



IICRC

Institute of Inspection Cleaning
and Restoration Certification

WHEN PIPES BURST

TIPS TO PREVENT WATER DAMAGE

When extreme temperatures strike, homeowners across the U.S. are crippled with millions of dollars in water damage to their homes and buildings.

Leaving a home alone can become an expensive implication if things go astray while you are gone. Unfortunately more often than not, things do go wrong. Opportunely, there are certain things homeowners can do to protect their home and their interior possessions.

Water is a homeowners' biggest enemy. If a pipe bursts, thousands of gallons of water can begin flooding a home. The IICRC responds as an authority on putting the pieces back together for home and business owners. When cracked pipes cause water damage, the IICRC offers these tips for clean-up.

TO PREVENT FROZEN PIPES

- Wrap electrical heating tape on exterior pipes and remove garden hoses from faucets.
- Cover pipes with foam rubber or fiberglass insulation and secure it with tape.
- Let cold and hot water faucets drip. Running water helps prevent freezing pipes and reduces pressure build up.
- Inside the home, open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to promote warm air circulation around plumbing.
- Leave the thermostat at the same temperature both day and night, at least 55°F.

TO THAW FROZEN PIPES

- Locate the problem pipe, if possible, and open a faucet. As the pipe thaws, running water aids the melting process.
- Apply heat to the frozen section using a hand-held hair dryer or portable electric space heater. Do not use a blow torch as it could cause the pipe to explode. Do not use a propane or kerosene heater as these are hazardous for indoor use.
- If you are unable to locate or access the frozen pipe area, call a licensed plumber.
- If all else fails and you experience a burst pipe that results in water damage, shut off the main water valve and contact a professional water damage restoration company with trained technicians and extraction, drying and dehumidifying equipment. Call the IICRC at 844-464-4272, or go to www.iicrc.org for a list of IICRC Certified professionals in your area.

IF WATER DAMAGE OCCURS, TIPS FOR CLEAN-UP

- Shut off the main water valve, if practical, and call a plumber to fix the leak.
- Call an IICRC Certified professional immediately for mitigation services, as required by your insurance policy. IICRC Certified professionals have the knowledge, experience and equipment to locate water wherever it goes, remove the excess, and dry your structure to industry standards. Call the IICRC at 844-464-4272, or go to www.iicrc.org for a list of IICRC Certified professionals in your area.
- Mop up standing water on flooring surfaces to prevent slip/fall hazards. If the burst pipe is overhead, drain ceiling cavities by punching “weep” holes.

- 💧 Prevent mold growth. Although it takes a few days to appear, mold thrives on wood, paper, particle board or even household soil, when stagnant air, moisture, and temperatures between 68°F and 86°F degrees are present.
- 💧 Wet clothing usually is salvageable. A 10-minute wash cycle in detergent and hot water should sanitize washable clothing and many household fabrics.
- 💧 Dry out before you rebuild. IICRC Certified professionals have a variety of instruments to determine when a building is dry, to prevent on-going microbial growth. Drying should not stop until wood or drywall moisture content (MC) falls below 16% MC. Normal MC is around 10% in most areas of the country.

To find IICRC Certified professionals in your area or to confirm the certification of any company that has contacted you, call the IICRC at 844-464-4272, or go to www.iicrc.org and select [“Locate a Certified Pro.”](#)



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