

Winter storms often knock out power. Without functioning heat, pipes are more susceptible to freezing. Please take the following precautions to reduce the likelihood of costly damage.

Stopping the water supply:

- Locate the water main (typically in the basement) and shut it off.
- Drain the system:
 - Open the cold water faucet located in the lowest elevation point in the home, and let it run until the flow stops.
 - Open all cold water taps on the upper-most floor of the home to break the system vacuum and improve drainage.
 - Note: depending on the plumbing design, draining the water line may take as long as 30 minutes.
- Once the pipes are drained, *immediately* close all taps that were opened during the draining process. This will prevent possible overflows once water is restored.

If using a portable generator to power temporary heat:

- Run all portable generators outdoors to prevent the build-up of hazardous carbon dioxide gas.
- Use a *heavy-duty* extension cord.
- Never run extension cords underneath carpets.

If using temporary fuel-burning heaters:

- Use with extreme caution; ensure the area is adequately vented to prevent the build-up of hazardous carbon monoxide gas.
- Keep heaters away from drapes, furniture and walls.
- Never leave temporary heaters unattended.

Once heat is restored:

- Wait for the temperature in the home to reach at least 60° F before turning the water back on.
- Systematically walk through the entire home; look and listen for possible leaks. It's sometimes easier to *hear* a leak than to see one.
- If you discover a leak, shut off the water immediately and call your plumber.
- Open each tap in the home one at a time to let any air in the plumbing line escape. Close the tap only after water is flowing without interruption.
- Walk through the entire home several times over the next few hours and days to identify any potential leaks. It may take time for water damage to be detected visually.

If pipes are frozen or you detect a leak:

- Immediately shut off the water at the main, and call a plumber.
- Mop up any water to keep damage to a minimum.
- Contact your insurance agent. If he/she is unavailable, or in the event of an emergency, call AIG Private Client Group's claims reporting hotline: **(888) 760-9195** (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week).