

I am leaving to go on holiday during the winter months, what can I do to ensure my pipes do not burst?

The Association understands that some tenants may head off on holiday during the winter months. Unfortunately with no heat on in the property during this time the possibility of pipes bursting in your home will increase significantly. If you plan to head away on holiday during the winter months please contact the Association and we can arrange for the water systems in your property to be drained so as they will not burst when you are away. Upon your return from holiday we can arrange for the water systems to be refilled and balanced.

I don't appear to have any burst pipes but my water is not working, what should I do?

Most frozen pipes are found in the attic or below the sink (please note above recommendations to carry out in order to prevent this). If you believe the pipes in your property are frozen and affecting your water supply you can use a thick towel soaked in warm water to put over the pipe to help it thaw. Do not use naked flames on the pipes and do not heat them too quickly as this may cause the pipe to burst.

If the problem with your water supply is to do with the main supply you should call NI water on 08457 440 088.

Have you got home contents insurance?

Please note that the Association strongly advises that all tenants have contents insurance. The Association will repair any damage to the property; however it will not be responsible for loss or damage to personal possessions within your home.

Help your neighbour

The Association understands that extreme weather conditions may be a difficult time for those who are vulnerable. If you know some one who may be elderly, disabled or housebound it would be much appreciated if you could call with them from time to time to help them prevent the possibility of pipes bursting in their home by showing them how to help prevent the pipes freezing.

Abandoned homes

If you know of a property belonging to the Association which has been abandoned or not being used please contact the office with details.

Summary of useful contact numbers

SUHA office – 028 3833 9795

Emergency helpline – 028 90 421 010

Northern Ireland Electricity – 08457 643 643

Northern Ireland Water – 08457 440 088



South Ulster

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SOUTH ULSTER HOUSING ASSOCIATION

18-22 Carleton Street Portadown

BT62 3EN

Contact Us

Phone: 028 3833 9795

Text: 07375341414

Email: info@southulsterhousing.org

Web: www.southulsterhousing.org



COLD WEATHER INFORMATION LEAFLET



South Ulster
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

During the Winter months it is possible that temperatures can reach 0°C or below. As you may well know this has the potential to create some problems to your property, namely burst pipes and heating failures. The Association realise that such problems can cause a degree of discomfort and inconvenience to our tenants. However, there are measures which can be taken to help prevent heating failures and burst pipes should the temperatures during the coming winter months drop to freezing levels. Please take the time to read this leaflet thoroughly so as you are aware of the preventative measures which will protect your home and belongings.

Why do my pipes burst?

Once the water in the pipes, (such as heating pipes) stops flowing and the temperature has reached freezing level, the water will freeze. As the water freezes it will expand. Due to the copper pipes being rigid they cannot expand to accommodate the expansion of the freezing water. This will result in a section or sections of the pipework bursting. Once the water then begins to thaw the water will leak out of the pipe.

How can I prevent this?

There are a number of ways in which this can be prevented. The vast majority of pipes in your property are located in the roof space and under the sink in the kitchen. It is important that the temperatures in these areas are kept above freezing. The following suggestions will help you to do this:

- Turn the boiler thermostat down and run the heating constantly. This will keep the water flowing through the pipes and prevent them from freezing. With the thermostat turned down you will not use a large amount of oil / gas. Only using the heating sporadically will increase the chance of your boiler / pipes freezing!
- Lift the trap door from the roof space to allow the warmer air in the house to pass into the loft. This will help keep the temperature above freezing.
- Turn the light in the loft on if you have one. A standard light bulb will emit heat into the loft, please note



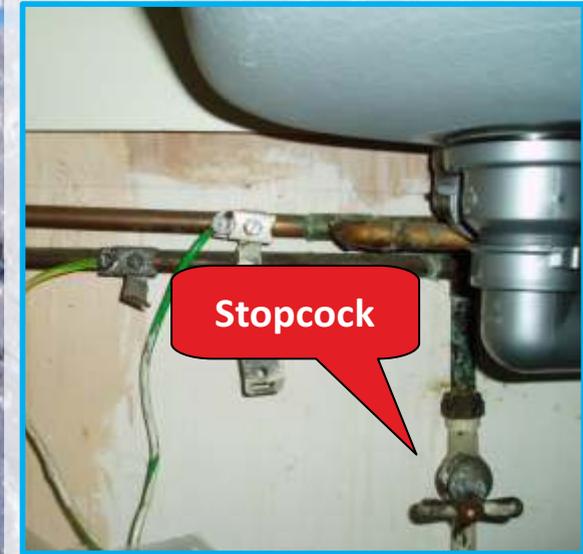
that this alone will not stop pipes from freezing but will help.

- Open the cupboard doors under the sink in the kitchen to allow the warm air to pass around the pipes and help keep them above freezing level.
- Open the internal doors in your property to allow the warm air to circulate each room. Some rooms may have pipes located within the walls that may be susceptible to freezing should the heat in that room not be on.
- Ensure that all radiators are turned on.
- Please ensure that you have adequate oil / gas credit to get through the winter months.
- Ensure you have a form of temporary heating available should you require additional heat in your property.

I have taken all of the preventative measures but still have a burst pipe in my house, what should I do?

In order to minimise any damage from burst pipes you need to locate your stop cock and turn it clockwise. By doing this you will turn off the cold water supply to your property. You should then run the taps in the kitchen and bathroom to drain the water from the system thereby minimising the amount of water being leaked into your property. This may take a few minutes to complete. The stop cock is usually found in the cupboard under the sink or in some cases can be found in the front or back hall. Please ensure that you are familiar with the location of

your stopcock. Please note that once the water system has been drained you must not use the immersion heater as the hot water tanks will be empty which could cause damage to the heater element and or cylinder. If possible you should also try to contain the leaking water if the burst pipe can be located. Please note this may not always be possible. If the water has come into contact with any electrical fittings then the electricity should be turned off at the mains.



Once you have turned the water off phone the Association on 028 38339795 during working hours (9:00am – 5:00pm Mon-Fri), for calls outside working hours please call our out of hours emergency line on 028 90421010. Please be advised that this number is only for emergency cases which require immediate attention.

