



BMU News

Bryan Municipal Utilities

Winter 2010

Q & A



Water
Supervisor
Nathan Gardner

Q: What precautions can residents take to help protect

water lines from freezing?

A: There are a number of steps people can take. First, protect exposed pipes from cold air drafts by closing and sealing windows and any exposed openings in basements or crawlspaces. Second, provide proper insulation for walls and pipes where necessary. If pipes cannot be shielded from the cold or the residence has a history of freeze-ups, run a steady stream the size of a pencil in an inside faucet to keep the water moving through the pipes. Make sure the drain is not plugged or blocked.

Q: What if the pipes freeze?

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9 tips to stay warm and save money this winter

Heating your home during the winter can be costly. Follow these simple tips to save money on your upcoming winter heating bills and keep your family comfortable.

1. Open window blinds during the day to let sunlight in to heat your rooms.



2. Have a heating professional check your heating equipment to ensure the system is running safely and efficiently.

3. Change furnace air filters often. Leaving dirty air filters in place can increase your heating costs. Severely restricted air filters can be a safety hazard.

4. Caulk or weather-strip all of your windows and doors to prevent heat loss. Seal off any unused fireplaces. Insulating and eliminating unwanted air infiltration provides the largest savings in heating costs.



5. Check ductwork in your attic or crawlspace to ensure that it is not disconnected or obstructed.

6. Purchase an easy-to-install programmable thermostat, so you can save money by adjusting the temperature automatically. *(Use coupon below!)*

7. Set the thermostat to the lowest temperature at which your family is comfortable. Setting the temperature lower overnight or while you are away will also save money.

8. Make sure your home is properly insulated. Start with your attic.

9. Flip the switch on ceiling fans to reverse the airflow direction, pushing the warm air in a high ceiling up. This air will then flow down the sidewalls to help warm the room below.



WINTER CALENDAR

Jan. 13 - US EPA Public Hearing on MICHINDOH Sole Source Aquifer, 8-9:30 pm, *New Era Auditorium*

Jan. 28 - Bryan Chamber of Commerce Banquet, *Orchard Hills Country Club*

March 30 - Business & Industry Show, 11 am-7 pm, *Bryan Middle School*

BMU customers \$ave

20%

on a
programmable thermostat



Save money by installing a programmable thermostat. Save even more money by clipping this coupon and redeeming it at Town and Country, 1210 E. High St., or Donaldson's ACE, 421 N. Union St., Bryan.

**Offer ends February 28, 2010*

Are you ready for winter storms?

Making sure the power is on when you need it is a year-round priority at BMU. Each year the electric crew inspects nearly 30 miles of distribution line and 24 miles of high-voltage transmission lines to spot and correct potential problems before they happen. Preventative maintenance is performed constantly on lines, poles, substations and transformers to ensure system reliability.

Nevertheless, weather conditions such as high winds or snow and ice storms can cause service interruptions.

If power lines fall, stay away. Call BMU at 419-633-6100 or 419-633-6150 after hours. Be prepared for winter storms. Every home should have a storm kit. The following items should be included:

- **Flashlights**
- **Extra batteries**
- **Portable, battery-powered radio**
- **Manual can opener**
- **A supply of non-perishable foods**
- **Bottled water**
- **Candles and matches**
- **Cell phone**



Shut everything off except one light. This makes it easier for BMU to restore power and for you to know immediately when service is back on. You will also want to know how to manually open and close any electric garage doors, security doors, or gates. Have surge protectors on important electrical equipment such as computers, DVD players, and televisions.

During cold weather, keep warm safely. Put on extra clothes or wrap up in blankets. Do not rely on gas stoves, kerosene space heaters, grills or other open-flame heat sources. Deadly carbon monoxide gas, which is odorless and invisible, may build up in your home without you realizing it.

BMU maintains a list of customers on medical or life support. We use this list to prioritize repairs in cases of emergency. However, this list does not guarantee uninterrupted service or immediate service restoration in the event of an outage. Those in this situation should plan for contingency measures such as back-up generators, an alternate power source, or evacuation to another location. Nor does this list prevent services from being shut off for non-payment.

Call BMU at 419-633-6100 to report an outage. After hours, please call 419-633-6150.



New energy efficient T-8 lamps in the communications warehouse.

Energy efficient lights pay back

Last year, Bryan Municipal Utilities initiated an energy efficiency project in its facilities with installation of motion sensitive T-8 lights in the electric warehouse. The new T-8 lamps put out more light than the old lamps and use about one third the energy. The addition of occupancy sensors reduced the burn time, and the energy savings paid for the new lights in 16 months.

With the success of that project, the utility is now installing T-8 lights with occupancy sensors in the water and communications warehouses, the electric storage warehouse, and the main office building. Additional induction and LED lights are planned for the outside facility lamps. Electric Superintendent Brian Carlin said the utility will monitor the performance of the new lights to see if the technology would be appropriate in other parts of the city.

The Bryan Electric Department is also planning a much larger lighting project – replacing about 1,300 streetlights with more energy efficient technology. “We are currently using conventional high-pressure sodium bulbs with a five-year life expectancy,” said Carlin. “The new technology is induction lighting. It has a white light, generates very little heat, and has a life expectancy of 21 years with 30 to 40 percent reduction in energy use.”

Read more at www.cityofbryan.net/NewsReleases.asp

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A: If your pipes freeze despite these precautions, do not try to thaw them with a torch. Call a licensed plumber or the Bryan Water Department, 419-633-6100 during regular business hours or 419-633-6150 after hours, if you are not sure what to do. Residents should know where the main shut-off valve is located. The Bryan Water Department cannot work on your private service line or plumbing, but we can confirm that the service line to your property is thawed.