



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **TVF&R Reminds Public to Prepare for Winter Weather**

Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue firefighters are recovering from a busy week dealing with broken water pipes across the District. In the past seven days, firefighters responded to 130 calls for service because of water problems at homes and businesses.

Of the calls for service, 73 were in Beaverton, 11 in Sherwood, 35 in the Tigard and Tualatin area, 9 in West Linn and 2 were in Wilsonville. At one point, TVF&R utilized reverse 911 technology at the Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency to advise residents in an Aloha subdivision to check their pipes after TVF&R responded to several calls for service in the same area.

"Now that the temperatures are back above freezing, this is a great time to educate yourself about how to shut off the water in your home," says TVF&R Communications Officer Brian Barker, "this can happen to anyone, and many homeowners suffer thousands of dollars in damage because they don't know how to stop the water from flowing."

The Tualatin Valley Water District has step by step instructions for shutting off water to a building. You can find those instructions here: <http://www.tvwd.org/resources--outreach/shut-off-your-water.aspx>

"In the case of a broken pipe, shut off the water valve and contact a plumber or water restoration company," Barker says, "During region-wide weather events, fire departments must prioritize their response to life safety incidents. Knowing how to immediately shut off your water and calling a professional can prevent significant damage to your home."

This is also a good time to prepare yourself for power outages and other problems that happen during the winter months. TVF&R advises that you take the following preventative measures:

- Gather necessary supplies for your family including flashlights, extra batteries, water, food, blankets, cell phone (vehicle) charger, manual can opener, battery-operated clock, etc. Stock up on food and water, as well as necessary medications.
- Candles are a fire hazard – use only flashlights, battery-operated lanterns, and light sticks as emergency lighting in your home.
- Prepare your vehicle. Inspect and change fluids (oil, antifreeze, wiper washer, etc.) and ensure your tire tread and brakes are in good working order. Keep your fuel tank at least half-filled and have emergency supplies (flares, blanket, water, cell phone) on hand in case you're stranded. Avoid driving when roads are treacherous.

- Never use outdoor equipment including propane or kerosene heaters or charcoal barbecues inside a home due to the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. CO is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas that claims hundreds of lives every year.
- Gas-fueled generators must be used outside in a well-ventilated area to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully before using a generator.