



# Village of Bald Head Island

## Utilities Department

### Recommendations to Preclude Water Loss/Damage

The Utilities Department believes, in most cases, water damage to the homes and high water bills can be avoided.

Listed below are incidents we have discovered over the years followed by recommendations to help our customers avoid these issues.

- **Incident:** Some homeowners are using the water meter disconnect valve to isolate their home for various reasons. **Recommendations:** *The homeowner/property managers are not authorized to use this valve unless it is for an emergency shutoff. The meter disconnect valve is to be operated by the Utilities personnel. This valve is intended for service disconnects due to non-payment, just cause, or at the request of the homeowner/property managers (a small reconnect fee will apply).*
- **Incident:** Homeowners or Property Managers, not knowing “where” the home isolation valve is located. **Recommendations:** *The Utilities Department recommends a good quality isolation valve be installed behind the customer side of the water service meter. The valve should be placed inside a separate valve box with a cover to prevent freezing. This valve can then be used at the homeowner or property manager’s discretion.*
- **Incident:** Homeowners not shutting off the water supply to their home when leaving the island for extended periods. **Recommendations:** *Shutoff the water supply to the home and cut off the breaker to the hot water heaters. This should be done every time the house will be vacant for even a week or more. I would also recommend when vacating a home during winter months that the heat be left on at the lowest setting.*
- **Incident:** Home not properly winterizing when vacant for an extended periods during the winter months (Without heat). **Recommendations:** *Shutoff the water supply to the home. Locate and open all outside hose spigots. Shutoff and drain all hot water heaters. Then proceed to flush all toilets and open all faucets (hot and cold) starting from the highest elevation and working to the lowest. When draining is complete, close all faucets and outside spigots. Visually check the leak indicator to insure that your shutoff valve is working properly. The “leak indicator” is a small red triangle located on the water service meter, any movement of the red triangle would indicate water by-passing your shutoff valve and this void the winterization process. With no water movement noted, complete the process by adding “environmentally friendly” anti-freeze to the toilet bowls and sink traps.*
- **Incident:** Water lost due to freezing pipes to the fire suppression “check valve assembly” (most are located in unheated garage areas). **Recommendations:** *Insulate or install heat strips to exposed water piping on the supply side of the check valve. **Note;** most fire suppression systems are serviced with anti-freeze but this will not protect the water*

*supply to the check valve assembly. Please call Utilities if additional information is needed.*

- **Incident:** Water supply to the homes froze while the home was occupied. In most cases the water supply line froze at the point between where the water exits the ground and then enters the home. **Recommendations:** *The pipe insulation for the above mentioned area should start 10” below ground and proceed until the home insulation takes over. We also recommend during very cold freezing weather especially when the wind can blow directly on the supply line that you flow a small stream of water from one faucet to prevent the home supply line from freezing.*
- **Incident:** Outside shower supply line froze causing damage and water lost. **Recommendations:** *An outside shower is not needed during the winter months. Install a separate isolation valve and insulate the water supply to the valve and turn off valve during the winter.*
- **Incident:** Outside hose spigot damaged by the freezing temperature. **Recommendations:** *The only spigots found damage was due to garden hoses connected with spray nozzles attached. Remember to disconnect all garden hoses when not in use, especially during the winter months.*
- **Incident:** The majority of high water bills are due to leaking toilet valve assemblies or poorly maintained irrigation systems. **Recommendations:** *Toilets can be checked by listening for water movement and/or by adding a food coloring to the toilet flush water tank. A few minutes after adding the food coloring, visually check to see if the color appears in the bowl, if it does a repair is required. Irrigation systems should be checked periodically to insure that the spray heads are intact and in good order. Also check the irrigation controller/timers to insure it is set and functioning properly. The solenoid valves can be checked to insure they are closing fully by visually checking the leak indicator to see if any water is going through the meter (even very small amounts can be detected).*

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