



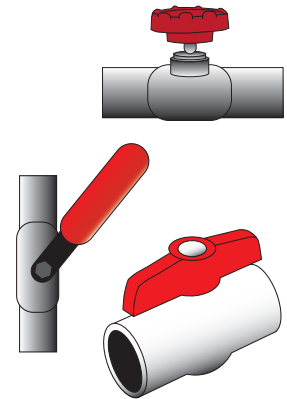
# PREVENTIVE PLUMBING TIPS FOR NEW HOMEOWNERS

It's surprising how often we meet homeowners who don't know one or more of these simple steps. Learning about them can help protect you from water damage and expensive repairs.

## IDENTIFY YOUR MAIN WATER SHUTOFF VALVE

Take a few minutes to identify the main water shutoff valve for your new home, and make sure it works properly. It is remarkable how often homeowners call us with a plumbing emergency and we have to help them over the phone to locate and turn off their water to prevent further damage until we can arrive to fix the problem.

If you are unsure where to look, the simplest method is to follow the cold water line from your water heater back to where the water line enters the house. As you can see from the illustration, the type of valve may vary, but usually the closest valve to the wall will be the main valve.



## ALWAYS REMOVE HOSES FROM SPIGOTS IN WINTER

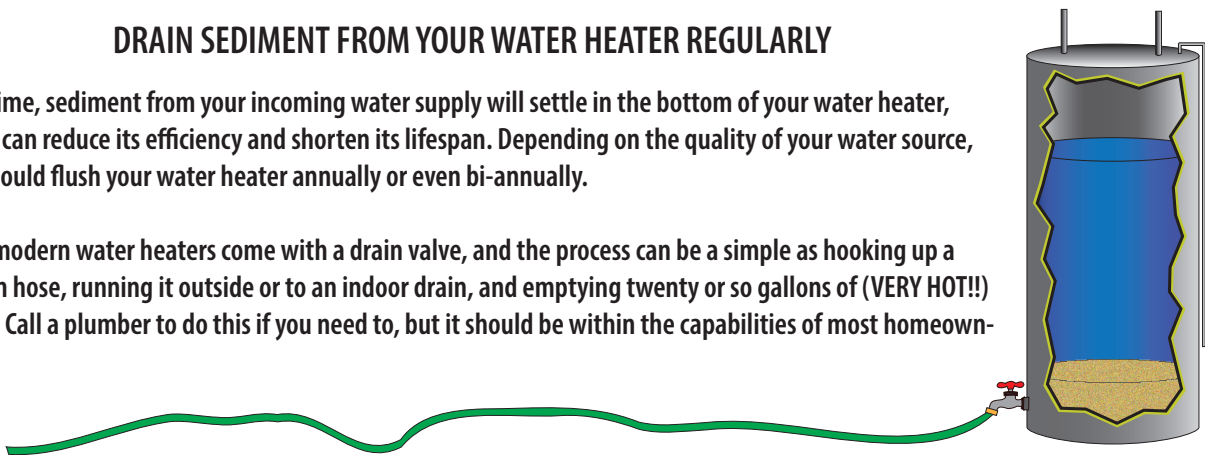
The majority of calls we get for frozen and burst pipes are caused by homeowners leaving hoses full of water hooked up to their outdoor hose bibbs (spigots) when the temperature drops. Even if you have turned off water to the spigot inside the house, if there is still water in line it can freeze and burst.

Even if you have a "frost proof" hose bibb, it's critical to insure that all the water has been allowed to drain out, otherwise water will still be in the fixture and can freeze and break it. The simplest way to ensure water has been drained is to remove all hoses for the winter months.

## DRAIN SEDIMENT FROM YOUR WATER HEATER REGULARLY

Over time, sediment from your incoming water supply will settle in the bottom of your water heater, which can reduce its efficiency and shorten its lifespan. Depending on the quality of your water source, you should flush your water heater annually or even bi-annually.

Most modern water heaters come with a drain valve, and the process can be a simple as hooking up a garden hose, running it outside or to an indoor drain, and emptying twenty or so gallons of (VERY HOT!!) water. Call a plumber to do this if you need to, but it should be within the capabilities of most homeowners.



NEED PROFESSIONAL PLUMBING HELP? Call [Service Force Plumbing](tel:3013708320) at (301) 370-8320.

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