

# Scottish Water advise on ways to keep water pipes protected in cold weather

The Met Office reports that temperatures will drop over the course of this week and with the low temperatures Scottish Water offer advice to home and business owners on how to protect pipes from frost damage.

The advice is part of Scottish Water's campaign, which includes tips on all things winter and water-related, including: keeping warm and reducing energy bills through water and energy efficiency, safety around reservoirs and other bodies of water, and the proper disposal of wipes and fats oil and grease to help avoid blockages and pollution.

The key advice about pipes is to heat, insulate and protect:

**Heat:** Modern central heating systems have frost-protection built in, which will fire up the boiler if needed, even when your heating is turned off. If you don't have frost-protection built in to your boiler, then set the heating thermostat to 10C and the programmer to On or 24hr. The heating will only come on if the temperature inside your home drops below 10C, so it shouldn't use a lot of energy and it could help prevent frozen pipes and expensive repairs.

**Insulate:** Pipes don't like the cold – whether they are outdoor

or indoor, metal or plastic, new or old. Making sure pipes and water tanks are properly insulated is one of the simplest, and cheapest, things which can be done to help protect properties from the cold. Make sure that there are no gaps at bends, valves or fitting, and that you use a suitable insulation material. Insulate the condensation pipe. Efficient condensing boilers produce a small amount of condensate which drains away through a plastic pipe, usually outside. If that pipe gets blocked with a build-up of ice, the boiler will stop working. Insulate the plastic pipe with foam pipe insulation to keep it warmer and prevent the condensate water from freezing and blocking the pipe.

**Protect:** If you are going away, make sure you have someone who can check regularly for any problems. Dripping water increases the risk of freezing, so have any drips or leaks at taps or valves repaired as soon as you discover them, and reduce draughts by fitting draught excluders to doors and windows. If the property is going to be vacant over winter, turn off the water supply and drain the system.

Even when your property is winter-ready, sometimes damages can happen, so make sure you have adequate buildings and content insurance.

If your property is going to be vacant over the winter months, turn off your water supply and drain the system. A licensed plumber will be able to give advice about this.

Visit [www.scottishwater.co.uk/winter](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/winter) or [www.yourwateryourlife.co.uk/winter/](http://www.yourwateryourlife.co.uk/winter/) for further advice, information and films.

Scottish Water are also issuing advice to help customers be 'water smart' this winter and save water, energy and money by taking shorter showers. Taking two minutes off your shower could take around £130 off your annual energy bill.

When customers are at home and consuming hot drinks on cold

days to help stay warm, the advice is to boil only the water they need.

And, when out and about, Scotland's countryside can look Christmas card-perfect but our reservoirs, lochs and rivers have hidden dangers and we advise that they are best admired from a safe distance.

Peter Farrer, Scottish Water's Chief Operating Officer, said: "We appreciate that this winter will be tougher than most for many of our customers.

"It's good to prepare for the possibility of severe weather and the potential impact that has on property and, by taking steps to insulate and protect properties and pipes, customers can avoid the considerable headache and heartache caused by frozen or burst pipes.

"We want to work with our customers to ensure we are all prepared for very cold weather.

"And as every penny counts this winter, there are habits we can all change that will save money. From shorter showers to only boiling the water you need for your cuppa, it all adds up and it benefits our pockets and the planet as we save money and energy."

The Scottish Government runs a winter preparedness campaign, on their Ready Scotland website, available at [www.ready.scot](http://www.ready.scot) , with a new winter preparedness toolkit and a home emergency kit/plan which can be downloaded and printed out.

