



Don't let frozen pipes ruin your winter

Christmas is always an expensive time of year so the last thing hard-pressed households need is the added cost of repairing a frozen or burst water pipe.

New research from United Utilities has revealed that a third of North West families could not afford to fix a burst pipe this winter, while one in fifty people say they'd need to cancel Christmas.

The average repair bill for a frozen or burst household pipe is estimated at £525. It's an added expense that few households can afford, which is why United Utilities is encouraging customers to take some simple precautions around the home to prevent a bleak midwinter.

Lagging your pipes, especially the ones in cold places such as the loft or garage, could make all the difference between a very Merry Christmas and a winter of financial woes.

Sally Ainsworth, United Utilities' head of customer experience said: "The thought of so many people suffering the stress of burst pipes over winter makes us shudder, especially when it can be avoided with a bit of planning.

"It's really easy to protect your pipes, providing peace of mind and preventing an unexpected hole in your finances."

Beat the freeze, by getting your home wrapped up!

With a bit of forward planning, you can avoid the expense and mess of frozen or burst pipes.

Here are four top tips:

- 1 Keep your pipes toasty by wrapping them in lagging. Pay extra attention to the pipes in cold places such as the garage or loft.
- 2 Find your stop tap, just in case you get a burst pipe and need to switch the water off quickly. Hint: it's usually under the sink.
- 3 Keep the central heating on low to prevent your pipes from freezing. Time it to come on if you're away over Christmas.
- 4 Have the name of a plumber handy in case the worst happens. You can find your nearest qualified knight in shining overalls at www.watersafe.org.uk

For more advice on keeping pipes warm and freeze-free this winter visit unitedutilities.com/winterwise

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