

UPDATES FROM THE PORTLAND WATER DISTRICT winter 2008

Pay online

Eliminate hassles, reduce check writing, and save a stamp! PWD offers FREE online payment services to view and pay your bill.

Registration is quick and easy. Once you register, you will receive a monthly e-mail notifying you your bill is available.

You can sign up to pay automatically or pay at your convenience. You will still receive a monthly statement in the mail unless you choose the paperless billing option.

Paperless billing benefits the environment and lowers costs by reducing paper consumption. And if you are worried about having a record of your bills, our online payment option features 2 years worth of online account history.

 **Register online at www.pwd.org.**

RATE INCREASE

Beginning January 1, 2008, water rates will increase 3.6 percent as part of the three-year plan to raise revenues to pay for infrastructure upgrades. A detailed rate schedule can be found on our web site at www.pwd.org.



Water Mains

Emergency crews respond to roughly 150 water main breaks each year, most occurring during the cold weather months. Once dispatched to a leak, crews quickly locate and solve the problem so service to customers can be restored. For your safety and the safety of our crews, please slow down and use caution near work sites.

Protect Your Neighborhood Adopt-A-Fire-Hydrant

The Portland Water District supports fire fighting by inspecting fire hydrants to ensure they are working properly and repairing leaks and defects. You can play an important role in protecting your neighborhood by adopting a fire hydrant. The winter months pose even more challenges for fire fighters. Snow, sleet, and ice can make it more difficult for fire fighters to reach hydrants and could possibly delay their response.



Keep your neighborhood safe by observing hydrants and ensuring they are not obstructed.

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Portland, Maine 04104-3553
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WINTER'S HERE *Be Prepared*



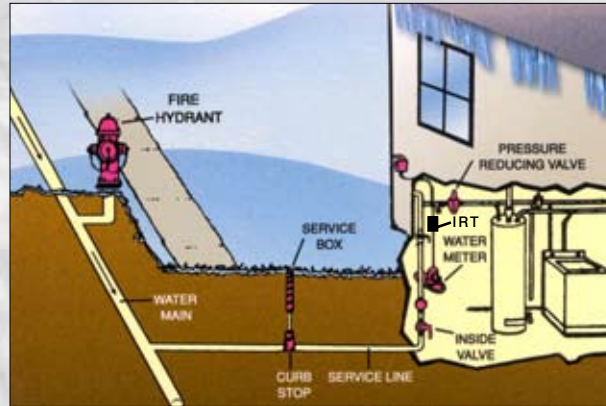
A MESSAGE FROM THE
PORTLAND WATER DISTRICT

Eight Quick Steps To Ward Off Winter Woes

Maine's harsh winters wreak havoc on water meters, pipes, and fire hydrants. Portland Water District's emergency crews are gearing up for Maine's winter months and remind customers to protect their meters and internal plumbing system.

Frozen water meters and pipes lurk in unheated basements and drafty buildings. Unexpected costs associated with frozen meters and pipes can be easily avoided by taking a few simple precautions now.

1. Have your furnace regularly serviced.
2. Know where your Shut-Off Valve is located.
3. Keep the name and emergency telephone number of your plumber handy.
4. Turn off outside faucets. Disconnect the hose.
5. Patch cracks and insulate holes near doors, windows, and walls by pipes and meters.
6. Inspect your plumbing.
7. Insulate water meters, pipes, and faucets in unheated areas.
8. Never completely shut off the heat when you are away. If you are planning to leave your home for an extended period of time, drain your pipes. If you don't drain your pipes, lower the thermostat, but never shut it off. The lack of heat can freeze pipes, causing flooding and damage when they eventually thaw.



Is It Too Late?

If you should experience frozen pipes, **NEVER USE A TORCH TO THAW**. The easiest and safest way to thaw a frozen pipe is to heat the room or wave a hair dryer on low heat along the pipe. Remember, the pipe may already be broken and, when the water is thawed, it will leak.

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PWD passes halfway mark on \$9 million project to replace water meters.

The Portland Water District's Remote Read project is over 50 percent complete. Approximately 30,000 Remote Read water meters have been installed and are now being read by one mobile collection unit.

The reading technology has proven effective at reducing estimated reads. Over 99 percent of the new meters are being read each period, compared to reading rates as low as 76 percent during winter months. At the end of the project, the meter reading fleet will be reduced from seven vehicles to one fuel efficient, hybrid vehicle.

The project is expected to be complete in October 2008. Postcards are being sent to remaining customers a couple weeks before installers plan to be in the neighborhood and ask that an appointment be made. "This project is helping us improve service to customers," explained Linda Fallona, director of customer service. "This system is more convenient for customers and provides more consistent and reliable readings." Once the project is complete, estimated reads should be virtually eliminated.

