



# Leak Resources at the Portland Water Bureau

Portland Water Bureau

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Maren Schermer, Home Water Leak  
Program Coordinator





# Portland Water Bureau Resources

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- [Water Emergency Line](#): 503-823-4874
  - Available 24/7 for emergencies
- [Customer Service](#): 503-823-7770
  - Request bill adjustments after a leak
- [Water Quality Line](#): 503-823-7525
  - Report drinking water quality and pressure concerns, including discolored water. M-F, 8:30-4:30
- [Home Water Leak Repair Program](#): 503-823-6060
  - Free leak repair assistance for Portland homeowners living with low income

Free language interpretation is available

# Preparing for freezing temperatures

Learn where your water shutoff valve is located.

- Usually located in your basement, garage, crawl space, or under your home.
- Many apartments, manufactured homes, and older homes do not have a shutoff valve.

For more tips, visit [portland.gov/water/winter](https://portland.gov/water/winter)



# Preparing for freezing temperatures

- Caulk around pipes where they enter the home.
- Insulate pipes in unheated areas, such as attics, crawl spaces, and basements.



Source: US Department of Energy, “Do-It-Yourself Savings Project: Insulate Hot Water Pipes”



# When temperatures are below freezing

- Open cupboard doors in the kitchen and bathrooms.
  - This allows these pipes to get more heat from inside your home.
- Turn your faucets on to let a slight drip of water run.



# Preventing freezing pipes outdoors

- Disconnect hoses from outdoor faucets.
- Wrap outside faucets and hose bibs with molded-foam insulating covers.
  - Insulating covers are available at most hardware stores.



# How to check for leaks

1. Locate and open the water meter box at street.
2. Stop using water inside and outside home.
3. Watch the meter. Does it continue to move? If so, you have a leak.
4. To determine if your leak is indoors or outdoors, turn off the main shutoff valve in the house. If the meter continues to move, you probably have an underground leak.



Learn more at [portland.gov/water/leak](https://portland.gov/water/leak)

# What to do if you have a broken water pipe

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1. Locate your home water shutoff valve (usually in your basement, garage, or crawl space).
2. Turn off your water by turning the handle to the right until it is snug. (Be careful if it is old!)
3. If you do not have a shut-off valve or cannot turn it, [call your water provider](#) to turn off your water at the street.

For more information, visit [portland.gov/water/shutoff](https://portland.gov/water/shutoff)  
Information now available online in Arabic, simplified Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Spanish.



# Water Emergency Line

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- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Call 503-823-4874
- Report water emergencies such as:
  - Request an emergency water shut off
  - Main breaks
  - Water running down streets
  - Sudden loss of water

For more information, visit [portland.gov/water/service-problem](https://portland.gov/water/service-problem)

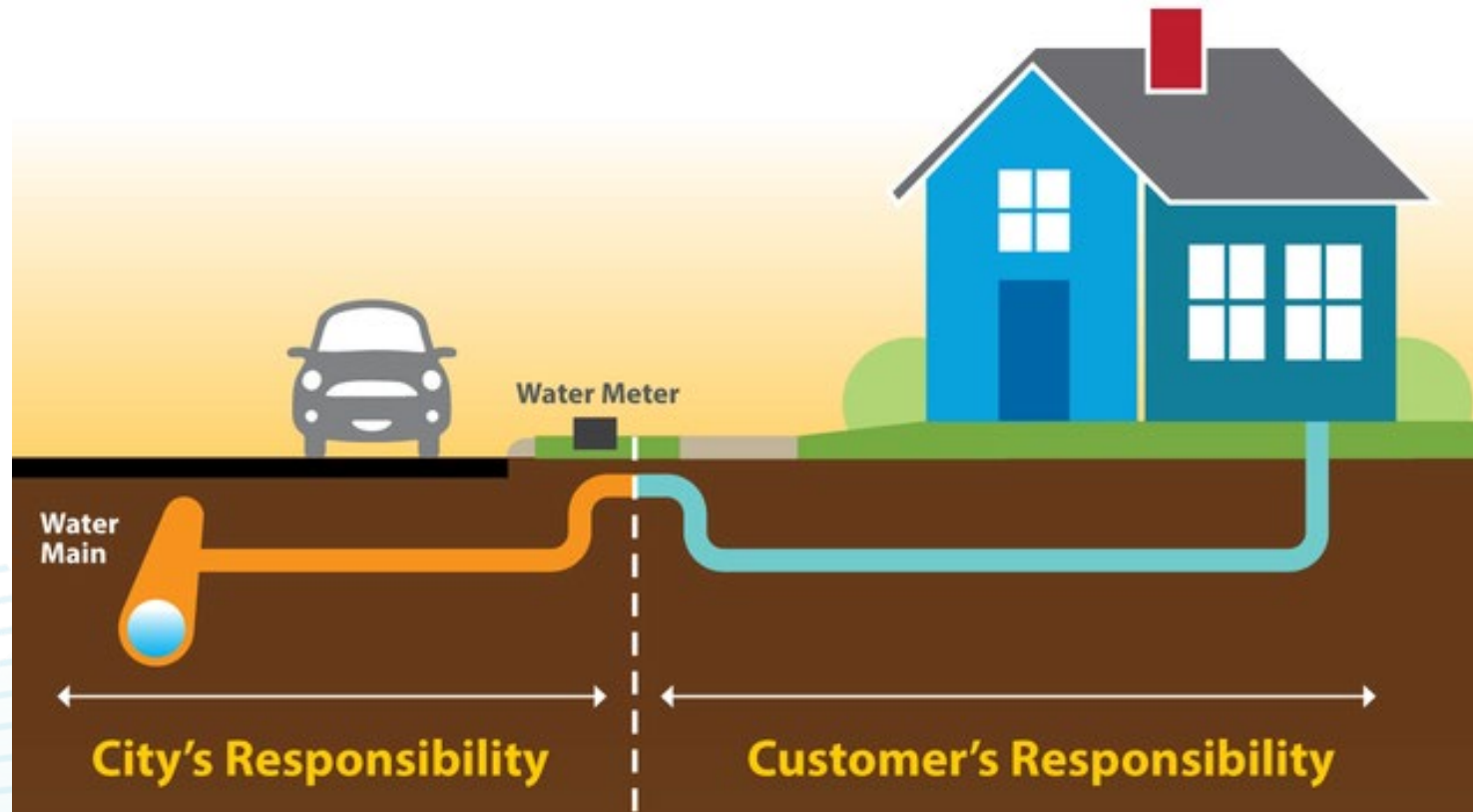


# City-side leaks





# Responsibility for fixing burst pipes





# Request a bill adjustment

If you have recently had a water leak fixed, you may be eligible for a bill adjustment.

- Winter leaks can cause a higher sewer charge for the rest of the year.
- Contact Customer Service at 503-823-7770 or [PWBCustomerService@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:PWBCustomerService@portlandoregon.gov)

To learn more, visit [portland.gov/water/leak-adjustment](https://portland.gov/water/leak-adjustment)

# Home Water Leak Repair Program

- Fixes water leaks and replaces inefficient fixtures
- Serves homeowners living with low income within the Portland Water Bureau service area
- Funded by the Portland Water Bureau and Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF)

To learn more, visit  
[portland.gov/water/leak-repair](https://portland.gov/water/leak-repair)



# Home Water Leak Repair Program: What we can and can't fix

## Eligible repairs

- Toilet
- Faucets (kitchen, bathroom, bath)
- Outdoor spigot
- Leak in wall pipes
- Underground pipe leak
- Inefficient clothes washer

## Ineligible repairs

- Drain leaks
- Any sewer-related leak
- Irrigation systems
- Leaking roofs
- Most water heaters (leaking water heaters may be eligible for repair)



# Home Water Leak Repair Program Partners

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African American  
Alliance for  
Homeownership



Community Energy  
Project



Multnomah County  
Weatherization  
Program



# Thanks!



Maren Schermer



[LeakRepair@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:LeakRepair@portlandoregon.gov)



503-823-6060



[www.portland.gov/water/leak-repair](http://www.portland.gov/water/leak-repair)



[PortlandWater](#)



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The City of Portland is committed to providing meaningful access. To request translation, interpretation, modifications, accommodations, or other auxiliary aids or services, contact **503-823-7770, Relay: 711**.  
Traducción e Interpretación | Biên Dịch và Thông Dịch | 口笔译服务  
अनुवादन तथा व्याख्या | Устный и письменный перевод  
Turjumaad iyo Fasiraad | Письмовий і усний переклад  
Traducere și interpretariat | Chiaku me Awewen Kapas  
Translation and Interpretation: **503-823-7770** | [portland.gov/water/access](http://portland.gov/water/access)



## PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR FREEZING WINTER WEATHER



Presented by: Steve Brotton  
Great Northwest Installations  
Founder and Co-Owner



# HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR THE WINTER

- Install foundation vent covers



- Turn off and drain your spigots/hose bibs



## ...PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR THE WINTER

- Disconnect and put away hoses for the winter
- Install spigot/ hose bib insulation covers



## ...PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR THE WINTER

- Drain your irrigation system



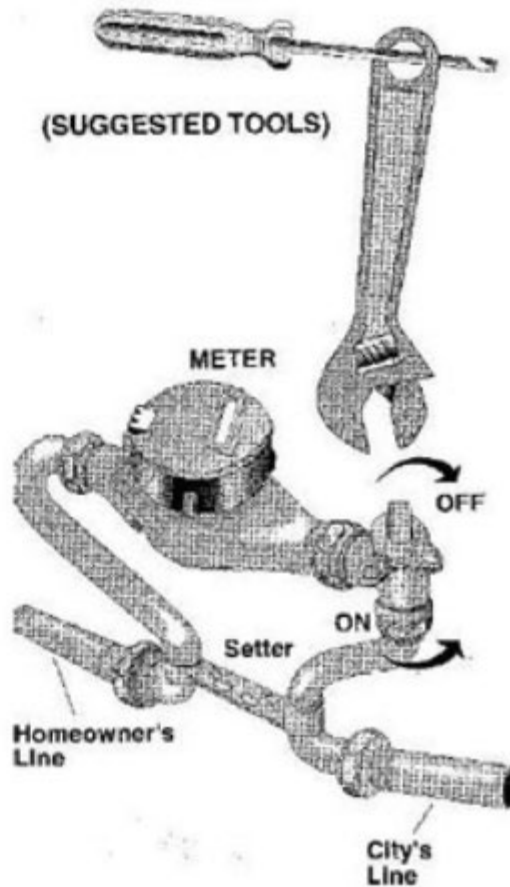
- Insulate pipes in crawlspace





# KNOW HOW TO SHUT OFF YOUR WATER

- Have a meter key and know how to use it

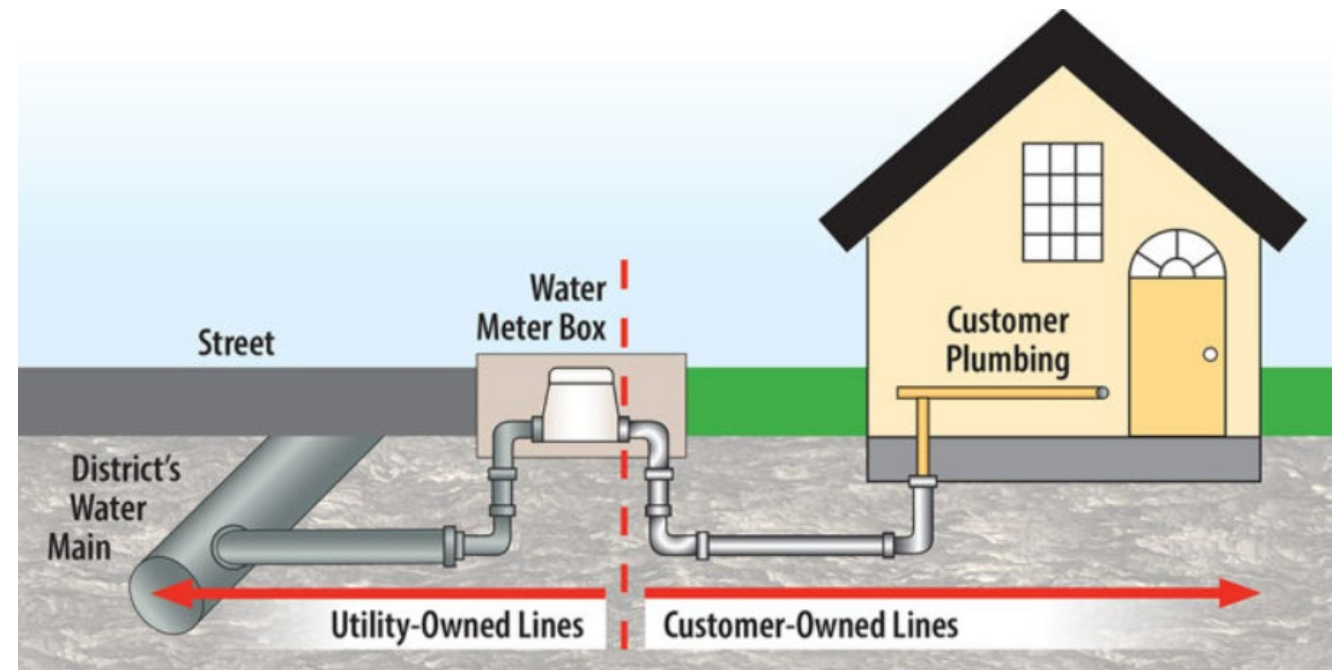


- Make sure you know where your house shut off valves are located!

# KNOW WHERE YOUR WATER METER IS LOCATED



Understand your responsibility  
City vs. Customer Owned Lines





# WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE'S FREEZING WEATHER

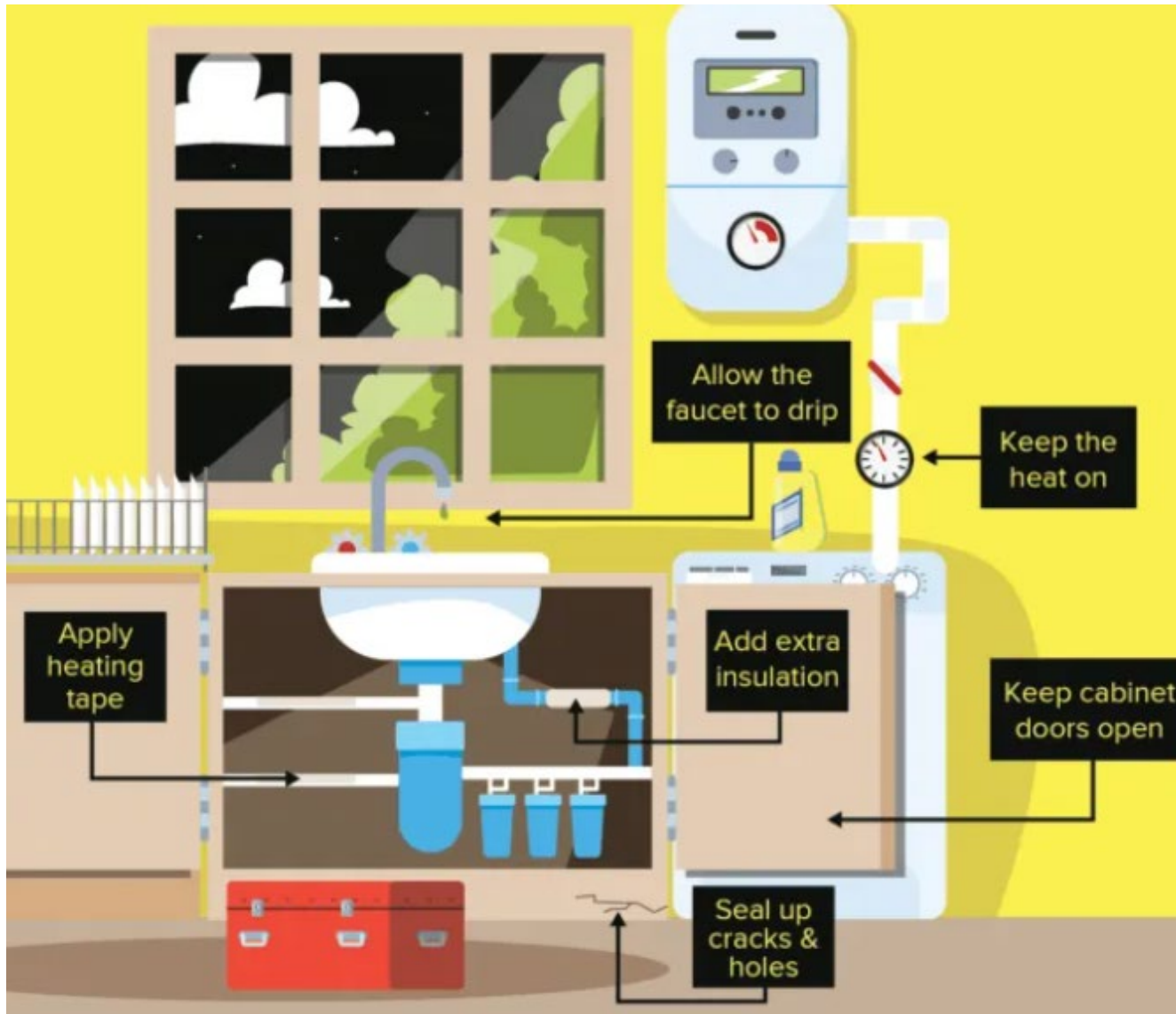
Weather in the Northwest can change quickly. Make sure to check the weather forecasts to be prepared.

- You've heard of the old trick to turn your faucets on and let it drip a little. **IT WORKS!**
- Use the fixture furthest from the meter/street.



- Don't forget to store potable drinking water and a couple of buckets of water to flush the toilet.

## 6 WAYS TO PREVENT PIPES FROM FREEZING



1. Allow faucet to drip
2. Keep the heat on
3. Add extra insulation
4. Apply heating tape
5. Seal cracks and holes
6. Keep cabinet doors open



## PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR EXTERIOR WALLS



- Exterior wall water lines are likely to freeze first. Let them run a little bit.

## A LITTLE DRIP CAN GO A LONG WAY

- Do not worry if you leave little amount of water running from the faucet when there is a potential for freezing weather. It could be a lot worst if you end up with a freeze break!!!





## THE CALM AFTER THE STORM...WHAT TO DO NEXT?

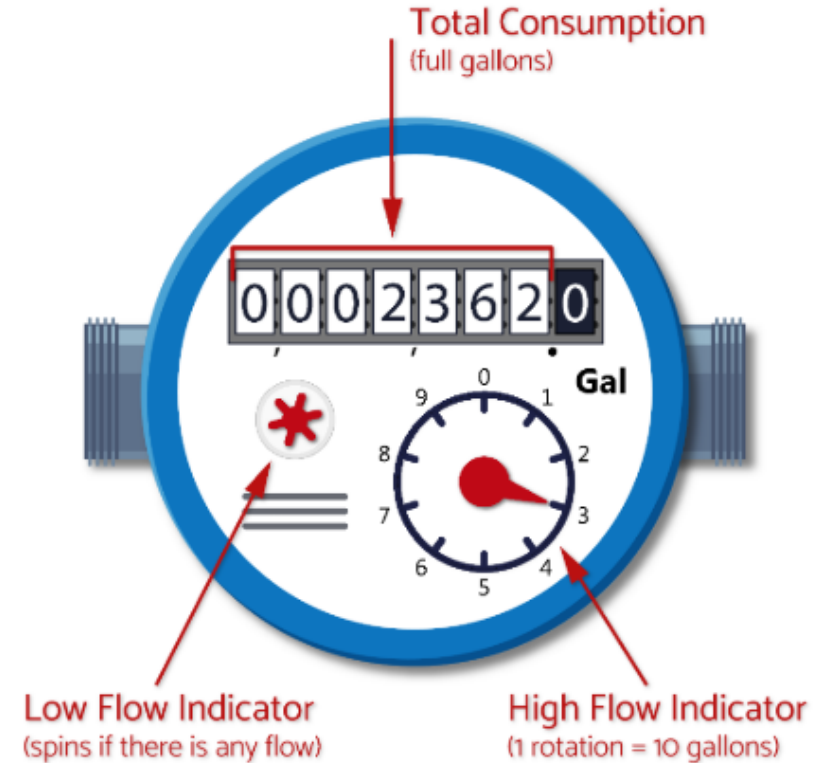
With all the preparation it is still possible to have your pipes freeze up. Mother Nature will do what it needs to do no matter how much preparation we do.



- When the thaw comes, inspect your home, listen for leaks, and check to see if the water pressure is lower than normal.
- Is the water from your water heater still hot?

# EASY STEPS TO DETECT IF THERE IS A LEAK IN YOUR WATER LINES

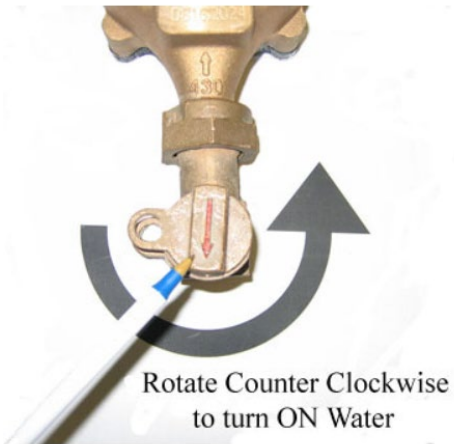
1. Make sure there is no running water from fixtures and no appliances are operating that use water in the home
2. Look at your water meter near the street. There is typically a triangle or star-looking symbol on the meter face.
  - If it is spinning, then water is moving through your pipes. This not good, call a for help!
  - If it is not spinning, there is no water moving through your pipes. This is good, most likely no leaks present.



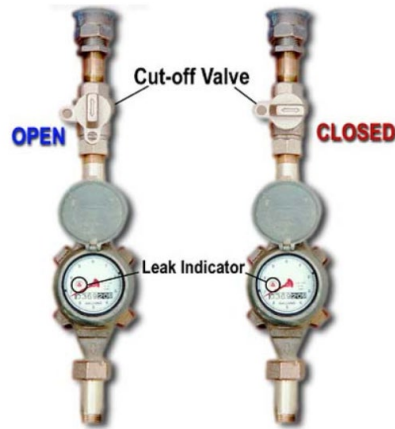


# TWO WAYS TO TURN OFF YOUR WATER

- If pipes have frozen, turn off the house water shut-off valve or water meter (with a meter key) to help prevent major water damage when the pipes thaw out.



## WATER METER VALVES



## HOUSE SHUT OFF VALVES

- Turn off the house water supply valve if you suspect a leak or broken pipe
- In case of an emergency or if you don't know where your house shut-off is, turn off from the water meter.

## OTHER TIPS TO HELP PROTECT YOUR HOME

- Use leak detection devices/water alarms
- Use leak detection and auto water shut-off devices
- Turn off the home's main water valve when gone for extended period of time
- Inspect the plumbing systems for existing issues (leaks in pipes or fitting, old supply lines/hoses to fixtures and appliances)
- Look for wet spots in your yard, crawlspace, or basement even when it's dry everywhere else
- Look for mildew or mold in places around your home (hidden leaks)
- Call the Portland Water Bureau or find them online for questions, concerns & issues
- Check out Regional Water Provider Consortium's Weatherization page at <https://www.regionalh2o.org/emergency-preparedness/winterization>





Any  
Questions?



Woof! My name is Maddie and I'm here to help!



## Contact info

- Steve's cell – 1 (503) 780 5171
- [Steve.Brotton@gnwinstallations.com](mailto:Steve.Brotton@gnwinstallations.com)
- Website: greatnorthwestinstallations.com
- Customer Service – 1 (800) 309 5211

THANK YOU AND HAVE A SAFE, FUN AND FREEZE FREE WINTER!!!

