



FROZEN PIPE FIASCO: ONE IN FOUR HOMES SET TO FACE FROZEN PIPES THIS JANUARY

- Frozen pipes are predicted to leave around three million homes without heating or hot water this month¹
- Yet 34% of households put off fixing the issue, risking further damage to their homes
- HomeServe urges preventative action to avoid a potential £1.45 billion repair bill²

Nearly one in four households (24%) will have to deal with frozen pipes this January, as icy temperatures grip the nation.

The new data from Home Assistance provider, [HomeServe](#) reveals that frozen pipes could leave almost a third (31%) of homes without heating and 29% without hot water – the top reported problems related to frozen pipes, and often one of the first signs of the issue. Households also report burst pipes inside (23%) and outside the home (21%) as well as bothersome noises (8%).

This aligns with data from HomeServe's homeowner survey, which revealed that of those who experience a frozen pipe (which leaks or bursts as a result), 70% of them incur such a problem during the winter months (December - February).³

The research shows that frozen pipes can send a chill down any homeowner's spine, costing an average of £213.40 to repair. An alarming one in seven (15%) had to shell out a hefty £500 or more the last time their pipes fell victim to the freezing temperatures, making this issue a costly household headache.

¹ According to the [ONS](#) there are 28.2 million households in the UK. According to a nationally representative survey of 2,000 adults, 24% (6.8 million) report having had frozen pipes. Of those affected 47% say the result has been no heating or hot water, equating to 3.2 million.

² According to research commissioned by Opinium, on behalf of HomeServe, research estimates that the average homeowner with a frozen pipe spends £213.40 to have it fixed – totalling £1.45 billion for the 6.8 million households affected by frozen pipes.

³ According to HomeServe's Annual Market Sizing report, conducted February 2023.

Given the hefty costs, it's perhaps no surprise that of those who have experienced frozen pipes, a third (34%) have delayed getting it fixed. Meanwhile, 3% of those with a frozen pipe never got it fixed, risking permanent damage to their home.

However, the good news is that these issues are often preventable, and homeowners can potentially spare themselves from big bills and further home damage, by following some simple tips.

1. **Insulate exposed pipes:** Wrap pipes in insulation to shield them from cold temperatures. The pipes most at risk of freezing are located outside of the heated fabric of the building e.g. in the roof space or under the floor.
2. **Seal leaks and cracks:** Identify and seal any gaps in walls, windows, or doors to prevent cold air from infiltrating and affecting pipes.
3. **Maintain heating:** Ensure your home's heating system is in optimal condition, and set it to a consistent temperature, especially during night-time.
4. **Disconnect outdoor hoses:** Disconnect and store outdoor hoses and shut off the water supply to outdoor taps to prevent water from freezing in the pipes. Half open the tap to allow any sitting residue of water to expand its way through the pipe and out of the tap if it begins to freeze.
5. **Emergency shut-off knowledge:** Familiarise yourself with the location of the main water shut-off valve in case of emergencies.
6. **Maintain your taps:** It is vital to replace washers in dripping taps. Slow running water entering a waste pipe has the potential to freeze, especially if the waste pipe runs external to the property.
7. **Check your condensate pipe:** A condensate pipe carries condensation from your boiler to your outside drain. It's usually a white or grey plastic pipe that travels from your boiler through the wall directly outside where your boiler is located. During cold weather, the condensation in this pipe may freeze and cause a blockage causing the condensation to back up into the boiler and cause it to shut down. If your boiler has stopped working, your condensate pipe could need defrosting. Visit [here](#) for more information on how to solve the issue.

Liam Sharkey, Home Expert at [HomeServe](#), says: *“By implementing these measures, homeowners can help fortify their properties against freezing temperatures and avoid the potential nuisance of frozen pipes this winter. Ultimately, it’s important not to put off essential maintenance tasks; taking proactive steps now can save you from the inconvenience and costly repairs associated with frozen pipes later.”*

For more information and tips to keep pipes from freezing in the winter, please visit [here](#)

Notes to editors:

About the research

Unless otherwise stated, Opinium commissioned research amongst 2,000 UK adults (18+) in December 2023.

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A little bit about HomeServe

As one of the country’s leading home assistance providers, HomeServe has 30 years’ experience looking after UK homes. From plumbing, drainage, boiler, heating, or electrics cover to new boilers and one-off repairs, they’re always looking for ways to bring you better care for your home, through their range of products and services. With a nationwide network of Home Experts and a claims line that’s open 24/7, 365 days a year, you can count on us to be there when it matters most.

Diversity and inclusion

HomeServe is proud to promote equality and inclusion through all their partnerships, including Business in the Community, Stonewall, Race at Work Charter and the Business Disability Forum. In recognition of these efforts, they’ve become a signatory of the Race at Work Charter, voted Best Place to Work for Women 2020, achieved accreditation to become a Disability Confident Committed employer and are now ranked in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. In 2021, HomeServe also earned a place on the list of European Great Places to Work.

To find out more, visit homeserve.co.uk. HomeServe - we’re on our way.