



**For Immediate Release**

## **MIDDLESEX WATER REMINDS CUSTOMERS TO PREPARE NOW TO PROTECT PIPES FROM FREEZING THIS WINTER**

ISELIN, NJ October 30, 2014 -- Freezing weather can take its toll on you and your home but you can act now to reduce cold-weather threats. Middlesex Water Company is reminding customers to take preventive measures – before winter sets in – to protect water lines which can freeze, expand and possibly burst, causing flooding and costly water damage to your home and belongings.

### **Before freezing weather sets in:**

**Disconnect, drain and store outdoor hoses:** Be sure to turn off the water to outside faucets, remove hoses and allow water to drain from the pipe. A single hard, overnight freeze can increase pressure throughout the entire plumbing system bursting either the faucet or the pipe it's connected to.

**Insulate pipes in unheated areas:** Some pipes are more likely to freeze than others because of their location in the home. Wrap exposed water pipes in unheated areas such as crawl spaces, attics and garages with insulating material available at hardware and plumbing stores. Be sure to focus on pipes that are located on outside walls and near crawl space openings and vents because they are most vulnerable to freezing.

**Seal off access doors, air vents and cracks:** Plug up drafty cracks and repair broken basement windows. Cold winter winds whistling through cracks and openings can quickly freeze exposed water pipes. Be sure not to plug up air vents that your furnace or hot water heater may need for good combustion.

**Identify and tag your main shut-off valve:** Be sure all members of your household know where the main water shut off valve is located. This valve is typically located in the basement or laundry room of the home. Be prepared to turn the valve off should a water line burst.

**Leaving homes unattended in winter:** If you will be leaving your home vacant and unheated for an extended period of time in winter, you may also want to consider turning off your main shut-off valve, the water heater and draining the system by letting faucets run and flushing toilets and shutting off fixtures before leaving. Furnaces should be set no lower than 55 degrees if houses are left vacant for extended time in winter.

### **During freezing weather:**

Do not keep crawl space, basement or garage doors open during cold periods. The cold air could freeze exposed pipes.

If you are unable to insulate your pipes that have frozen in past winters - particularly on sub-zero nights or periods of low usage - you may want to keep a trickle of water running from any faucet that will cause water to flow through the problem section of the pipe. Be sure to keep the drain clear of obstructions to prevent the basin from overflowing. While you will be billed for the water used, this procedure is using a minimal amount of water and may prevent more costly plumbing repairs and water loss caused by broken pipes.

**If a Pipe Freezes:**

Completely open the cold water faucet nearest the frozen pipe. This releases the pressure and reduces the chance of pipe breakage. Should you decide to thaw the pipe yourself, use a hand held blow-dryer. If you are uncertain what to do, call a licensed plumber.

Middlesex Water Company strives to deliver a safe, reliable water supply to your home. A Customer Service Representative is available at 732-634-1500 to answer your questions and provide as much help as we can if you experience frozen water line problems. However, care and custody of the pipes from the curb, up to and inside the home are your responsibility. By taking preventive measures before cold weather arrives, you can prevent freezing pipes and the potential inconvenience and costly damage that goes with them.

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