

Schedule Your Spring Projects

Now is the time to plan/schedule your spring and summer building and renovation projects. While we spend more time inside during these cold winter days our attention can be focused on the improvements to our home we have been putting off.

That new kitchen, bath, or addition is only a few simple steps away from becoming reality! Call us for a no obligation consultation.

Ice Dams Explained

An ice dam (figure 1) is a ridge of ice that forms at the edge of a roof and prevents melting snow (water) from draining off the roof. The water that backs up behind the dam can leak into a home and cause damage to walls, ceilings, insulation, and other areas.

There is a complex interaction among the amount of heat loss from a house, snow cover, and outside temperatures that leads to ice dam formation. For ice dams to form there must be snow on the roof, and at the same time, higher portions of the roof's outside surface must be above 32 degrees while lower surfaces are below 32 degrees. For a portion of the roof to be below 32 degrees, outside air temperature must also be below 32 degrees.

The snow on a roof surface above 32 degrees will melt. As the water flows down the roof it reaches the portion of the roof that is below 32 degrees and freezes, voila! – an ice dam.

The dam grows as it is fed by the melting snow above it, but will limit itself to the portions of the roof that are on the average below 32 degrees. So the water above backs up behind the ice dam and remains a liquid. This water finds cracks and openings in the exterior roof covering and flows into the attic or exterior wall space

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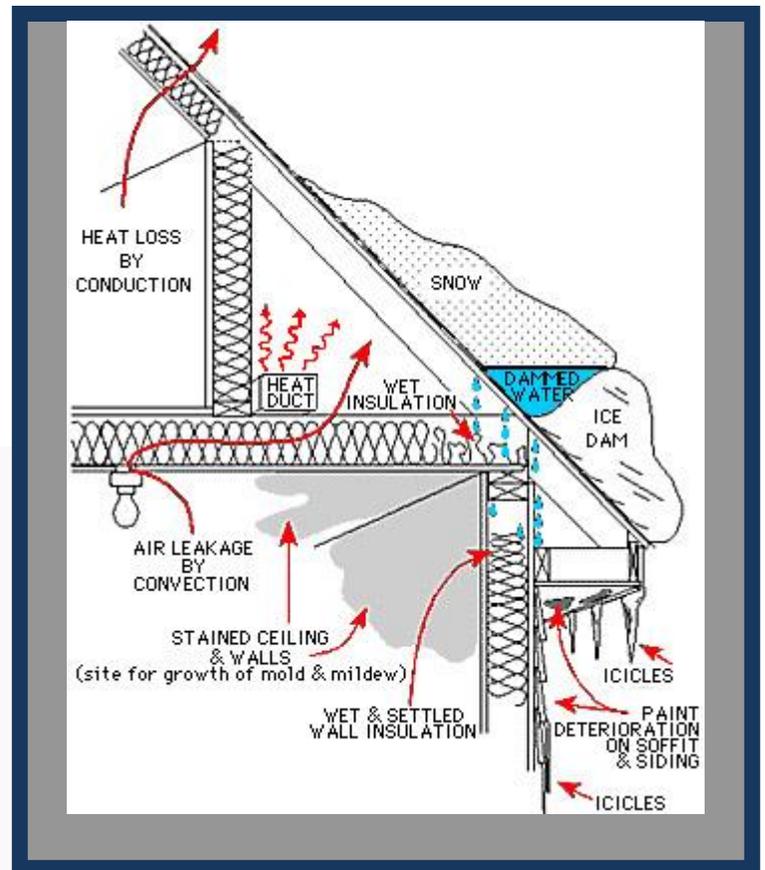


Figure 1 :Cross Section of an Ice Dam

Just because you have ice damming does not mean you will have roof leaks. If your roof was installed properly with an Ice & water barrier installed from the roof's edge up to 3-4 feet then it is unlikely the water backed up from an ice dam will leak inside your home. The ice dammed water will still try to get in but be prevented by the ice & water barrier. These barriers are installed during the roof installation process and are recommended in areas where ice damming is common.

If no ice & water barrier was installed, or your roof is older prior to this becoming common practice, then replacing the lower roof edge material is the only solution to prevent ice dam water entry.

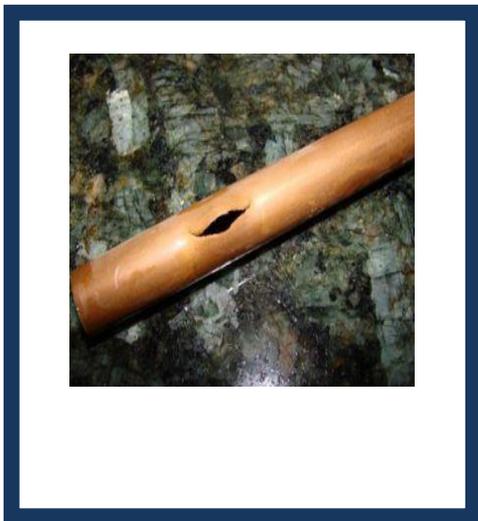
Frozen Pipes

Damages Caused by Frozen Pipes

When water freezes it expands. That expansion can create tremendous pressure, enough to crack the copper or other metal pipes you may have in your house. The resulting water damage can be equally tremendous. Wet sheet rock or plaster walls can collapse, wood flooring will warp, painted surfaces ruined, electrical fixtures shorting out, are just a few results of water flooding into interior spaces. The damage can also result in future mold problems due to wet insulation and interior wall cavities that remain moist.

Ways to Stop Pipes from Freezing

- First and foremost know where the main water shut off is for your home. If a pipe break happens the sooner the water is shut off the likelihood of stopping major damage is increased.
- Drain outside hose bibs and faucets before the weather gets cold. Most exterior water supplies have interior shut offs. Once closed inside open the outside faucet to drain any remaining water. Reverse this process in the spring to activate your outside water again.
- Keep outside doors closed especially garage doors which can bring in freezing air to pipes nearby or in garage ceilings.
- Protect all exposed pipes in your crawl spaces or any other exposed areas with pipe insulation. Install heating cables on pipes you can't fully protect. Most heat cables will automatically turn on when the temperature drops below a certain point if plugged in.
- For bathrooms and kitchens that have pipes on outside walls of your house keep sink cabinets open to allow warm air to circulate on very cold days and nights. If you have trouble areas leave the faucet dripping slowly as this slight movement of water can prevent solid freezing.
- For faucets where water has stopped flowing you can try warming the pipes with an electric hair dryer to see if you can get the water flowing again.



This small break caused over \$50,000 worth of water damage in just 15 minutes!

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NEEDS**

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