



St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission

23121 Camden Way, California, MD 20619

Serving our customers since 1964

www.metcom.org

Potable Water Distribution - Wastewater Collection / Treatment

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MEDIA RELEASE for *Immediate Release*

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METROPOLITAN COMMISSION PREPARES FOR APPROACHING WINTER WEATHER

While the area braces for the first winter storm of the season, the Metropolitan Commission is taking necessary steps to prepare for the forecasted weather.

While snowstorms do not necessarily increase the number of water main breaks in our system, road conditions may cause logistical and safety challenges for our field crews. This could mean longer service disruptions than normal in the event of a needed emergency repair.

MetCom is preparing for the storm in the following ways:

- Keeping and maintaining the water distribution system as full as possible during the storm.
- Updating the emergency contact list for our electrical supplier in the event of a power outage at vital facilities.
- Testing and topping off mobile equipment including generators to provide temporary power if an outage occurs.
- Preparing snow removal and salting equipment at key locations.
- Securing contractor support in the event of an extreme weather event.

Should customers encounter water or sewer service issues during the storm they should call our Emergency Call Center at 301.373.5305.

- Please conserve water in the event of a power outage.
- If your property is serviced by a grinder pump and you experience a power outage, conserve water until power is restored. It is normal for the grinder pump to alarm for several minutes once electrical power is restored; however please contact MetCom at 301.373.5305 if the alarm continues.
- In the event weather conditions affect MetCom operations, we will provide updates to local media and post on our website at www.metcom.org and our Facebook page. Status updates will be provided as frequently as we are able to do so.

MetCom does not generally maintain the pipes on private property, however there are steps homeowners can take to lessen the impact on the pipes in their homes during the winter months.

- Tightly close doors and windows to the outside.
- Turn off water to outside faucets.
- Insulate outside walls, pipes and water meters. Consult with your plumber or hardware store about proper materials.
- Consider signing up for our voluntary month-to-month warranty program that includes thawing and frozen pipe coverage offered thru Service Line Warranties of America.

Additionally, be prepared in case of frozen pipes or a longer than normal period of time without water service.

- Do **NOT** use a blow torch to thaw the pipe. Instead try a hair dryer.
- Fill clean containers with MetCom tap water and have extra water on hand. At least one gallon a day per person (more if you have pets).
- Fully charge cell phones and update important contact information.
- Property owners are responsible for their own pipes. If you are unsure if you have a frozen or broken pipe MetCom recommends homeowners call a licensed plumber.



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Created by State law in 1957, METCOM has served parts of St. Mary's County since 1964. METCOM is entirely self-supporting and is not part of St. Mary's County government. METCOM drinking water has always met or exceeded federal standards.