



Eastsound Water Users Association

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Dec 15, 2008

Winter Storms and Your Water System

Here are some thoughts regarding efforts people should be taking to minimize the consequences of this extended period of winter cold weather.

- Keep a supply of water set aside in pitchers, coolers, milk jugs and such. There have been multiple reports of freezing water lines, and you want a back up supply of water prepared should your lines freeze.
- If your home has a history of freezing water lines, it might be wise to keep the faucet furthest from your incoming water line dripping to keep the water moving in the pipes. This reduces the risk of freeze up. A drip is all that is needed, *just a drip*. One faucet dripping hot water, another dripping cold water is best. Perhaps you only need to have the water dripping at night when it is coldest.
- If you have a history of freezing pipes in an old, or poorly insulated structure, it is also wise to keep the heat up in the house at night. Often times our “programmable thermostats” are set to turn the heat down after we go to bed. The cooler house means that the outside cold migrates further into your walls and crawl spaces, increasing the risk of freezing pipes.
- The biggest winter storm strain on the water system is actually when the thaw comes. This is when the ruptured pipes begin to leak. These leaks greatly increase the load on the water sources, often bringing demand back to peak summer levels. Members can help reduce the water lost to leaks by watching out for unoccupied neighboring homes. These empty homes, often have the heat turned way down and are some of the most susceptible to ruptured pipes. In the case of any empty home the rupture pipe continues to leak water without anyone noticing.
- If you have an empty home it would be wise to contact your water system and have them turn your service off at the meter before the thaw comes. This reduces the impact on the overall water system, but also protects your property by eliminating the potential for a continuously running leak inside your home.
- Keep an eye out for unusual puddles of water, or build-up of ice that might be coming from unoccupied properties. If you spot a concern, please contact your water system to have it checked out.
- Garden hoses still connected to exterior hose bibs are also a common cause of freezing pipes. Your hoses should be disconnected. “Frost Proof” hose bibs are not effective if the water in them can’t drain because the hose is attached.