



Green up your Winter Storm Prep with Tips from askHRgreen.org

(Hampton Roads, Va., Dec. 21, 2022) – Freezing temperatures are forecast this weekend for Hampton Roads, and residents will be watching the thermostat, piling on extra blankets and securing their homes for potential winter weather.

“Any time the temperature drops to the teens, we worry about the possibility of frozen pipes,” said Rebekah Eastep, team leader of askHRgreen.org. “The pipes that carry water throughout your home can freeze, especially in drafty or unheated areas of your abode.”

The team at askHRgreen.org advises Hampton Roads residents to be proactive in reducing frozen or burst pipes this weekend by following these winter storm prep tips:

- **Reduce drafts.** Keep doors and windows near your water pipes closed during cold weather and seal any air leaks or cracks in your crawl space or basement.
- **Insulate.** Pipes in unheated areas of your home (garages and crawl spaces) should be insulated. Also, replace any wet insulation, which is worse than no insulation at all.
- **Disconnect and drain garden hoses and rain barrels.** Packing away your garden hose will prevent damage from freezing temperatures and may decrease your chances of bursting a water pipe.
- **Keep fats, oils and grease out of the drain.** Keeping greasy food waste out of your drains will help to prevent clogs and sewer backups. Grease cools much faster in colder temps and improper disposal could quickly lead to a clogged sewer line and a nasty mess in your home. Can the grease and skip the disposal as you place food waste in the trash (or compost pile) where it belongs.
- **Find your shut-off valve.** In the event of a burst pipe, you don’t want to be fumbling around looking for the main water shut-off valve. Locate it ahead of time and be prepared to act in an emergency.
- **Drip the faucet, but not too much.** When temperatures are predicted to be in the teens or below consider leaving a trickle of water running from a single faucet at the highest level in your home. This trickle should be about the size of the lead in a pencil. Leaving a

faucet running wide open will not provide additional insurance against a frozen water pipe, but it will waste a great deal of water.

- **If a pipe freezes, be cautious.** Thawing a frozen pipe can be dangerous because the pipes may become damaged or cracked, releasing water under great pressure. This is especially risky if you are using heat lamps, hair dryers or other electrical means of thawing the pipe. Never use an open flame on a frozen pipe. Be sure to thaw the pipe from the direction of the faucet so that the water has a safe way to escape as it melts.
- **If you lose all water service, call your water utility provider.** When all the faucets in your home stop working, it is possible that your water meter has frozen. Your water utility service provider will need to send a technician to your home to check the meter and, if needed, correct the issue. However, the water utility does not assist with frozen pipes between the meter and your faucet, so prevention is key to reducing the headache (and expense) of a frozen or burst water pipe.

For more tips and information about all things green in Hampton Roads, just askHRgreen.org.

About askHRgreen.org askHRgreen.org is your go-to resource for all things green in Hampton Roads – from recycling tips and pointers for keeping local waterways clean to water-saving ideas and simple steps to make local living easy on the environment. Launched in 2011, the region-wide public awareness and education campaign is administered through the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and powered by the following members: The cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg; the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, Surry and York; the town of Smithfield; and HRSD. Like askHRgreen.org on [Facebook](#), follow on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), tune in to [YouTube](#) and catch the “Let’s Talk Green” [blog](#), written by a team of local experts.

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