

## Who's Responsible for That? Understanding Your Water Pipes, Mains and Meters Can Save You Time and Money

**K**nowing a little bit about the pipes and valves that transport water to your home or business could save you a lot of time, money and headaches down the road. When things go wrong—a valve springs a leak or a pipe bursts—you need to know who is responsible for repairs.

“We find that we can never over-explain this issue,” said General Manager Jerry Stevens. “Water leaks can quickly reach emergency levels, and delays caused by waiting or calling the wrong entity for help only exacerbate the situation.”

water main and the piping that carries water from the main to their properties. This includes the **tap**, the **service pipe**, the **inlet and outlet valves**, the **curb valve** as well as the integrity of the water meter—protecting it from damage—and **providing access** to meter reading equipment.

### Water Mains and Water Meters

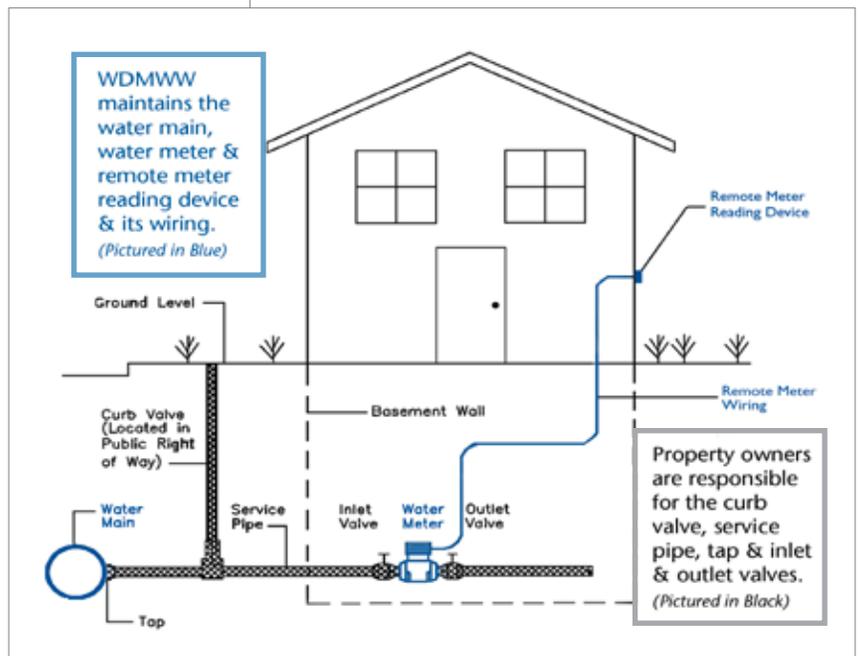
Water mains transport water from the treatment plant on Railroad Avenue and surrounding water

*Water Pipes (continued on page 2)*

### In a Nutshell

West Des Moines Water Works is responsible for maintaining the water mains used to transport water from our treatment plant to the homes and businesses and the meters used to measure usage. This includes **water mains** and **hydrants**, which are usually located in the public right-of-way, as well as **water meters** and remote meter reading devices.

Property owners, on the other hand, are responsible for the connection to the



## What is the Best Temperature for Drinking Water?

**T**here's nothing like an ice cold glass of water on a hot, Iowa summer day. But when the mercury and humidity rise, is ice water the best choice?

In terms of water absorption, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) says that the rate at which fluid leaves the stomach to be absorbed from the intestine into the blood stream relies on a complex interaction of factors. Volume as opposed to temperature has the biggest impact, so the ACSM recommends that fluid temperature be determined according to palatability. In other words, water temperature should be whatever gets

you to drink enough to move the water efficiently into your bloodstream.

“I don't think there is any optimal temperature for drinking water,” Vince Calder, retired physical chemist and former Iowa State Professor, wrote in an online response. “Obviously, it shouldn't be so hot that it burns your mouth, or so cold that it is uncomfortable. In the heat of summer people usually prefer cooler water but this is more a perception than [a need for] increased metabolic cooling.”

Besides hitting the spot in the summertime, drinking ice cold water burns calories according to

*Temperature (continued on page 2)*

DID  
YOU  
KNOW



You can detect a leaking toilet by putting food coloring in your toilet's water tank. After 30 minutes, if there is food coloring in your toilet bowl, you have a leak, and your tank needs a new flapper.

<http://www.toiletology.com/leaking.shtml>

## Reporting and Fixing Leaks Early Saves in the Long Run

*Water Pipes (continued from page 1)*

towers to homes and businesses throughout the community. They are generally located underground in the public right-of-way, and West Des Moines Water Works is responsible for their maintenance and repair.

The city's water meters, which are required for all water usage in West Des Moines, also fall under the jurisdiction of the Water Works. Each of these meters is connected to an electronic device used to read your water meter each month.

If you suspect that your water meter is malfunctioning, please call the West Des Moines Water Works so that it can be inspected for necessary repairs or replacement.

Inexplicably high water usage doesn't necessarily mean that your meter is faulty. In most cases, these spikes in usage are caused by a leaking faucet or toilet.

"It's the old adage—an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Fixing leaks and malfunctioning toilets early saves money in the long run," Stevens added.

### The Tap, Valves and Service Pipe

Water is delivered to homes and businesses through a connection to a water main called "the tap." West Des Moines property owners are responsible for this connection as well as the service pipe and valves that transport water from "the tap" to and from the meter.

Valves control the flow of water from the tap through these pipes. The inlet and outlet valves

next to your water meter provide master control from inside your home or business, while the curb valve, generally located in the public right-of-way, controls water flow from the outside.

It's important that these valves are functioning correctly so that water can be turned off when necessary. Sometimes, though, these valves may not operate properly due to age or damage and could require repair. Property owners are responsible for any maintenance or repairs that these privately owned valves require.

### Water Main and Service Pipe Leaks

Water main and service pipe leaks can cause significant damage to private and public property.

Unexplained running water in the street or a parking area, a drop in your water pressure, noise in your plumbing, or water standing in your yard are all possible signs of a leak.

If the problem lies in the water main or hydrant, West Des Moines Water Works is responsible for repairs. If the water service pipe or tap is leaking, the property owner is responsible for contacting a private plumber in order to make the repair.

*Contact West Des Moines Water Works customer service at 515-222-3460 or [waterworks@wdmww.com](mailto:waterworks@wdmww.com) with any questions you may have or problems that you need to report. We will quickly investigate and isolate leaks to determine the cause of the problem.*

## Ice Water: More Than Just Refreshing, it Burns Calories

*Temperature (continued from page 1)*

Dr. Daniel Deavers, Professor Emeritus at Des Moines University who taught temperature regulation for 29 years.

"The body definitely has to warm any cold water that is consumed," he said. "To warm the water the body must burn extra calories. The question that remains is whether or not this is a significant amount to aid in losing weight."



Deavers pointed to an equation formulated by Howstuffworks.com that accurately figures the average person will burn just under nine calories to warm an eight ounce glass of ice water.

Assuming you drink eight cups a day, drinking ice cold water can burn around 70 calories. It certainly won't replace hitting the gym, but it's an added benefit to drinking your suggested daily intake of water.

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