

Village of Hampshire Public Works

Frozen Pipe Policy

Each person serviced by the water system shall take reasonable precautions to prevent their water service from freezing.

Frozen lines from the water main through the B-box are the responsibility of the Village while frozen lines from the B-box to the home are the responsibility of the homeowner.

If the service pipe freezes, the property owner may call the Department of Public Works to thaw the pipe.

During regular business hours: If it is determined that the blockage is in the portion of the water piping that is the responsibility of the property owner, the property owner will be billed a flat fee of \$150.00 for assistance with the thawing. If it is determined that the blockage is in the portion of the pipe that is the responsibility of the Village, this charge will be waived.

Outside of regular business hours: If a property owner requests that the Public Works Department thaw a frozen water pipe outside of normal business hours, the property owner will be billed for this service at Public Works Department billing rates, including any appropriate overtime labor rates. If it is discovered the blockage is in the portion of the pipe that is the responsibility of the Village, this charge will be waived.

Thawing will be done on a first-call-first service basis. The order of thawing may be changed when, in the judgment of the Public Works Department, there is reason to do so.

While the Department of Public Works will attempt to accommodate requests as described, there may be circumstances under which this service may not be provided, including but not limited to situations where:

- The existing piping is in such condition that in the judgment of the Public Works Department, connecting and using the thawing equipment could result in damage to that piping.
- Conditions in the area to be used for thawing are such that, in the judgment of the Public Works Department, they pose a safety or health hazard to the employee.

The Department of Public Works will make reasonable efforts to accommodate all requests for thawing in a timely fashion. The timing of the work is subject to other thawing work previously requested and other circumstances such as other water system emergencies or snow removal operations. The Village shall not be held responsible for damages suffered due to delays in thawing the water pipe. Property owners may, at their own expense, contract with other individuals to thaw their frozen water service.

If the Public Works Department determines that they cannot respond to a property owner's request for thawing in a reasonable amount of time, or determines that available equipment is not suitable for a specific thawing operation, the Department may authorize the property owner to contract with another party to thaw the pipe. The Village will not be held responsible for any damages resulting from the pipe thawing attempts of the selected contractor or others. The property owner shall give notice to the Department of Public Works to allow the Department the opportunity to have a representative on site when a contractor thaws a water pipe.

If the pipe is thawed in such a manner as the location of the blockage can be determined, the representative and contractor shall agree upon the locations. Costs of thawing shall be as follows:

If it is determined that the blockage is in the portion of the water piping that is the responsibility of the Village, the Village will reimburse the property owner for the reasonable costs of thawing.

If it is determined that the blockage is in the portion of the water piping that is the responsibility of the property owner, the property owner will be responsible for the thawing costs.

If the location of the blockage cannot be determined, the Village will reimburse the property owner for 50% of reasonable thawing costs.

If the Department of Public Works is not notified prior to the thawing operation, the property owner will be responsible for the thawing costs.

Waiver of charges, costs and reimbursements by the Village as described shall be limited to one per winter.

When extended cold weather increases the risk of water main or service line freezing, residents are responsible for running their water.

- Run the cold water at a rate of one gallon every four minutes – about the stream width of a pencil.
- Keep your drain clear of debris to prevent overflow or flooding.

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It is difficult to predict which water lines will freeze, but once a line has frozen and thawed, it is essential to keep the water running continuously. Turning the water off, even for a few minutes, could cause the line to re-freeze. Some will see a drop in water pressure before the line freezes while some are given no warning at all. The Village does not give a discount for the water used if you let your water run. All water going through the water meter will be billed as usual. The cost of thawing a service line varies by contractor and the extent of the blockage, but letting the water run is the best insurance policy available. Running water at a rate of one gallon every four minutes will increase your water bill about \$110.00 per month.