



# WINTER PREPARATION

Winter is here, so we are providing what we hope will be helpful information to help you through the season.



## SNOW ON THE ROAD



When the Public Works Crew receives an advance weather alert that a snow storm is on the way, they apply biodegradable de-ice to the City's main arterial streets prior to the snowfall. This helps melt the snow and prevent icy conditions (provided the temperature is not too low). When heavy accumulation occurs, the Public Works Crew will run the snow plow around the clock to make the roadways clear for your travel. They concentrate on the most traveled arterials first, then move to the secondary arterials and finally to the residential areas.

The snowplow can do a faster and more efficient job when cars are parked off the street; however, it is inevitable that driveways will be blocked during snowplow operations. We apologize in advance for this and ask for your understanding when the enormous task of clearing the roads happens.

In regard to the Snow Removal Map (please see link on City web page) - *Although we will do our best to follow the priorities indicated on the map, other urgencies may take precedence, depending on the type of storm events and other conditions.*



## SAFE WINTER DRIVING TIPS



- ✓ Clear snow and ice from all vehicle windows and lights, even the hood and roof, before driving. On ice and snow, take it slow, and use your headlights.
- ✓ Don't use your cruise control in wintry conditions. The short touch of your brakes to deactivate the cruise control feature can cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- ✓ Do not pump anti-lock brakes when attempting to stop. The right way is to "stomp and steer!"
- ✓ Leave extra room between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. And remember, the larger the vehicle, the longer the stopping distance.
- ✓ Watch for slippery bridge decks as they ice up sooner than the adjacent pavement and take longer to melt.
- ✓ Snowplow in the area? Stay behind it until it is safe to pass. Remember that a snowplow driver has a limited field of vision. Stay back (15 car lengths) until you're sure it is safe to pass or until the plow pulls off the road.
- ✓ Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle. Your four-wheel drive vehicle may help you get going quicker than other vehicles but it won't help you stop any faster. Many 4x4 vehicles are heavier than passenger vehicles and actually may take longer to stop. Don't get overconfident about your 4x4 vehicle's traction; it can lose traction as quickly as a two-wheel drive vehicle.
- ✓ For the latest road and weather conditions you can log on to <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/winter/> or call 511 for real time traffic and weather information.

## **IF YOUR PIPES BREAK**

Shut off your water immediately using your home's shutoff valve. If the shutoff valve does not work, you should contact the City to have the water shut off at the meter: **Call 354-2829 During business hours (8 am-5 pm)**

**Call 815-5755 After business hours**

The Public Works crew will check the water service line (from the City water main to the water meter) to ensure that it is undamaged and will then turn off the water at the meter. Any damaged pipes beyond the meter are the property owner's responsibility and should be repaired by a qualified plumber. Water bills that include water loss as a result of a break may qualify for a leak adjustment - contact our business hours number above for more details.

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**The Problem With Frozen Pipes** - Pipes that freeze most frequently are those that are exposed to severe cold, like outdoor hose bibs, swimming pool supply lines, water sprinkler lines and water supply pipes in unheated interior areas like basements and crawl spaces, attics, garages or kitchen cabinets. Also, pipes that run against exterior walls that have little or no insulation are subject to freezing.



Frozen water in pipes can cause water pressure buildup between the ice blockage and the closed faucet at the end of a pipe – this could cause the pipes to burst at their weakest point. Water expands as it freezes. This expansion puts tremendous pressure on whatever is containing it, including metal or plastic pipes. No matter the "strength" of the pipe, expanding water can cause pipes to break.

Frozen water pipes can stop water service and be expensive to repair or replace for homeowners, so it's worth it to take extra precautions to ensure your home is protected from the occasional cold snap.

**What Should I Do If My Pipes Freeze?** If you turn on a faucet and get no water, your pipes may be frozen. Rubbing the pipes with warm, damp rags may slowly thaw the line, or if possible, expose the pipe to the inside heat. Never try to thaw a frozen pipe with a torch or open flame; instead, place a warm towel or rag around the pipe or try a hair dryer on a low setting to thaw out the frozen pipe.

# STORM DRAINS

When the storm drains are blocked, it not only causes excess water on the streets, but also increases the potential for backups in private systems.

Citizens can assist by not parking on or near storm drain grates, and by using off-street parking so the street sweeper can be more efficient in picking up the leaves and the plows can remove the snow.

If you see a plugged storm drain and can easily clear it yourself, that would be a big help to the City. Otherwise, please notify the Public Works Department at 354-3446.

# FLOODING

Public Works maintains a supply of sandbags and sand that community members can use to protect their properties from flooding damage.

In advance of a flooding event, the bunker at the corner of Judson Street Alley and S 6<sup>th</sup> Street (shown below) will be ready for citizens to fill their own sandbags.



# MORE WINTER TIPS

## Taking a Winter Vacation?

If you plan to be away from your home for an extended period of time during the winter:

- ❖ Call Lynden Utility Billing at 354-2829 to have your water service temporarily turned off.
- ❖ Turn off the water supply lines to your clothes washer.
- ❖ Turn off your hot water tank.
- ❖ Eliminate drafts: close and insulate vents with rigid foam, including crawl space vents. In winter, when the air is drier, closing the vents will reduce the chance that pipes in the crawl space might freeze. Just remember to remove the plugs when the weather turns mild in the spring.



## Conserve Energy and Protect Your Home

- ❖ Disconnect or winterize, and drain garden hose and irrigation systems, pools, and spas according to manufacturer's recommendations. Drain outside pipes and faucets too.
- ❖ Fit exposed pipes / outside faucets with insulation sleeves or wrapping. The more insulation the better. Caulk and seal cracks and holes in outside walls and foundations near water pipes with caulking.
- ❖ Let your faucets drip during extended cold periods - this water flow will help prevent pipes from freezing.
- ❖ Open your under-sink cabinets to allow heat to circulate around your plumbing fixtures.

## Meter Box Maintenance

Your water meter is in a meter box typically located by your front property line. Knowing the location of your water meter is very important and lets the City quickly access the water meter and shut-off valve in case of a leak or water emergency.

Shrubs, planters and other landscaping can obscure access to the water meter. You can help maintain access to the water meter box by:

- ❖ Shoveling plowed snow off of the meter box
- ❖ Keeping the meter box closed during cold weather to reduce the chances of freezing.



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## Prepare for the Unexpected

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In the event of a power outage the City has generators in place to run City Hall, your new Water Treatment Plant, your Wastewater Treatment Plant and other facilities until Puget Sound Energy can restore power. In the event of a snow storm or other weather related events we have trained staff ready to respond.

### To reach us during regular business hours:

E-mail at [citypublicworksclerks@lyndenwa.org](mailto:citypublicworksclerks@lyndenwa.org) or

Call during business hours at 360-354-3446

Or for after hours emergency at 360-815-5755

*Courtesy of City of Lynden Public Works Department*