

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN WATER CONSERVATION

**LIVE OAK, FLA., Jan. 2, 2018** –The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) is urging local residents and business owners to take preventative measures to protect pipes, irrigation systems and even crops as many across the District face freezing temperatures throughout the week.

Weather forecasts are predicting three nights of hard and light freezes (sustained temperatures below 30 degrees Fahrenheit) throughout the District; including the possibility of hail and/or frozen precipitation Tuesday evening through Wednesday afternoon.

If left unprotected, freezing temperatures can cause water pipes and irrigation systems to burst or break as water freezes and expands. These broken systems can cause significant damage to homes and businesses as water melts and leaks when temperatures rise.

“Freezing temperatures not only pose a threat to pipes and water systems, but if leaks occur, they can be a notable source of water loss when added up amongst homes and businesses across our region,” said Hugh Thomas, Executive Director for the District. “Taking precautionary measures now, can save a great deal of headache, and water, later.”

Local farmers also face the risk of loss as temperatures plummet. Hard freezes can wreak havoc on fruit and vegetable crops throughout the region, specifically blueberries and citrus. Similar to dripping faucets to protect pipes, farmers will irrigate crops to protect against frost damage.

“The wise use of water to protect and prevent calamity during a freeze is an important precaution every homeowner, business and farmer should take to prevent unnecessary resource and water loss,” said Thomas.

The following steps are recommended to help prevent frozen pipes and irrigation systems:

- Wrap pipes located in under-insulated or uninsulated areas like attics, crawl spaces, porches or outdoor buildings. Use faucet covers, rags, papers, trash bags or plastic foam.
- Cover vents around the home’s foundation.
- If possible, shut off outside water spigots and drain lines. If a shut off is not available, turn on outdoor faucets and spigots to create a trickle or drip stream. Moving water is less likely to freeze than stagnant water.
- Cover or move plants indoors to protect from frost. Water plants thoroughly as the water acts as an insulator. Remove coverings once the temperatures warm back up.
- Bring pets indoors or ensure adequate protection from the cold with windbreaks and thermal support.

- Insulate and cover well components at land surface, bring water hoses indoors.
- If you have a swimming pool, either drain the circulation system or run the pump motor.
- If pipes freeze, water will not pass through the faucets. Turn off the water at the shut-off valve and call a plumber for help.

The mission of the Suwannee River Water Management District is to protect and manage water resources using science-based solutions to support natural systems and the needs of the public. The District holds true to the belief of water for nature, water for people. Headquartered in Live Oak, Florida, the District serves 15 surrounding north-central Florida counties.

For more information about the District, visit [www.mysuwanneeriver.com](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter, search @SRWMD.

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