



FREEZING WEATHER

Water damage caused by bursting pipes or ice dams can damage your home. You can avoid the water damage by taking several basic steps right now to prevent this kind of damage.

Freezing Pipes

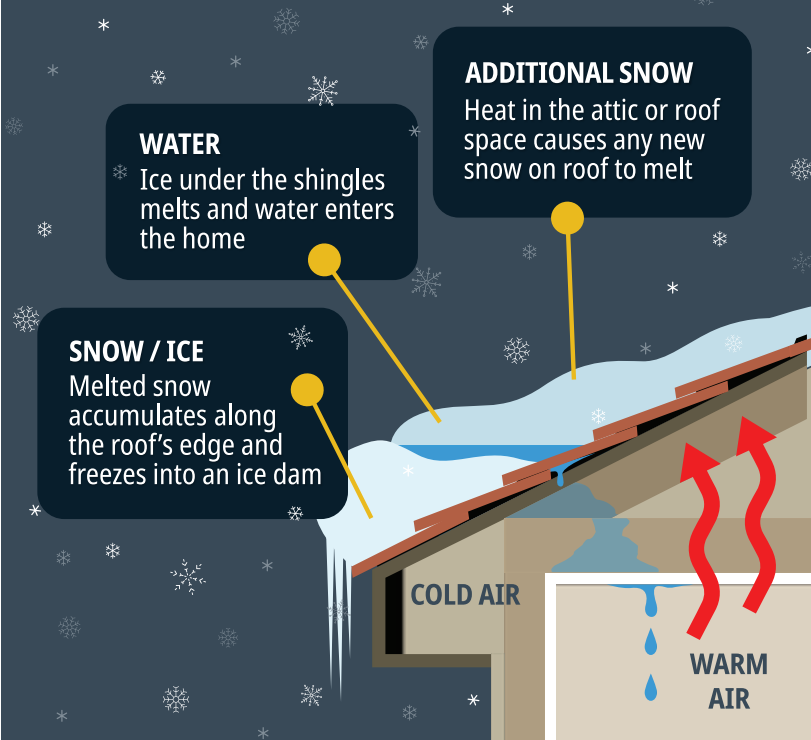
Frozen water in pipes can cause water pressure buildup between the ice blockage and the closed faucet at the end of a pipe which leads to pipes bursting at their weakest point. Pipes in attics, crawl spaces and outside walls are particularly vulnerable to freezing in extremely cold weather. Holes in outside walls for TV, cable or telephone lines allow cold air to enter the house.

To keep water in pipes from freezing, take the following precautions:

- Fit exposed pipes with insulation sleeves or wrapping to slow the heat transfer. The more insulation the better.
- Seal cracks and holes in outside walls and foundations near water pipes with caulking.
- Keep cabinet doors open during cold spells to allow warm air to circulate around pipes, particularly in the kitchen and bathroom.
- Keep a slow trickle of water flowing through faucets connected to pipes that run through an unheated or unprotected space. Drain the water system especially if your house will be unattended during cold periods.

WHAT IS AN ICE DAM?

An ice dam is the accumulation of ice at the lower edge of a sloped roof, usually at the gutter and prevents melting snow from draining off the roof. The water backs up behind the ice dam and can leak into your home, causing costly damage to ceilings, walls, insulation and floors.



Ice Dams

Taking the following steps will decrease the likelihood that ice dams will form or, at least, will reduce their severity.

- Keep the attic well ventilated. The colder the attic, the less melting and refreezing on the roof.
- Keep the attic floor well insulated to minimize the amount of heat rising through the attic from within the house.
- As an extra precaution against roof leaks in case ice dams do form, install a water repellent membrane under your roof covering.

Unfortunately, ice dams may be unavoidable if your home has recessed lighting near the roof. Heat generated from these lights melts snow which then contributes to ice dam buildup. The only sure way to avoid this problem is to eliminate recessed light fixtures near the roof.



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