845 601 8855** or visit our website at:

www.scottishwater.co.uk



Scottish Water
Always serving Scotland

Protect your pipes

Be prepared this winter
heat, insulate and protect your home

Looking after you and your home is important to us at Scottish Water. This leaflet gives you helpful advice on how to **heat**, **insulate** and **protect** your home during the cold weather.

Just follow our winter code and be prepared for winter!

protect your home

heat

Warmth offers the best protection against frozen pipes, so leave your heating on, using a low setting. If you live in a flat, it's sensible to leave the heating on low in rooms where the mains pipe supplies neighbouring flats. If you're going away then make sure you have someone who can regularly check for any problems. If your neighbours don't have a key for your home make sure they have contact details for someone who does, in case of an emergency. If your property is going to be vacant over the winter months, turn off your water supply and drain the system - a licensed plumber should be able to give you advice about this.

insulate

Your water tank should be fitted with an insulation jacket or alternatively, the top and sides of the tank can be wrapped with suitable insulation material.

Don't place loft insulation under the tank, though, as this stops heat from the rooms below helping to keep the tank warm. If you have toilet cisterns, water tanks or pipes in exposed places or unheated outbuildings, make sure you insulate them. Better still, if not in use, drain them for winter.

protect

Dripping water increases the risk of freezing, so have any leaks at taps or valves repaired as soon as you discover them. Cold draughts can also cause frozen pipework and can increase your heating bills. You can reduce draughts by fitting draught excluders to your doors and windows. All these things help to protect your home from the effects of cold weather, but sometimes damage can happen, so make sure you have adequate building and contents insurance.

if a pipe bursts...

1 Locate the stop valve which controls the water supply entering your home and turn it off immediately. The location of the stop valve will vary, but the most common locations are under a sink (kitchen or utility room), in a garage or close to the hot water system (wherever the mains supply enters your house). This normally closes by turning clockwise. Then switch off your immersion heater and central heating boiler. Open all hot and cold taps to drain them of any remaining water to minimise the damage. Let any solid fuel fires die down. You should also warn your neighbours so they can take steps to reduce the chance of any damage to their homes.

2 Switch off your electricity supply at the mains if there's any chance that water could come into contact with electrical wiring or fittings.

Water and electricity can be a deadly combination, so if you are in any doubt about what to do in this case, don't take a risk - call a qualified electrician.

3 If you live in a flat, you may have a shared water supply. Make sure you can get to the stop valve; this is normally located where the water supply enters the building. Then check with your neighbours that turning off the water has not affected their supply. It's important to remember to make sure your hot water system is refilled BEFORE you re-light your boiler or switch on the immersion heater.

repairing a burst pipe

You can make a temporary repair to a burst pipe using repair putty or a pipe repair clamp which can be bought from most DIY outlets. However, any temporary repair needs to be replaced as soon as possible by a permanent repair, carried out by a licensed plumber.



if a pipe freezes...

1 Turn off the stop valve immediately and open all COLD taps to drain the system, but NEVER turn on the hot taps - if you have a hot water cylinder it may collapse if the pipes leading to it are frozen.

2 Call a licensed plumber if you are in any doubt about what to do.



thawing out your pipes

Never attempt to thaw out frozen pipes by switching on your immersion heater or central heating boiler. Instead, check for leaking joints or bursts in the pipes.

Then gently heat any frozen sections with a hairdryer or a heated cloth wrapped around the pipe. Never apply a direct flame.

licensed plumbers

We would always recommend the use of licensed plumbers. Scottish Water supports and promotes the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbers Employers Federation (SNIPEF).

To find a licensed plumber in your area visit www.needaplumber.org or call SNIPEF on **0845 224 0391** who will be able to recommend a plumber. Office opening hours are Monday - Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. For out of office hours, please visit the website or refer to your telephone directory.