

# Take Preventive Steps to Avoid Frozen Pipes

NewsUSA

(NU) - Winter is officially upon us and that means many homeowners will be paying a hefty price for not protecting their property against frozen pipes.

According to the Insurance Industry Institute, water damage and freezing is the second most common home insurance claim filed, with the average claim totaling \$8,861. In fact, frozen pipes are a significant contributor to the more than \$10 billion in annual insurance claims paid out due to plumbing leaks.

Water's power in both liquid and solid states can wreak havoc on the unprepared home, says Chuck DeSmet, founder of FloLogic, a plumbing leak detection auto water shutoff device.

"Water can unleash a double whammy where freezing causes a breakage and thawing causes destructive flood," DeSmet says.

"Water damage from frozen pipes not only destroys irreplaceable property, it can uproot families from their homes and cost them for years to come in higher insurance premiums."

But frozen pipes and water leak damage are completely avoidable when homeowners follow some practical guidance, and with the help of technology designed to detect and arrest leaks automatically.

Here's a practical guide for avoiding frozen pipe damage this season:

- **Turn up the heat.** Whether home or not, keep thermostats in the 55-60-degree range, or higher, to ensure pipes in basements and crawl spaces don't freeze up. For extreme cold protection, opening sink cabinets is advised to expose pipes to additional warmth.

- **Insulate.** Pipe insulation wraps will increase resistance to freezing ambient temperatures, while insulating structure cracks and openings will help keep the environment surrounding your pipes at a safe temperature. To avoid exposure to deep freezes, a UL-listed heat tape or cable wrapped around pipes will electronically generate warmth to prevent freezing.

- **Inspect and update.** Be sure



outdoor hoses are removed from spigots. Periodically replace supply hoses to washers and toilets - a primary cause of water leaks beyond frozen pipes.

- **Let it trickle.** When temperatures are especially frigid on homes with exposure, leave faucets open to a steady drip or trickle. The constant flow will help prevent freezing, but also wastes water.

- **Install leak control technology.** Leak detecting smart water valves, like the one offered by FloLogic ([www.flologic.com](http://www.flologic.com)) will flag a broken pipe leak anywhere in a plumbing supply and automatically shut off the water before the ice dam completely melts. FloLogic qualifies many for insurance discounts, since it virtually eliminates the risk of catastrophic water damage year-round.

- **Shut it down.** If you don't have a leak detection auto shutoff device, the most prudent protection when you're away is shutting off the water supply and draining pipes. Even a small two drips-per-second leak from a cracked pipe will produce 77 gallons in a week - enough to cause costly damage.

With greater knowledge and adoption of leak control technologies, reduced damage from frozen and broken pipes stands to benefit everyone, according to DeSmet.

"When insurance companies pay to repair leak damage, it indirectly costs every policy holder," DeSmet says. "Simple preventive measures and leak control technologies will help spare us all."

For more information, visit <http://www.flologic.com/>