



Winter is Coming WE ARE PREPARED!

At the Portland Water Bureau, we are preparing for winter! Our crews are ready to respond to emergencies, including water main breaks, 24-hours a day, and seven days a week. Yes, even on Christmas. On average, crews respond to 200 main breaks a year, which is relatively low compared to cities of similar size.

In Portland, water mains tend to break during the colder weather. Cold water can cause pipes to become brittle. Adding cold air temperatures can cause the ground above a pipe to freeze and thaw, increasing stress on a pipe. The age of a pipe, soil conditions, pipe corrosion, and ground movement can also cause a main to weaken and break over time.

During a main break, nearby customers may notice a reduction in water pressure or have their water temporarily shut off while repairs are made. Customers may also experience discolored water from sediment that can get stirred up during a main break. The discoloration does not pose a health risk, but avoid using hot water or running the washing machine or dishwasher until repairs are made. You can run the water at one tap for five minutes to see if it clears. Repeat hourly until clear.

Reporting Water Main Breaks

Anyone observing water running from streets or sidewalks is encouraged to report the leak to the Water Bureau's 24-hour **Emergency Line** at **503-823-4874**.

Your Role: Protect Your Home's Plumbing During Winter

Everyone has a role to play when it comes to preparing for winter. Below are tips for protecting your home's plumbing through rain, snow and ice.

OUTSIDE PLUMBING

- * Caulk around pipes where they enter the home.
- * Close all foundation vents and fill vent openings with wood or Styrofoam™ blocks.
- * Wrap outside faucets or hose bibs with insulation if you don't have a separate outside valve to turn them off. Use molded foam-insulating covers which are available at hardware stores. Newspaper or rags (covered with plastic wrap) are another option.

INSIDE PLUMBING

- * Insulate pipes in unheated areas, such as attics, crawl spaces and basements.
- * When below-freezing weather is forecasted, open cupboard doors in the kitchen and bathrooms. This allows these pipes to get more heat from inside your home.
- * If you leave home for several days, put your furnace on a low setting. This may not prevent freezing pipes but it can help.
- * Let a slight drip of water run when temperatures dip below freezing.



What if pipes freeze?

Thaw plumbing lines safely with a hair dryer or heat lamp. Once the pipe has thawed, make sure to leave a little water running so the pipe doesn't freeze again.

Do not open the water meter box near the curb. It could increase the chance of freezing water at the meter.

What if pipes break?

Close your main water shut-off valve to your house. Most shut-off valves are located where the water line enters the house, either at the front of your house where you connect your hose, or basement near the hot water heater, or inside the garage.

Turn off the water heater. Locate the dedicated shut-off valve on the cold water inlet.

Repairing broken pipes on the customer's side of the meter is the customer's responsibility. Contact a plumber for repair work.

AutoPay is Here – Enroll Today

The Portland Water Bureau and Bureau of Environmental Services are pleased to introduce a convenient new automatic payment option. You can now pay your bill automatically, with a credit card or electronic check.

We have partnered with a new online bill pay service provider that offers our customers more options than before to view and pay their bill.

By registering for AutoPay, you will also be invited to register for Paperless Billing. Save trees, checks, stamps, and time.

To enroll in the AutoPay program:



Visit www.portlandoregon.gov/utilitybill to enroll. Once you have completed the steps, you will receive an email to confirm. Click the link in the email to complete registration.



A Customer Service Specialist is available at 503-823-7770 and PWBCustomerService@portlandoregon.gov from



8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday – Friday to answer any questions you may have.

We're here for you!

We have programs to manage the cost of sewer, stormwater, and water charges. We offer flexible payment arrangements, discounts, and credits.

- **Bill Discount** – Qualified single-family residential accounts can save \$136 on a 90-day bill.
- **Crisis Assistance** – If you have an emergency, you might be eligible for up to \$150 in financial assistance.
- **Safety Net** – Provides deferred water shut-off and a waiver of recent late charges to manage a temporary crisis.
- **Fixture Repair** – Qualified home owners may be eligible for help fixing leaks and replacing older fixtures.
- **Payment Arrangements** – If you're unable pay an outstanding balance, contact [Customer Service](#) to request a payment plan.

Visit www.portlandoregon.gov/water/financialassistance for more information.

Get social with PWB



facebook.com/PortlandWaterBureau



twitter.com/portlandwater



flickr.com/photos/pdx_water



PublicAlerts.org



www.portlandoregon.gov/water/blog



Portland Water Bureau

1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 600
Portland, OR 97204
503-823-7404

Nick Fish, Commissioner
Michael Stuhr, P.E., Director

To help ensure equal access to City programs, services, and activities, the City of Portland will provide translation, reasonably modify policies/procedures and provide auxiliary aids/services/alternative formats to persons with disabilities. For accommodations, translations and interpretations, complaints, and additional information, contact 503-823-7404, use City TTY 503-823-6868, or use Oregon Relay Service: 711