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Public Service Announcement

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RE: Frozen Pipes & Meters a Hazard this Week!

With this week's extremely cold temperatures, Lehigh County Authority wants all customers to be aware of the dangers of frozen water pipes and frozen water meters. During last year's exceptionally cold winter, more than 300 customers reported frozen pipes or water meters, and this week's extreme temperatures are likely to cause similar problems if customers are not prepared!

Frozen pipes can cause major property damage if pipes crack during freezing. When the ice begins to melt, major leaks can occur, causing expensive property damage and other expenses. Frozen water meters are also a problem because they are expensive to replace and are the homeowner's responsibility.

As soon as possible, customer are urged to:

- Evaluate your home to determine where the coldest spots are, such as in unheated garages, crawl spaces, underneath a mobile home, etc. This could also include cabinets or vanities underneath a sink faucet with enclosed, un-insulated cabinetry. Check to see where your plumbing is in those spots and be sure they are properly insulated, or use heat tape to keep the pipes warm.
- If you are unable to properly insulate any of the exposed piping that you think is vulnerable to freezing, consider adding a space heater to the area (but monitor it – don't leave it unattended!), or allow a nearby faucet to trickle overnight to help prevent freezing.

- If you cannot add a space heater to the areas vulnerable to freezing, open any doorways, cabinet / vanity doors, etc., that will expose those areas to the heated areas of your home. Add a regular fan to circulate warm air into these areas.
- Know where your main shut-off valve is! It is usually located near your water meter. It is especially important to be able to quickly turn the water off if you notice a leak.

If your pipes freeze:

1. Turn off the water at the main valve – you don't want to risk a leak when the pipes thaw out!
2. Once the water valve is turned off, apply gentle, indirect heat to the frozen area with a hair dryer or space heater. Don't leave them unattended, and check the thawing pipes for cracks.
3. Turn the water back on and monitor the area for leaks.
4. Call a plumber to evaluate your plumbing to ensure they don't freeze again in the future!

If your home appears to be out of water, you are always welcome to call LCA (610-437-7515 for Allentown customers or 610-398-1444 for Suburban customers). However, please be aware that interior plumbing is the homeowner's responsibility and we may not be able to help if the problem is a frozen pipe. Take action today using these tips to protect your home from costly leaks during this cold winter!

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