



Hello Tenants!

I'm sending this memo out because we've noticed an alarming trend in emergency calls where gushing water has caused property damage before help can arrive. Extreme weather can cause water leaks and serious damages. Damages can be lessened with your help!



It is so very important that you prepare for a circumstance in which you may need to quickly shut off the water main or shut-off valve to your home to stop damaging water intrusion before a plumber arrives.

Recognize, locate, and notate the whereabouts of your valves!!

You need to know this information BEFORE there is a need to use it. Some homes have an interior and an exterior valve, and some only have one or the other. I am going to help you learn this right now so if your pipes do freeze and you have cracking, you can be ready to take steps to halt damaging water intrusion. Once you have located your valves and before snow falls, place a marker in this area so you can easily find it when needed, even in the snow. More information below on recognizing water valves.

- Water valves usually resemble the type of handles that you see outside your home where your hose is located. They may be located near the house or near the street. Some homes have them immediately next to the home. In most cases their color is brass, but not always. I have attached some photos of different valve handles and tools so that you will recognize what you may be needed at your home.

- If you live in a condo or townhouse and your water is included in your rent, your valve is possibly only inside.

- If you see a water line inside the house with a brass handle, chances are that is it. It is usually not out in the open. Inside the home it's likely in a closet or under a kitchen or bathroom sink. It could be in or behind a panel in the garage.

- If you live in a home and have never seen the valve, despite looking everywhere, you may need to go to where the water meter is read each month. You have probably noticed the green or grey box on the lawn that you mow over in the summer. Under the lid to that box the valve will be next to the water meter and should be the valve closest to the home if there is more than one.

- The cover over the exterior shut-off valve may have a small hole that you will need to access to open. You can use just about anything to pull it open. A screwdriver will do the job, but you may try a clothes hanger or even a pencil. In the case of a water leak, any instrument that gets it open will do.

- In some cases you may need a pipe wrench (photos attached) to turn the valve off. If this is the case, purchase one and put it where everyone in the home knows where to find it before you need it.

If one member at the home knows where the valve is but others do not, please make a point to spread the word. Don't just find the valve; tag it for other occupants in the home to recognize it. Make sure all adults and even responsible minors know where it is. Test the valve to make sure it does indeed halt water to the home entirely. If the water does not turn off, you may have just located the gas shut-off. If that is the case, keep looking.

Cold weather preparedness is just like hurricane preparedness: Pick up the supplies you need, educate the family, and be prepared for worst-case scenarios. IF you have looked for the valve (high and low) and can't find it, contact our office. We will touch base with the owner of the home to locate your valve. It is our sincere desire to assist you so that you are never without the tools that you need to manage the systems in your home.

