



PREVENTION *is the best policy*

To help prevent **FROZEN SERVICE LINES**, here are a few tips and procedures that your system can follow.

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures to help eliminate frozen water and sewer lines and the process for what happens in the event of frozen water and sewer lines. Procedures identified in this plan are intended to help identify responsibility of maintenance and repair.

Things the water system should consider in a written policy:

- *Spell out ownership of service lines** (as according to your city ordinances) i.e.: city owns the main lines and customer is responsible for service line from corp stop to house/business.
- *Ask residents to monitor water temperature:** Sample verbiage: city will monitor water temperature at specific locations in the system. When the temperature reaches 38 degrees, the city will notify the public to monitor their water temperatures coming into the homes and businesses. Monitor temperature from the faucet that is closest to the water line entry to the home/business.
- *Require residents to run a pencil-sized width stream of water from a faucet:** Sample verbiage: when the water reaches 38 degrees, the city recommends to run the water at a pencil-sized stream (1/4 gallon/minute).
- *Require when residents should start running their tap AND when they should stop.** Residents should have a clear idea of when to start running their tap and when to stop. Sample verbiage: This will not be a short term situation as it will take multiple days, possibly weeks, before the frost levels decrease and the risk of freezing has passed.
- *Inform residents of the cost of running their tap:** Sample verbiage: all water going through the meter will be billed. Water will run at approximately 575-700 gallons/day of usage x 30 days = _____ gallons divided by 1,000 and multiplied by cost per thousand gallons ⁽¹⁾ = _____ per month (divide by 30 for per day). Sewer will be charged on the same formula. Remind residents that thawing a frozen service line varies by contractor and usually the minimum fee is at least \$400. The city does not thaw out frozen services lines and having a contractor perform that service will get expensive.
- OR -***City may decide to reimburse for running water expenses or average-out the water bills during months of running the water.** Sample verbiage: all utility bills will be adjusted based on average usage.
- *Remind residents of the possibility of a sewer backup due to letting the water run.** Remind residents to monitor for frozen sewer lines also due to letting the water run.
- *Have a list of qualified contractors that can thaw frozen service lines available for residents.**

⁽¹⁾ Located on current water bill or call city office for rate.

Other Helpful Tools for Prevention of Frozen Service Lines:

- *MRWA has sample policies and procedures regarding frozen service lines available on our web site at www.mrwa.com.
- *AWWA has developed a media kit for customers at www.mnawwa.org.
- *Check out League of Minnesota Cities link for reducing utility bills due to constantly running water at <http://lmcpipeline.blogspot.com/>.
- Disclaimer: advice given in this prevention plan is designed to reduce the risk of frozen service lines and is not a guarantee.*