

FROZEN PIPES! WHAT TO DO?

When pipes freeze, you will have blocked or restricted water flow, which is usually the first indication of a problem. During an extended cold spell, pipes may freeze despite precautions taken.

You must act quickly to prevent pipes from bursting.

At the first sign of a blockage, open a faucet so that once the pipe thaws the water has a place to go, relieving the pressure and preventing the pipe from bursting.

Finding the blockage is critical. If you think you know where the freezing occurred, the safest tool to use is a hair dryer on a low setting. Wave the warm air back and forth along the pipe. **DO NOT** hold in one spot. Be careful as the pipe may already be broken. As the water thaws it could come gushing out. Be ready to shut the water off at the master shut off valve if necessary.

If you don't know where the freezing occurred, you may want to call your plumber to trace the supply pipe where it runs through exterior walls or other unheated areas.

CAUTION: DO NOT under any circumstances use a torch or any open flame. The entire home could catch fire. Also, overheating in one spot can burst the pipe and heating a soldered joint could allow it to leak or come apart.

Source: AWWA (American Water Works Association)

Keep telephone numbers handy:

Village of Benzonia 231-882-9981

Plumber _____

WHEN TEMPERATURES STAY BELOW FREEZING:

- Give pipes a helping hand**
If pipes run through cabinets or vanities, open the doors to let warmer room temperatures flow in.
- Keep water working**
Keep water moving through the pipes by allowing a small trickle of water to run. The cost of the extra water is typically lower than the cost of repairing a broken pipe.

BUT IF YOUR PIPES DO FREEZE:

- Shut off the water immediately**
Don't attempt to thaw pipes without turning off the main shut-off valve.
- Thaw pipes with warm air**
You can melt the frozen water in the pipe by warming the air around it with a hair dryer or space heater. Be sure not to leave space heaters unattended and avoid the use of kerosene heaters or open flames.
- Be careful turning water back on**
Once pipes are thawed, slowly turn the water back on and check pipes and joints for any cracks or leaks that might have been caused by freezing.