

Shaun Scott UK plumber of the year offers cold weather advice

❌ Frozen and burst water pipes can cause flooding, damage and leave homes without water. **WaterSafe plumber Shaun Scott, who was voted UK Plumber of the Year** in 2016, shares his experience of chilly pipes and top tips on getting homes winter ready.

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“The last couple of winters have been quite mild but with forecasts of a cold winter this year it pays to be prepared. Back in 2009-2010, we worked all day, every day, from Christmas Day to January 3, repairing frozen and burst pipes. Everyone was caught by surprise by the weather – it was windy, and at the lowest point, the temperature dropped to -20C!

I had a call from a lady in a huge panic as her house was flooding! I talked her through where she might find the stopcock to turn off the water, before rushing over to find water coming through her ceiling. Although the leak had been stopped, the glass wool in her loft had soaked up a huge amount of the water, and when I carried this outside to her shed to dry, it was so cold the water dripped on my boiler suit and froze it like cardboard!

The lady said she hadn't had water for two days. When it's cold it's really important to tell a plumber if anything suspicious like this happens, so pipes can be defrosted before they burst. It took 14 repairs before we could defrost the pipes and then lag them to help prevent it happening again.

Anyway, the moral of the story – make sure you know where to turn off your water!

Most importantly, if the worst happens, keep calm, do not panic and if you suspect you have frozen pipes contact your nearest [WaterSafe plumber](#) from the UK national accreditation scheme.

My top tips to beat the winter freeze are:

- Make sure you know where your stop tap is and check it's working
- If you are going away, leave your heating on and set the thermostat to 14C
- Make sure all roof and vulnerable pipes are insulated and your boiler is serviced
- Make sure you have the name and telephone number of your nearest WaterSafe qualified plumber to hand. Keep it by the boiler or stop tap!
- Get a neighbour to look in occasionally if you go away.

A few minutes reading [WaterSafe's winter advice and watching our films](#) on how to insulate your pipes and turn off your stop tap could save you from a flooded home and no water this winter."

Shaun Scott, Derek Scott & Co Plumbing, Scotland

Member of UK plumber accreditation scheme WaterSafe.