



**Township of Southgate**

# Dundalk Frozen Water

## By-law 07-2016

By-law 07-2016 passed by Southgate Council on the 25 day of  
January, 2016

**The Corporation of the Township of Southgate**

**By-law 07-2016**

Being a by-law to outline the roles and responsibilities of property owners and the Township of Southgate in cases where the water service line freezes between a building and the water main in the Village of Dundalk.

**Whereas** under sections 8,9 and 11 of the Municipal Act, 2001 as amended, authorize the Council of a Municipality to pass by-laws.

**And Whereas** under section 11 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, a municipality may pass by-laws respecting matters within the sphere of jurisdiction of Public Utilities, which includes a system that is used to provide water services for the public;

**And Whereas** section 9(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides that section 11 shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on municipalities to enable them to govern their affairs as they consider appropriate and to enhance their ability to respond to municipal issues;

**Therefore** the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the Township of Southgate enacts as follows:

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Frozen Water By-law is to prevent and manage interruptions to the supply of municipal water caused by the freezing of water service between privately owned buildings or residences and the water distribution piping owned by the municipality, so that customers maintain reliable and continuous access to water.

## 2. Definitions

**Curb Stop** - this is the isolation valve located at or near the property line and is the point where the municipal responsibility stops and the customer responsibility starts

**Customer** – any residence who has an active water and/or wastewater account with the Township of Southgate

**Non-potable** – usable for non-consumption use (for example, water which can be used for toilet flushing, but not for drinking or cooking)

**Potable** – useable for all consumption uses (for example, water which can be used for drinking and cooking)

**Temporary Service Line** – a temporary supply of water to a Customer who is without water

**Temporary Water Service Donor** – a Customer with an active water supply who provides a Temporary Water Service to a neighbour through a Temporary Water Service Line connected to the donating Customers' own water pipes

**Water Pipe** – any pipe, main, plumbing, hose or apparatus through which water from the Township is provided to customers

**Water Services** – the Township's water services, including all applicable managers, employees and contractors

## 3. Property Owner Responsibilities

**The owner of any commercial, industrial, institutional or residential building shall:**

1. Be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the water service line between the building and the curb stop. All water services between the water main and the curb stop shut-off valve are considered Municipal property. All water services inside the curb stop shut-off valve are considered private property.
2. Maintain adequate heat to premise plumbing to prevent service line freezing.

3. Promptly report any actual or suspected frozen service issues to the municipality.
4. Permit safe access to their property by municipal staff should services be requested to address frozen service issues.
5. Follow instructions and communications provided by the municipality to prevent a water freeze or the reoccurrence of a water freeze.
6. If requested, continuously run water to ensure that your residence has running water and ensure that your plumbing and drains are able to accommodate continuous, unattended running water.
7. Run your water from only one cold water tap with a flow of around a ½ inch in diameter, which is approximately 1 cup of water in 10 seconds.
8. Be responsible to pay for the time and materials that were provided to that specific residence for frozen water services if the owner failed to continually run water and the residence is found not to be running water from data collected through water meter technology.
9. Assumes all responsibility for damages caused as the result of continually running water.
10. Advise the Public Works Department to temporarily shut off the water services if the property will be vacant for the winter months. For those residents leaving their property vacant for an extended period of time during the winter months, have someone check the house daily during cold weather to ensure water services are functioning properly.
11. Continuously monitor television news, radio news, the Township of Southgate website and/or Facebook for reports on the status of frozen water services.

#### **4. Frozen Water at your Home or Business**

**The following procedure will be applied to address issues due to frozen water service:**

1. Within 24 hours of receipt of notification of a frozen water service the municipality will visit the property and/or contact the customer.
2. Municipal staff will make recommendations to the property owner and document these on a site specific basis.
3. Such recommendations may require the customer to contact a plumber if the frozen water service is a result of conditions or circumstances on private property. In such cases, the cost will be borne by the customer.
4. If it is determined that municipal piping contributed to the water freeze, arrangements will be made to attempt to thaw the frozen water service at no cost to the customer. Regardless of responsibility, where services are unable to be thawed by mechanical equipment, the municipality will attempt to make arrangements to install a Temporary Service Line from a neighbouring property or hydrant at no cost to the customer.

5. The municipality will make every effort to assist the property owner, but reserves the right to not install a Temporary Service Line should field conditions not support it or it is not technically feasible. Where property owner(s) arrange for Temporary Service Line(s) as a result of a frozen water service that is not attributed to municipal piping, it will be the customers responsibility to notify the municipality to take meter readings for the purposes of providing water billing adjustments to the supplier of the water.
6. If the temporary water line freezes after the Township has installed the Temporary Service Line and the Township has advised the property owner to continuously run water, the cost for thawing the Temporary Service Line will be the responsibility of the customer for time and materials if it is determined the property owner did not run water continuously.
7. If the Public Works Manager or Lead Hand for the Township of Southgate have advised a property owner to continuously run their water and the property owner chooses not to do so, the property owner will be responsible for covering all costs incurred if the water services freeze, even if the frozen section occurs in pipes that are on Municipal property.
8. Each customer is required to be a Temporary Water Service Donor if the circumstances arise.
9. Hose connections are not considered to have potable drinking water. However the municipality will have bottled water available at the Dundalk Community Centre and Arena located at 550 Main Street East. Shower facilities are also available at the community centre if required.

## **5. Water Service Billing Adjustments**

### **The following procedures will be applied to customers affected by frozen water service:**

1. Customers that have been instructed by circulation of door-to-door notice to run water to prevent frozen water services are based upon a predetermined historical list of properties (potential frozen water services list) that have shallow water service and potential water freeze up on municipal property will have their water/sewage billings adjusted based on average historical consumption from previous billing periods. Customers are selected based upon a predetermined historical list of properties (potential frozen water services list)
2. Where it has been determined that the frozen water service is a result of frozen municipal piping, customers requested to run water will have their water/sewage billings adjusted based on the average historical consumption for previous billing periods.
3. The Basic Flat fee for water/sewage billings will apply to all properties, regardless of whether they receive a Temporary Service line of water or not.
4. The Municipality will not be responsible for the payment of home based energy costs for customers instructed to, or voluntarily applying heat to exposed plumbing to solve or prevent water freezing.

5. Customers who have supplied water through a Temporary Service Line to a neighbouring property will have their water/sewage billings adjusted based on the average historical consumption from previous billing periods.
6. Customers being supplied with water through a Temporary Service Line from a neighbouring property will have their water/sewage billings adjusted based on the average historical consumption from previous billing periods.

## **6. Steps to Thaw a Frozen Pipe**

1. If you have a history of frozen pipes, or your water is currently frozen, turn on a tap in the basement, preferably the cold water faucet in the laundry room or the closest cold water faucet.
2. Use a blow dryer, electric blanket, heating pad or small heater to warm the suspected frozen pipe for one or two hours. If using a blow dryer, do not leave it unattended. It is the home owners responsibility when using any of these methods to thaw your water pipes safely while operating at your own risk.
3. Place a warm towel or rag around the suspected frozen pipe.
4. You may also use a portable heater with caution, especially around flammable materials.
5. Depending on the outside temperature and the extent of freezing within the pipe, the thawing process could take between one to six hours.
6. If these steps do not resolve the problem, contact a licenced plumber.

After thawing the pipes, keep the pipes warm. If the pipes have frozen already they are susceptible to freezing again. Keep this area warm by opening the basement, cellar or cupboard door, by insulating the pipe and take action to prevent freezing in future years.

## **7. Township Responsibilities**

If it is determined that water piping is frozen on the Township side of the curb stop, the Township will excavate at the curb stop and begin thawing procedures from the curb stop out to the water main.

## **8. Effective Date**

This by-law comes into force and effect on the date it is passed.

**Read** a first, second and third time and finally passed this \_\_\_\_\_<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2016.

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Anna-Marie Fosbrooke, Mayor

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Raylene Martell, Clerk

## **"Appendix A"**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. What can I do to prevent my water service from freezing?**

Always ensure that internal plumbing is protected from drafts and cold temperatures. If you have pipes on the interior side of exterior walls in cabinets leave the doors open to circulate warm air. Insulate pipes that are susceptible to freezing with foam covers which can be purchased at most hardware stores.

#### **2. I think my water service is frozen, what do I do?**

First determine if it is your indoor plumbing that has frozen. Try running cold water taps throughout your home. If more than one has running water while the others don't, your issue is likely internal. You should call a plumber.

#### **3. What can I do if my household pipes freeze?**

If your pipes are located in an unheated basement use a portable heater to warm the area where your water comes into the house with a cold water tap running. If you find the heater isn't thawing the pipes you will be responsible for contacting a plumber.

#### **4. What can I do to protect myself from frozen water service?**

Ensure that your pipes are insulated and are warm when coming into the house.

#### **5. Can I drink water from my temporary line?**

No, water is considered non-potable. Bottled water is available for residents at the Dundalk Community Centre and Arena who are affected with frozen water services.

#### **6. How long will it take to fix my water service?**

It could take until mid-April for regular water service to be restored as the ground around the water service line must thaw out in order for water to start running again.