



COMMISSION POLICY

Frozen Water Lines

Category: Water	Subcategory: General	Policy Number: 5.1.003
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Section I - Introduction

This policy was developed to be used as a guide by Grand Rapids Public Utilities (GRPU) personnel and to provide GRPU customers the greatest practicable latitude in the use of utilities services consistent with reliable, economical and safe service to all customers. The result of using this policy should be consistent, logical and fair treatment of GRPU customers in regard to water and wastewater discussions.

Section 2 – Policy

~~Upon being notified by a property owner or customer that a water service line is frozen, GRPU will attempt to restore the water service.~~

~~If the customer has plastic or a non-conductible service line then special arrangements will need to be made in order to be able to provide the customer with water. GRPU will work on a solution on a case by case basis.~~

~~If the customer has a conductible service line then GRPU will attempt to thaw the service line. The customer **MUST** be present in order for GRPU to provide the service. For electrical safety reasons, GRPU personnel will be required to enter the residence to assess the electric situation throughout the thawing process. The customer will also need to watch for flowing water during the thawing process.~~

~~GRPU will first attempt to thaw the water service from the public water main to the curb stop on the service line. If thawing this portion of the line restores water service, no charge will be made to the customer. This thawing is allowed one time annually. If additional thawing is required at a later date, see Water and Sewer Ancillary Charges schedule for all applicable costs.~~

~~In the event that thawing between the public water main and the curb stop does not restore water service, then the frozen condition is deemed on the customers portion of the service line, see Jurisdictional Boundaries Policy. In this case, the customer will need to pay for thawing their part of the service line. See Water and Sewer Ancillary Charges schedule for all applicable costs.~~

~~Once a customer's service line has become frozen, it is imperative that the customer maintains a constant flow of water through the line until GRPU notifies the customer that it is no longer necessary. In this case, the customer will be permitted by GRPU to maintain a constant flow of water and no water usage charge above the customer's average monthly bill will be made. For example, the customer will keep running a small stream of water into a sink. This will be coordinated with a GRPU Customer Service Representative.~~

~~Billing will be based on standard GRPU procedures.~~

~~Due to many safety concerns involved with thawing water lines with welding equipment, no new thawing jobs will be started within an hour before dusk, during the night, or before 7:00 am. GRPU personnel need to be able to see what they are doing at all times. During the night, traffic control and traffic can put GRPU employees and GRPU equipment at risk. Additionally, running a generator can disturb the peace of the neighborhood.~~

When a property owner or customer notifies GRPU that a water service line is frozen, GRPU will make every effort to restore water service. This assistance is available seven days a week to ensure prompt service and minimize inconvenience.

Special Considerations for Service Line Materials

In cases where the customer has a plastic or non-conductible service line, standard thawing procedures may not be applicable. Special arrangements will be necessary to restore water service to these customers. GRPU will work with each customer individually to determine the most appropriate solution based on the specific circumstances.

Thawing Conductible Service Lines

For customers with conductible service lines, GRPU will attempt to thaw the service line to restore water flow. The customer MUST be present during the thawing process. GRPU personnel are required to enter the residence to assess electrical safety and monitor the situation. The customer is also responsible for watching for flowing water during the thawing process to ensure successful restoration.

Initial Thawing Procedure

GRPU will first attempt to thaw the water service line that runs from the public water main to the curb stop. If the thawing of this portion successfully restores water service to the customer, there will be no charge for this service. This complimentary thawing service is limited to one occurrence per year for each customer. Should the need for additional thawing arise within the same calendar year, customers are advised to refer to the Ancillary Services and Fees schedule for information regarding all applicable costs.

Responsibility for Thawing Customers Service Line

If thawing the section between the public water main and the curb stop does not restore water service, this indicates that the frozen condition exists on the customer's own portion of the service line. Customers should consult the Jurisdictional Boundaries Policy for

further clarification. In these cases, the responsibility for thawing falls to the customer, who will be required to pay for thawing services. Detailed cost information can be found in the Ancillary Services and Fees schedule.

Maintaining Water Flow After Thawing

After a water line has been thawed, regardless of side of ownership, it is essential to maintain a continuous flow of water through the line until GRPU notifies the customer that this precaution is no longer necessary. GRPU permits customers to maintain this constant flow, and there will be no water usage charge beyond the average monthly bill during this period. For example, customers may be instructed to keep a small stream of water running into a sink. This process will be coordinated directly with a GRPU Customer Service Representative. Billing will follow standard GRPU procedures.

Safety Protocols and Work Hours

Due to numerous safety concerns associated with thawing water lines using welding equipment, GRPU will not initiate new thawing jobs within an hour before dusk, during nighttime hours, or before 7:00 AM. Jobs that started earlier in the day may sometimes continue into the evening. Adequate visibility is necessary for the safety of personnel, and nighttime work poses additional risks such as traffic hazards and disturbance from generators. These precautions are in place to ensure the safety of GRPU staff and minimize disruption to the neighborhood.

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POLICY HISTORY:

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