

City of Lanesboro

Public Utilities

Prevention of Frozen Water Service Lines Policy

October 6th, 2014

Definition of service level, priorities of service and procedures for thawing of frozen service laterals.

1. To protect city infrastructure and provide for the safety of city residents, the City may provide a service of thawing frozen service laterals to commercial businesses, owner occupied residences, owner-occupied residential condominiums and owner-occupied co-operative housing.
2. The City may thaw external water service laterals only, not frozen plumbing inside the residence. If the city employee finds that the frozen line is from the house to the curb stop, the home owner may be responsible for contract plumbing and fees incurred to thaw the line.
3. The process of back-feeding another residence with water (supplying another home with water via garden hose or similar process) is the sole responsibility of the home owner. The City will not be held liable for the failure of plumbing on private property and therefore a plumber should be consulted prior to undertaking the back-feeding process. It should be noted that back-fed water is not potable (safe for drinking) and would therefore be a violation of Minnesota Department of Health and Safety Code for businesses that serve food (restaurants and bed and breakfasts) to engage in this process. Any and all violations will be reported.
4. The City may respond to calls in order received.
5. Calls received during regular working hours may be responded to as resources permit. Calls received after regular working hours may be responded to the next business day. Calls received on weekends may be responded to during regular working hours.
6. There may be no charge to the resident if the property can be thawed, and if it is the first occurrence of the season for the property. In residences that have a dripper installed and the line freezes, it is the resident's expense to thaw from the first occurrence. If the city notifies a resident to run water and the line freezes, it is the resident's expense to thaw from the first occurrence. The fees charged will be actual expenses incurred, time, labor and materials.
7. The City may use hot water in its thawing operations. The use of electric pipe thawing machines or welding machines is strictly prohibited, and persons using same may be held liable for any damage caused.

When there are extreme frost conditions and the risk of freezing water lines occurs, a general notification on “how to protect water lines from freezing” will be placed on the public access channel, in the city utility bills, and on the city website.

- A. Residents will be asked to monitor the temperature of their water. If the water temperature reaches 35 degrees F. or lower, they must contact City Hall or the Public Works Department.
- B. After notifying the city, the affected home owner must allow a trickle of cold water run from one faucet throughout the day and night and continue to do so until the water temperature is above 35 degrees.
- C. Residents that have notified the city, and have had to leave their water running, may have their utility bill adjusted to their average use.
- D. Residents that provide water to another resident whose lines have frozen (back-feeding) may have their utility bill adjusted to their average use.

This policy was approved by the Lanesboro City Council on October 6th, 2014.