



## **MEMBER ALERT**

### **Water Damage Due to Freezing**

Many JPA member districts experience water damage during the winter because of freezing conditions. The purpose of this Update is to provide you with some quick tips and reminders to help prevent your district from becoming a victim of the freezing months.

When the temperature falls below 30°F, especially if it falls below 30°F for several days in a row, the following recommendations will help reduce water damage losses. Additionally, it would be prudent for you to have a designated person check buildings for water damage after a weekend, a holiday, or when a facility is closed for other reasons for an extended period of time.

#### **OUTSIDE AREAS**

Large Plumbing Areas: Examples of large plumbing areas are water mains, water pumps, and landscape sprinkler controls. They should be boxed or framed and filled with sawdust or a non-compacted insulation.

Exterior Water Lines: Exterior water lines that serve drinking fountains and evaporative cooler should have insulation where feasible or should be shut off.

#### **INSIDE AREAS**

Attic Areas: Even though the building may have good insulation, many times the plumbing runs above the insulation. For buildings or rooms that fall into this category, there are two alternatives. You can either insulate the pipe or keep the heat on at a reduced temperature, but high enough to keep the pipes from freezing.

Walls of Older Buildings: Many times the water pipes are located in the walls but the walls have never been insulated. In these cases, keep the heat on at a reduced temperature, but high enough to keep the pipes from freezing. This will also help protect uninsulated pipes located in the attic.

#### ***Tips to Prevent Frozen Pipes***

- Insulate all exposed pipes.
- Set heat no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Open cabinet doors under sinks.
- Disconnect garden hoses.

Once a pipe ruptures, extensive water damage can occur in a very short amount of time. A little extra effort along with the minimal expense of insulation can go a long way in protecting the district's buildings and property.

## **The JPA/SISC recommends taking the following mitigation measures prior to the winter season**

- Inspect your buildings
- Remove leaves and debris from gutters
- Clear storm drains
- Trim trees and shrubbery
- Remove all damaged branches
- Identify the low spots on your campuses and prepare sump pumps for delivery of this water to the closest drain
- Identify staffing needs for when a severe storm hits your area
- Understand your municipalities sewer cleaning program to be certain those needs have been addressed in your immediate area
- Be prepared to move valuables to a higher area
- Be prepared to move hazardous materials to a higher area (such as paint, oil, pesticides and cleaning supplies)
- Be prepared to secure loose outdoor items such as tables and trash cans
- Have sand bags and tarps available
- Have plywood for broken windows and fences available

## **FEMA**

California is located within Region IX of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). An excellent resource to review is the information that can be located at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) related to severe weather preparedness and post event measures.

Please contact Olivia Humilde of FEMA's Region IX office at (510) 627-7068 or Mary Simms at (510) 627-7006, in the event you have any specific questions concerning the recommendations and suggestions found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

If you have any questions, please contact Norma Wallace at (209) 536-2035.