



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority offers tips to keep pipes from freezing this winter**

**Okatie, SC – (December 2, 2024)** – As cold weather approaches, Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority (BJWSA) is reminding customers that they should take steps now to prevent their household water pipes from freezing.

“Sustained freezing temperatures can cause your pipes to freeze or even burst,” said BJWSA’s Director of Field Operations Andy Mattie. “It’s critical to know how to prepare ahead of and during below-freezing periods so you’re not facing significant damage and service interruptions.”

Fortunately, there are simple steps that residents can take in advance to ensure uninterrupted water service during frigid periods.

- Shut off and drain any outside faucets and irrigation systems not in use.
- Prevent drafts in unheated areas, such as crawl spaces or garages, by replacing broken glass or making other repairs.
- Have supplies such as heat tape, pipe insulation, a portable space heater and a hair dryer on hand.
- Locate and visibly mark the home’s master water valve. If a pipe does break, use this valve to turn off water to the home.
- Make sure the lids on outdoor meter pits are not broken or missing.

BJWSA also advises customers to take the following precautions in any unheated areas of their homes when temperatures drop below freezing:

- Wrap exposed pipes and spigots with insulation or heat tape. Proper and safe use of portable space heaters can also keep exposed pipes in drafty areas from freezing.
- For plumbing located on an outside wall, open cabinet doors beneath the sink to allow the warm air in the home to reach the pipes. If pets or small children are in the home, remember to take steps to keep them from discovering chemicals that may be in the cabinets.
- For uninsulated pipes and spigots, a slow steady drip from a downstream faucet is enough to keep water moving through pipes and prevent freezing. The additional cost of the water is cheaper than repairing ruptured pipes.
- If a pipe does freeze, and you can locate the frozen area, open a nearby spigot and use a hand-held hair dryer or heat tape to thaw the area. If this does not resolve the issue, contact a licensed plumber.

**About Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority**

BJWSA is the Southern Lowcountry’s largest water and wastewater utility, serving approximately 200,000 Carolinians through 69,000 connections. The public, non-profit organization is led by a board of directors recommended by the Beaufort and Jasper County Legislative Delegations and appointed by the Governor of South Carolina. The mission of the utility is to deliver quality water and wastewater services to current and future residents of the utility’s 750 square mile service area.

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