

TOWN OF GORE BAY

NOTICE TO WATER USERS

What You Should Know about Frozen Water Services

Why do water lines freeze?

Most water services in the Town of Gore Bay are deeply buried for protection against frost. Some water service lines, however, are at a shallow depth by today's standards. Extremely cold temperatures, or fluctuations between warm and cold temperatures, can sometimes push frost to a depth that will freeze water services.

Who is responsible for water service lines?

It is the responsibility of the property owner to maintain and/or replace the portion of the water service located within the building and between the building and the shut off valve located at or near the property line.

The Town of Gore Bay is responsible for the service located between the shut off valve located at or near the property line and the water main. In the event the Town is unable to thaw this area, the Town will make every effort to gain access to water by connecting hose from a neighbouring property to the property with a frozen water service.

Does the Town thaw a water service on private property?

The Town of Gore Bay DOES NOT thaw a water service on private property. The property owner is responsible for thawing the portion of the waterline that is frozen within the building and between the building and the shut off valve located at or near the property line.

How can I reduce the risk of frozen water pipes this winter?

- When the temperature is below freezing, you can leave a cold water tap running at a steady stream of about 6 mm or 1/4 inch (approximate thickness of a drinking straw).
- Leave the cupboard doors under your kitchen and bathroom sinks open if piping is located next to exterior walls. Please take care to remove household cleaners and other items that could harm children or pets while the cupboard doors are open.
- Do not turn your furnace below 13 degrees C (55° F) at night or when the house is vacant.
- Shut off and drain pipes leading to outside faucets.
- Wrap foam pipe insulation around pipes most susceptible to freezing (e.g. near outside walls, crawl spaces, attics).
- Seal air leaks in your home and garage, especially in areas where pipes are located.
- If you are away, have someone check your home regularly.

What should I do if my water service freezes this winter?

- i. Property owner is to notify the Town of Gore Bay and a plumber immediately upon becoming aware of the frozen water line.
- ii. Town of Gore Bay will send a Public Works Staff member to assess the situation by checking the water main valve which may be an indication of whether or not it is frozen at the main line.
- iii. On site plumber that the owner hires to thaw the line must provide a certification indicating what work was conducted on the line including the location of where the line was frozen to determine whether or not the line was frozen on private or municipal property.

If it is determined and certified by a licensed plumber that the line was frozen on Municipal property, you may contact the Gore Bay Municipal Office for information pertaining to reimbursement of your costs.

Can I do the work myself?

If you are able to determine that the frozen section of water pipe is located inside your home, you can try the following methods. If you are unable to locate the frozen section of pipe or are unsure what to do, please contact a licensed plumber.

IMPORTANT: Never use an open flame to thaw a frozen water pipe. Always use caution when applying any heat source near insulation or other flammable materials.

- Open a cold water tap nearest the frozen section so you will know when the pipe is thawed.
- Apply heat using an electric heating pad wrapped around the pipe or an electric hair dryer.
- You may also use a portable heater with caution, especially around flammable materials.

How can I correct this problem permanently?

If your water service line has frozen in the past, and the frozen portion was located on your property, the best solution is to lower your service line to a depth that cannot be penetrated by frost. The Town of Gore Bay requires new water lines to be buried at a minimum depth of 2 metres. Property owners with existing water services are asked to contact the Town of Gore Bay for more information.

How can I obtain more information?

For information about municipal water services, please contact the Town of Gore Bay at 705-282-2420 Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

In an after hours emergency contact Gore Bay Public Works (705) 282-7206.