

Frozen Water Service

Frozen Pipe Response 2020

Your water service has been confirmed frozen and this document will outline the next steps for thawing. With Calgary's extreme winter conditions frost permeates the ground and freezes water service pipes. Together, we share ownership of the water service. While thawing The City's portion of the pipe, we will attempt to thaw your private portion of water pipe as well in order to restore full water service to your home. As we attempt to thaw your service, we'll need your cooperation as City crews need access to your home and property.

How to proceed:

- A City of Calgary employee will call to set up an appointment for service thawing. You are required to be home for the thawing technique to be applied.
- Prior to the crew attempting the initial thaw please sign and provide the **Work Authorization** form.
- Talk to your neighbours about the potential to set up a temporary water service (more information below).

Below is an outline of the steps and thaw techniques with more information on the back of the page

Hot Water Thaw

- Crew will confirm the service is frozen and what thaw techniques may work for your home.
- This technique sends hot water through a small tube to thaw pipes.
- The City try this technique a maximum of two times.

Electric Thaw

- This technique uses electricity to heat up the metal in the pipes to thaw the service. It will only work on metal pipes.
- The City will only try this technique once.

Temporary Service

- If hot water and electricity do not thaw the pipes, a temporary service that connect your home to your neighbour's home will be used.
- Once your house has temporary service, The City will let your service thaw naturally.

Important information:

- There may be additional activity by City staff around your property. **City of Calgary personnel wear identification badges so you can recognize them. Anyone not wearing an identification badge should not be permitted into your home.**
- City crews entering your home will wear booties but are required to have steel toed boots on at all times.
- Thawing of services comes with inherent risks to your safety and your home. Our crew will monitor risks continuously and do everything to limit safety hazards and damages.
- Commercial properties are assessed on a case by case basis and may not follow this exact process.

Hot Water Thaw Information:

- Hot water thawing uses hot water delivered by a small hose into your service and can take between 1 – 6 hours. If the crew cannot complete the thaw they will attempt a second time.
- You must have a ball valve and a break away coupling before we attempt to thaw. Our crew will help you identify these and if you do not have it we will send a plumber to your home to exchange your valve. You may be required to remove drywall or other home infrastructure to get access to the water service. **The City will not pay to repair the area after thawing other than cleaning up our equipment.**
- There is a risk of potential water damage after the service is thawed. The City will do its best to limit any damages.

Electric Thaw Information:

- There is a risk to your electronics so please unplug all electrical devices such as oven, dryer, appliances, TV, stereo, etc.
- **If you smell burning or hear any unusual noises, please let our staff know immediately.**
- The house will be dark as we conduct this work. You are welcome to remain in your home during this time, however, we ask that you stay upstairs as our crew does their job.

Temporary Water Service

- A temporary service can be installed from one of your neighbour's houses from their outdoor tap to your outdoor tap.
- We only require yourself to be home to set up. If you have a backflow preventer, The City will remove it. **You will be responsible for putting it back.**
- After installation you must **continuously run a tap full in your home (to prevent freezing).**
- Your neighbor's water bill will be adjusted to a flat rate of 7m³ (this is based on the average amount of water used per person per household. If they typically use less than that then the bill will be adjusted to their average usage).

After Water is Restored:

1) Before using the water in your home, please do the following:

- **Wash** any tap aerators or screens in hot, soapy water, and then disinfect them for 10 minutes in a solution of one-part bleach to nine parts water.

- **Disinfect** any water filters to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- **Run** bathtub tap on cold water for 30 minutes until the water clears. Then run other cold taps in house for 5 minutes or until clear.
- If water does not run clear after running the taps for 30 minutes, contact 311. Do not use this water.

2) To prevent additional freezing:

There is a chance that your water service line could freeze again due to the frost in the ground. To help avoid that situation, we require you to do the following:

1. **OPEN** one inside tap and run it continuously – 24 hours per day with the tap water flowing half way open.
2. **ATTACH** a note to the tap to help serve as a visual reminder and help prevent the tap from being turned off unintentionally.
3. **KEEP YOUR TAP RUNNING** until you receive a follow-up letter from Water Services to stop running the water. Regardless of periods of warming weather, the ground temperature will remain below freezing for several months. If you think you should stop running your water but have not received a follow-up letter please call 311.

Should you choose not to run your water and your water service pipe refreezes, you have the option to:

1. Call a plumber to thaw your service at your own expense, or
2. Call the City (contact 311). The City does not consider this an emergency.
 - a. A charge of \$200 per hour (plus 5% GST) may be applied with a 1 hour minimum, **and**
 - b. The response time is dependent on crew availability, **wait times may be up to 10 days.**

3) Bill Adjustment

Your water bill will be adjusted to a flat rate of 7m³ which is the average amount of water used per person per household. If you use less than the average 7m³, please contact ENMAX to review your account and discuss having your bill adjusted to your typical bill. If you have any billing questions please contact ENMAX at 403-310-2010.

If you have any questions, or would like more information please **contact 311** or visit **calgary.ca/water**