

Preventing frozen pipes this winter

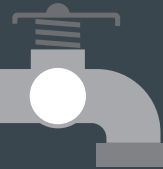
Plunging temperatures can occur in the winter sometimes with little to no warning, freezing pipes across the country in the process. For example, 2010's 'Big Freeze' caused temperatures to plummet down to -13C. Besides being frightfully cold, freezing temperatures can cause significant and costly damage to your property's pipes. In fact, as a general rule, temperatures have to reach -6C for pipes to freeze. If your pipes do freeze and burst, the average claim cost is £7,500, according to the Association for British Insurers.

To ensure that your pipes stay warm this winter, follow these seven pieces of advice:

1. Set your thermostat to at least 12C.



2. Find your main stopcock and ensure that it is working properly and that you can turn it on and off.



3. Repair any dripping taps, fittings or cisterns.



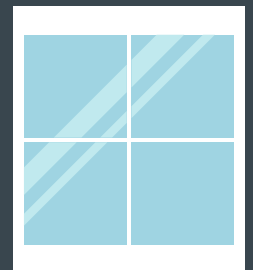
4. Disconnect and drain all hosepipes, sprinkler systems and water features that are connected to external water outlets.



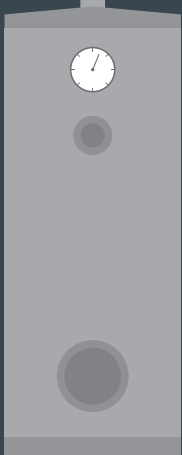
5. Insulate all exposed pipes, regardless of whether they are indoors or outside. Pay special attention to water tanks and pipes in unheated areas such as loft spaces and garages.



6. Inspect the seals around doors and windows to minimise draughts from the outside.



7. Have your boiler serviced by a certified boiler engineer.



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