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**ELECTRIC
DISTRICT HEAT
WATER
WASTEWATER
SOLID WASTE**

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for immediate release

**Jamestown BPU Water Department Alerts Public regarding
Frozen Water Pipes and Services, *Numbers to Call***

The Jamestown Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Water Department, facing more frozen water services to homes and businesses than ever, alerts water customers to help prevent going without water for an extended period of time.

According to Water Division engineers, the Water Department is finding frost 50 inches or 4' 2" below ground, the same area where water mains and service lines are buried. In some cases, water lines may be laying in a bed of ice. If the water is not moving all the time, the water in that line will freeze.

When a water line freezes, the frozen water expands and may break the pipe, causing a leak when the line thaws. If the break occurs on the owner's side of the water stop, usually located in the terrace area between the sidewalk and street, the owner is responsible to have the pipe replaced or repaired. These repairs could cost thousands of dollars.

A 1/32 inch stream of water running twenty four hours a day would cost 53 cents a day in Jamestown, a small price to pay for the convenience of having water running in your home and not having to repair a costly leak. Customers are advised to run a small stream especially during extended times of non-use, such as during the night. If a customer chooses not to run the water in the day, they are advised to run the water hard several times throughout the day and night to clear the line of ice build-up.

BPU officials note that, even if air temperatures start to warm, ground temperatures may take several weeks of warm weather before the frost comes out of the ground. The BPU will issue public service announcements to keep customers informed of how deep the frost line is and when it is safe to stop running water.

Interior plumbing also can freeze. It is recommended to be sure all basement windows are closed so that your water pipes are not exposed to cold air. Open cabinets under sinks at night so that warm air may circulate under the sinks where pipes are located against exterior walls of your house.

What to do if your service or pipes freeze?

Should customers find that their water services are frozen, they may call the BPU to be placed on a waiting list to have the line thawed using an electrical current. The owner will be required to sign a damage waiver prior to the Water Department's attempt to thaw the water service. The wait time for this service is approximately three days as of this date, even with two crews working continuously. As a result, customers need to arrange for bottled water for drinking and cooking; and melted snow for flushing toilets. Someone is required to be present at the building when the BPU attempts to thaw a water service.

Some plumbers have equipment to thaw frozen water services for a fee. The plumbers' response times may be less than that of the BPU. The Water Department will thaw a frozen water service at no charge the first time it freezes. After that, the BPU will charge \$100 for each time that crews return to thaw the same service.

Should customers need help to thaw frozen water services or pipes, they may call BPU Customer Service at 661-1660 from 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. weekdays. The number for "after hours" is 661-1640, the utility trouble line.