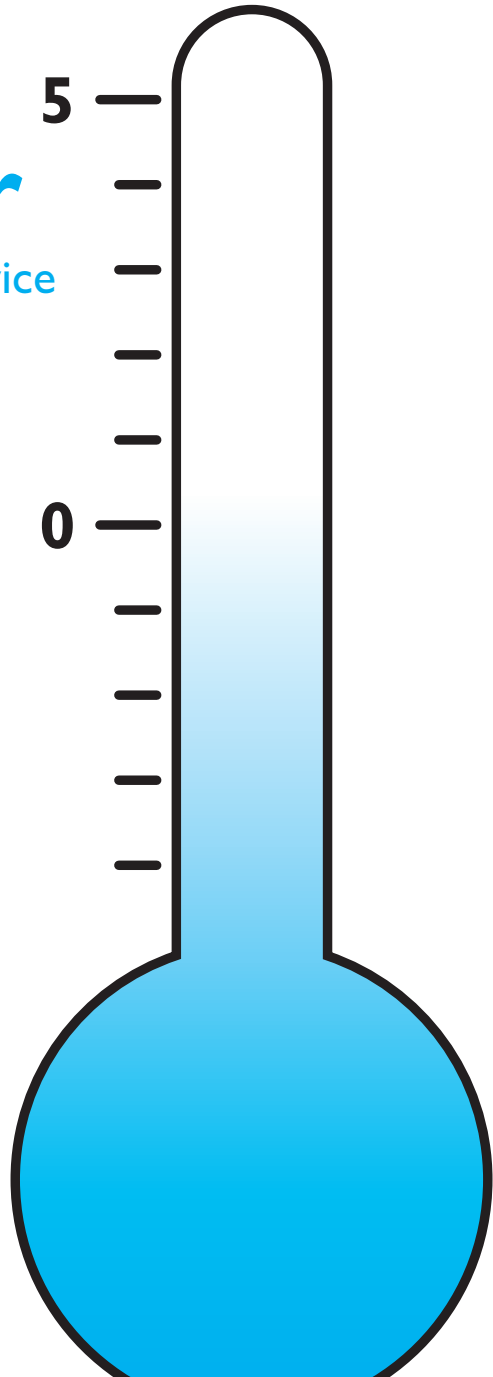


# Beat the **FREEZE** this winter

Weather Emergencies Advice



Look After Your Home

## LOOK AFTER YOUR HOME THIS WINTER

There are many ways that cold weather can be prevented from causing damage to your home and belongings:-

### Get to know your home

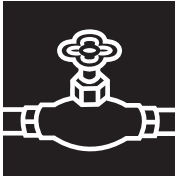


*Stopcock*

Make sure you know where the main stopcock for your water supply is located and check that it turns easily. It is usually near where the water pipe enters the house or under the kitchen sink.

Make sure you know where the isolating valves for the hot and cold supply are and check that you can turn them easily.

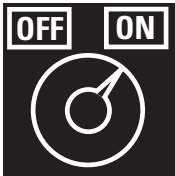
Check all your taps, if they are dripping report them to your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop.



*Isolating valve*

If you require further guidance on how to protect your home and belongings from the effects of cold weather you should contact your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop.

### Keep your house warm



To avoid burst pipes and damage to your home this winter keep your home reasonably warm day and night. During cold weather keep the heating on. If you have thermostatic radiator valves (TRV's) with an anti-frost setting, make sure it is used.

### Heating the loft



In the event of very low temperatures you should open the hatch to the loft space (if you have one). This will provide additional protection if your water tank and pipes are located in the loft.

## Going on Holiday



If you are going away this winter you should keep your central heating on at a low level and leave the loft hatch open to allow warm air to circulate in the loft space.

If you require assistance to drain your heating system/turn off your water supply you should contact your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop who will arrange this for you. Ten days advance notice is required and you must also advise us when you will be returning so that we can make arrangements to refill your system/s.

*REMEMBER YOU MUST NOT LIGHT YOUR CENTRAL HEATING BOILER OR SWITCH ON YOUR IMMERSION HEATER BEFORE YOUR SYSTEM IS REFILLED.*

If you expect low temperatures while you are away, pour some salt into the toilet pan and other waste pipes to stop the water in the traps freezing.

Do not forget to make arrangements for emergency access to your home before you leave. If you are going away for an extended period of time you should provide us with a contact number and an address of a key holder to your property. Ask someone to check your house regularly while you are away.

## If your water supply becomes frozen



If water will not flow from a tap or a cistern will not fill in cold weather, ice may have formed in one of your supply pipes. The ice *CANNOT* be in a pipe supplying those taps or valves which are working normally, so you should be able to trace the blockage fairly quickly.

## If your water supply becomes frozen, what action should you take:



Turn off the water supply at the main stopcock.



Turn on all cold taps to drain the system.



Flush the toilet



Do not turn hot water taps on as the hot water cylinder may collapse if the pipes feeding it are frozen.



Switch off the central heating and immersion heater and let any solid fuel fires die down.



Collect water in the bath for washing and flushing the toilet.



Contact your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop or the outwith hours Emergency Service (Tel. 01324 503050).



If pipes freeze you can attempt to defrost them by using warm air (from a hairdryer perhaps) or warm water. Start by warming the pipe as close as possible to the tap or valve, then work along it.

**REMEMBER TO DEFROST PIPES SLOWLY AND AVOID THE USE OF FIERCE HEAT OR A NAKED FLAME AS IT MAY CAUSE THE PIPE TO BURST.**

If you are unsure how to contain a burst pipe **DO NOT** attempt to defrost pipes yourself.

## If you get a burst pipe



Turn off the water supply at the main stopcock.



Contact your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop or outwith hours Emergency Service (Tel. 01324 503050).



Switch off the electricity at the mains.



Warn neighbours who may suffer damage.



Switch off any water heaters.



Try to contain any leaks or use buckets to collect the water. Blankets can also be useful to soak up water and limit the damage to your home and belongings.



Switch off the central heating system.



Let solid fuel fires die down.



Turn on all taps to drain your system.



If your ceiling begins to bulge, place a bucket under the bulge and, using a screwdriver, pierce a hole to allow the water through. This could prevent additional damage to your ceiling and belongings.



If possible collect water in the bath for washing and flushing the toilet.

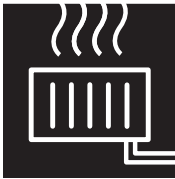
## House Contents Insurance



It is advisable that you obtain insurance cover against damage to furniture and fittings, personal possessions and any redecoration required. Falkirk Council has no responsibility to assist financially or otherwise, in the drying out or replacement of furniture etc.

Falkirk Council has a Tenant's Contents Insurance Scheme which provides a simple, financially attractive means for tenants to protect their household effects against loss or damage. Insurance cover is provided by a reputable insurance company and participating tenants pay the premium on a fortnightly basis together with their rent. Details are available on a separate leaflet at your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop. **DO IT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!**

## Heating Advice



You can get advice on: heating your home, effective operation of heating systems, payment of bills and where to get help with heating costs from your local Housing Office or One Stop Shop. Contact your local Neighbourhood Officer (Tenancy Services) for further advice.

## Neighbourhood Offices and One Stop Shops

Advice Shop	01324 503600
Dawson Centre	01324 501450
Bo'ness	01506 778899
Camelon	01324 503640
Callendar Square	01324 506868
Denny	01324 504050
Grangemouth	01324 504550
Stenhousemuir	01324 503340
Emergency outside office hours	01324 503050



**Falkirk Council**  
*Corporate & Neighbourhood Services*