



TENANTS *and* RESIDENTS

EAST AYRSHIRE

Useful information

Keep safe this winter

Welcome to our winter information note. We hope this will help keep you and your family safe and sound at home and when you're out and about.

At home

Make sure you take some frost precautions. As you know burst pipes can cause serious damage to your home.

Burst pipes usually follow on from the water in the pipe freezing. When water freezes it expands, and that is what causes fractures to the pipes. By following a few simple precautions you can hopefully avoid getting frozen pipes.

Frozen pipes

To avoid frozen pipes you should:

- Check the severe weather reports
- Keep your home reasonably warm day and night
- Never leave a tap dripping
- Reduce draughts wherever possible
- Leave your loft hatch open a little in really cold weather

If you leave your home empty for a few days during the winter it is important that you:

- Leave your central heating on at the frost setting
- If possible, leave a key with someone who can keep an eye on the house, maybe a neighbour

Tenants are required to inform their local housing office if they intend to be away from home for an extended period of time.

If you get frozen pipes:

- If possible, thaw the pipes by applying gentle heat, e.g. a hairdryer or hot water bottle. **Do not under any circumstances use a blow torch or naked flame on any fitting or pipes within your home.**

- Raise the temperature in your house but **do not** switch on the immersion or central heating.
- When the water begins to run at all taps and the WC cistern it is safe to use the immersion or central heating.

Burst pipes

If you do get burst pipes:

- Turn off the water at the main stopcock immediately - this can save a lot of time, damage and expense.

The main stopcock is usually found under the sink. If the Council has recently fitted a new kitchen you will have a 'Sure Stop' valve that once activated will shut off the water supply. **Check now where your stopcock is located.**

- Turn on all taps and flush the WC
- Switch off the electricity supply if water comes into contact with fittings or wiring
- Attempt to contain the leak in a bowl or other container
- Contact the Council's Repair Service on 01563 555555.
- Warn any neighbours who may be affected

Further advice on burst and frozen pipes can be found at: www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk and at www.scottishwater.co.uk

Winter travel

Plan ahead and think about how the weather may impact on you. Some tips and hints:

Driving your own car?

- Check the weather forecast and road conditions
- Think about using public transport or other modes of transport instead
- Think about alternative routes
- Allow extra time for your journey
- Let someone know where you're going and what time you expect to get there or back
- Make sure your car is ready for a journey in bad weather
- Fully charge your mobile phone
- Think about fitting winter tyres

Pack some essentials...

- An ice scraper
- A shovel for snow
- A torch & spare batteries
- Warm clothes, boots and a blanket
- Some food and a warm drink in a flask
- A first aid kit
- Battery jump leads
- A map – in case of diversions

Travelling by public transport?

- Dress for outdoor conditions – wrap up warm, wear sensible shoes / boots & a hat
- Check travel line on 0871 200 2233 for delays / disruption to services
- Take your mobile phone with you to keep in touch with family & friends
- For long journeys take a snack and some water if you can

Winter in your community

We all know winter weather can leave us vulnerable. We can all make life easier for ourselves and others by taking a few easy steps:

- Find out if any of your family, friends or neighbours may need a helping hand when the weather is bad – have their phone numbers to hand
- Offer to help with shopping or other essential tasks
- Clear ice and snow from your paths
- Remember, ice can make things just as difficult as deep snow for people to get out and about
- We can all prepare for bad weather by agreeing with our neighbours and colleagues what we can do to minimise the effects of severe conditions

What else can you do?

- You can sign up to receive weather warnings and alerts from the Met Office at www.metoffice.gov.uk
- You can also check weather forecasts on the go by downloading the Met Office's FREE mobile phone app for Android and iPhone
- You can find out more about how East Ayrshire is dealing with severe weather at www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk or contact roads and transportation at 01563 503160 or e-mail roads@east-ayrshire.gov.uk