



VILLAGE OF DEERFIELD

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www.deerfieldwi.com

November 20, 2018

Subject: Protocol for frozen services/run water

Dear Customer:

In previous winters you or your neighbors may have experienced having a frozen water service for a period of time, or were advised to run water. This letter is to advise you of information and the procedure if this were to happen again during the upcoming winter months.

1. **How do I tell if there may be a problem?** Please monitor your water temperature during extremely cold days to determine a base line of temperature readings. Run your cold water tap for several minutes and use a thermometer to record the temperature. If the temperature is 37 degrees or below, please call the Water Department for further instructions (608-764-5497).
2. **If I am directed to "run water" how much water should I run?** We ask that you run a small stream of cold water from a single tap – just enough to fill a 12 oz. can in 1 minute or a gallon jug in 10 minutes. Please check the faucet periodically to ensure that the flow rate has not changed or that it has not been turned off and that the drain and sewer is taking the flow of water. The water should run continuously until you are notified by the Water Department that it is safe to shut it off.
3. **How will my credit be calculated?** This rate of flow will produce approximately 6 gallons per hour (144 gallons per day), which equates to a credit of \$2.11/day (WATER - \$0.74/day SEWER - \$1.37/day). It is important that you take the time to adjust your flow rate correctly as too little flow could cause your service lateral to freeze and the cost of too much flow will be the customer's responsibility.
4. **When should I stop running water?** You should continue running the water until further notice, even if the air temperature outside is above freezing. The Water Department will post a notice on the Village of Deerfield's website (www.deerfieldwi.com) and contact individuals when the risk of frozen service laterals has diminished. You will need to prove the Village Hall, at 608-764-5404, with the phone number or email address you wish to be contacted at.
5. **Who is responsible for costs?** Water laterals providing service to customers generally consist of two parts.
 - a. The utility-owned portion of the lateral is usually located in the public right-of-way and includes the section of the lateral from the main to the curb stop box.
 - b. The customer-owned portion of the water lateral generally extends from the curb stop box to the property provided with service.

Wisconsin Admin. Code § PSC 185.52 requires that mains and laterals be placed at such depth or otherwise protected to prevent freezing. If a freeze-up occurs in the main or utility-owned portion of the lateral, **the utility is responsible** for the expense of thawing its facilities. Individual customers may not be held responsible for the expense of thawing utility-owned laterals or mains.

If a freeze-up occurs in the customer-owned portion of a lateral Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 185.88 specifies the situations when the utility is responsible for the expense of thawing the customer's portion of the lateral and when the customer is responsible for the expense. This section provides that **the utility is responsible** for the expense of thawing the customer-owned portion of a lateral if:

- it is the first thaw for the customer at the location
- the lateral is electrically conductive
- the utility has not given notice to the customer to take corrective actions for a known condition (e.g. that the customer should increase the lateral depth or provide insulation to prevent freezing, or run water).
- the utility is also responsible if the freeze-up is the direct result of a utility disconnection that occurred during a time when the freeze-up could be reasonably expected to occur.

Under Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 185.88, **the customer is responsible** for the expense of thawing a freeze-up **in the customer's portion of the lateral** if:

- the customer's lateral is not electrically conductive
- the customer neglected to provide or maintain proper insulation or protection
- the utility advises the customer of corrective measures to be taken and the customer does not follow the utility's advice
- or if the utility disconnects for a dangerous condition.

Previous winters many utilities requested customers to run a stream of water to prevent mains and utility-owned laterals for freezing. In some cases, customers did not follow the utility's advice to run the water as requested. In these cases, **the customer would be responsible** for the expense of thawing the customer-owned portion of the lateral. The utility would remain responsible for the expense of thawing its facilities as this section does not permit the utility to shift the cost of thawing utility-owned facilities to individual customers.

If you have further questions please contact the Village Hall at 764-5405, for further clarification.

Respectively,

Elizabeth McCredie
Village Administrator, Clerk-Treasurer