

## Winter in Colchester

Now that the air is cold, certain care needs to be taken with your water pipes and water meter. They should be protected from cold drafts and outside air. This can be accomplished by checking for missing insulation and gaps in wall board etc. If the temperature is still not reliably above 40 F then efforts should be taken to wrap the piping in "heat tape" or provide a proper heat source. Broken pipes can cause large amounts of damage to your property, as well as increasing your water bill. Frozen meters need to be replaced and are costly as well.

## Increasing Water Usage

During this time of increased costs for everyone, it's never been more important to conserve water. Toilets are the biggest source of leakage in a home, using 250 gallons or more per day (23,000 gallons per quarter)! The leakage can be nearly silent, causing large amounts of loss before discovery. For less than \$15 in parts the internals of a toilet can be completely replaced. Almost everyone can do it with a short video online. The Water Department also has toilet leak tablets for no cost. Add these tablets to the tank of the toilet, if any die presents in the bowl, the flapper valve is leaking and needs to be replaced.

Another method of reducing water usage is to keep a diary. Track every use of water for a typical weekday and weekend day and then use this handy table to create a usage amount. <https://water.usgs.gov/edu/activity-percapita.php>. It can be eye-opening to see how much water can be used in a day.