

Take action to prevent frozen pipes this winter

Cobb County Water System
CobbLine Special

Frozen pipes can lead to serious damage for your home. Here are some quick tips from the Cobb County Water System to help prevent any problems with your water service.

Plan ahead: Pay attention to outside temperatures and listen to weather reports to plan ahead for cold spells. Even inside a pipe, water will freeze at 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Beware of freezing temperatures: Homeowners face most problems when the temperature outside drops below 32 degrees. Be cautious of any temperature cold enough to freeze water in lawn sprinkler systems, sprinkler heads, outside spigots and in pipes located in unheated basements and garages.

Watering systems at risk: Winterize your irrigation system at the end of the season. The key to winterizing is draining all of the water from the lines by first turning off all of the system's valves including the main shutoff valve. The next steps in the process are to open each valve, then slowly turn the main valve back on. Continue these steps until all of the water has been released. Finally, close all valves and the main shutoff.

Prevention through insulation: Pipe insulation can be wrapped around pipes in basements, crawl spaces, garages and other unheated areas. Layers of newspaper taped around outside spigot heads also forms a protective layer.



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Benefits of dripping: Let the hot and cold faucet drip during periods of extreme cold, since running water will not freeze. A small drip uses much less water than a ruptured water pipe.

Repair damaged pipes: If a pipe or joint has a weak or impaired area, the pressure of frozen water can amplify the damage. Also, prevent frozen pipes by opening cabinets to expose plumbing to warm air indoors.

Important information: Learn the location of the valve which controls the flow of water into your home or business. This valve is often painted red. If a water pipe bursts within the structure, this valve can be turned to stop the flow until damaged pipes can be repaired.

Immediate Notification: If the line break occurs between the service meter and the structure, the water line will need to be turned off at the service connection. In this instance, call the Cobb County Water System's Customer Service Center at 770-423-1000 during regular business hours.

Report water leaks: Cobb Water dispatches field staff to turn the water off at the meter and advise the property owner of the best repair approach. A homeowner or business can contact a plumber who will repair the damaged pipe and turn the water back on.

Report water problems: Please call the Emergency Center at 770-419-6201 if you see water or ice on the roadway or an open or damaged hydrant.

After hours or during weekends and holidays, call the Cobb County Water System emergency number at 770-419-6201. Regularly scheduled work crews, as well as backup crews, provide 24-hour service every day of the week.

Keep Cobb Beautiful offers convenient, safe medication disposal

Most days, when we turn on the tap or flush our toilet we rarely think about the importance of fresh clean water. Even less frequently do we consider what a huge responsibility it is to preserve and protect that resource.

Don't flush your unused medication down the drain. The largest source of pharmaceutical byproducts in our wastewater, source water and drinking water comes from the improper disposal of unused and outdated pharmaceuticals. They need to be properly disposed of at designated locations. Keep Cobb Beautiful wants to help.

Keep Cobb Beautiful, in partnership with Cobb Public Safety, Cobb Water, Cobb Senior Services and Kaiser Permanente, will offer the first Medication Disposal Day for Cobb in February. This will provide an opportunity for residents of Cobb to safely dispose of outdated or unused over-the-counter and prescription medications. Acceptable items will include: liquid and pill-form medications, sharps, diabetes materials, catheters, tubing and more. Although, no durable medical equipment will be accepted.

Nothing will be accepted at any senior center or by any senior services staff person before or after the scheduled drop off days.

For more information, please call Keep Cobb Beautiful at 770-528-1135 or visit kcb.cobbcountyga.gov.



The following locations will offer medication disposal from 9 a.m. to noon on the dates listed below

Saturday, Feb. 6

Windy Hill Senior Center
1885 Roswell Street
Smyrna, GA

Saturday, Feb. 13

North Cobb Senior Center
4100 Highway 293
Acworth, GA

Saturday, Feb. 20

East Cobb Senior Center
3332 Sandy Plains Road
Marietta, GA

Saturday, Feb. 27

West Cobb Senior Center
4915 Dallas Highway
Powder Springs, GA

Carbon monoxide safety

Often called the silent killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless and colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil and methane burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burns fuel are sources of carbon monoxide.



- Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards.
- Choose a carbon monoxide detector that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories Incorporated or Southwest Research Institute.
- Test carbon monoxide detectors at least once a month. Replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. Replace batteries at least once a year.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, immediately move to a location with fresh air outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from an area with fresh air and stay there until emergency personnel arrives.
- Have a trained professional inspect, clean and tune-up central heating systems (furnaces, flues and chimneys) annually. Repair any leaks promptly.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Never run a vehicle or any engine that runs on fuel indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow, mud or debris.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace are free from obstruction.
- A generator should only be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vents.

State of the County address

Commission Chairman Sam Olens will deliver his annual "State of the County" address on **Jan. 11**. Olens will also give the address to different civic and community associations and the presentation will also be playing all month long on TV23 and will be available on the county website at cobbcounty.org/boc/.



Come see the Encore Series

Many popular acts are scheduled throughout the season, including the 5th Dimension on **Feb. 13**; Julianne Hough on **March 6**; the Osmond Brothers on **March 13**; Frankie Avalon on **March 27**; Vicki Lawrence **April 10**; and AIDA, which premieres on **Jan. 21** and runs through **Jan. 24**. The Jennie T. Anderson Theatre is located at 548 South Marietta Parkway, Marietta. For more information, call 770-528-8490 or visit prca.cobbcountyga.gov/anderson_theatre.htm.



The Osmond Brothers will perform on March 13.

Homestead exemptions due by April 1

Homeowners have until **April 1** to apply for Homestead Exemptions for this tax year. Homeowners must apply for all exemptions for which they are eligible. Exemptions are automatically renewed thereafter unless there is a change in ownership or eligibility. Homeowners must notify the Tax Commissioner's office if they are no longer eligible for an exemption.

Tax bills are mailed on **Aug. 15** and payment is due within 60 days to avoid late charges. Applications and payments must be received or U.S. Postmarked (metered postmark not accepted as proof of timely mailing) by the filing or payment deadline to be considered timely. Tax bills, applications and detailed information are also available on cobbtax.org.

Review Cobb's progress during year

Cobb County's 2009 Annual Report describes projects completed during the past year as well as various other accomplishments. The Annual Report is now available online at cobbcounty.org/annual-report/.



Cobb County Communications Department • 770.528.2480 • information@cobbcounty.org • www.cobbcounty.org

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Plan ahead by purchasing plants for your garden now

By Louise Weyer

Cobb County Extension Service

The Cobb County 4-H Club is having its annual plant sale. This year's assortment includes blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, Admiral Semmes azalea, crape myrtles, edgeworthia, hellebores, heuchera and Spring Bouquet Viburnum. Prepaid orders will be accepted until Wednesday, **March 10**.

The order form is available at cobbextension.com or by calling 770-528-4076. Plants may be picked up at Jim Miller Park on Saturday, **March 20** (one day only) from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Blackberries: Blackberries require plenty of sunlight, neutral soil (pH 6.0 – 6.5) and adequate water. Do not plant them in low areas where water stands after a heavy rain. The standard spacing is two feet between plants and 12 feet between rows. Fifteen plants, properly cared for, can supply berries for the average family.

Work the soil ahead of time so a drenching rain can firm it. Plant with the roots two inches below the soil line. Do not fertilize at planting time. In April of the first year scatter one pound of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 18 feet of row. In June, scatter one pound of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 36 feet of row. Spread the fertilizer evenly over the row in a band two feet wide.

Blueberries: Blueberries prefer sun, acid soil (pH 4.5 – 5.2) and adequate water. The standard spacing is four to five feet between bushes and 10-12 feet between rows. Plant more than one variety for required cross-pollination.

Mix one-quarter to one-half bushel of moist organic amendment with the soil in each planting hole. Do not add lime. Transplant to the same depth as the plant grew in the pot. Water with three to five gallons per bush.

Cut the plant back one-third at planting and remove flower buds the first year. Mulch with pine straw, chopped pine bark or similar material, keeping it away from the trunk. After new growth begins, spread one ounce of 12-4-8 or 10-10-10 fertilizer in a circle six inches from the trunk. Make another application in June.

Raspberries: Raspberries produce fruit in early summer. Plant bushes three feet apart in rows six feet apart. Raspberries require full sun to light shade, well drained soil and a pH of 5.0 – 6.5. It is a shallow rooted bush, requiring one to one-and-a-half inches of water per week.

Crape Myrtles: Crape myrtle, admired for the beautiful blooms, exfoliating bark and fall leaf color, may be grown as a bush or shaped to a tree type. Our powdery mildew resistant varieties do best in full sun and, once established, can withstand drought.

Dig a hole at least two times wider than the root ball. Set the plant in the hole no deeper than it grew originally. Backfill with the soil removed from the hole. Water thoroughly and mulch



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with three to five inches of pine straw, pine bark or slightly decomposed leaves. Keep mulch away from the trunk.

The plants should be watered thoroughly at planting time and once a week for the first two months. Apply one teaspoon of 8-8-8, 10-10-10, 12-4-8 or 16-4-8 fertilizer monthly from March through August to newly planted one gallon plants. The plant's height ranges from 10 to 20 feet.

Edgeworthia: Commonly known as Paper Bush, this winter flowering shrub (six feet by six feet) does well in light shade. Its three to four inch long, narrow dark blue-green leaves are clustered at branch tips. Flower buds covered with silky white hairs appear

in late summer after leaf-fall and look like white blossoms and the lightly fragrant, pale yellow blossoms appear in late winter. Edgeworthia is pest-free. It prefers moist, well-drained soil containing plenty of organic matter. Pliable, bare stems produced freely from the base, with leaves clustered at the tips impart a tropical look. Use as a woodland plant or specimen.

Helleborous: The attractive foliage and blossoms during winter and spring of this perennial is a wonderful addition to a shady garden. Mass under high-branching trees or on north or east side of walls. If established plants are disturbed, it may take two years to reestablish. Plant them in well-drained soil amended with plenty of organic matter and feed once or twice a year. This plant forms tight clumps of many growing points. Plants may self-sow and seedlings may be transplanted in early spring. It is not damaged by deer or rodents.

Heuchera: This 12-20 inch high herbaceous perennial, also known as coral bells, is an attractive border plant. It does well in light shade to shade in moist well drained, humus rich soil. Snow Angel has green and cream mottled leaves with vivid pink blossoms in May-June. Raspberry Ice has dark purple or raspberry foliage with pink blossoms. Caramel has apricot-colored or caramel foliage with pink blossoms.

Viburnum: Spring Bouquet is an evergreen shrub with small, leathery, dark green leaves. Its upright-rounded form, about five to six feet tall and wide, makes it a good choice for small hedges, screens or foundation plantings. Fragrant white or pink flowers appear in the spring, and blue or black berries in the fall. Plant it in full sun and water regularly.

Azalea: Admiral Semmes is a heat tolerant and mildew resistant hybrid reaching four to five feet in height and width at maturity. Fragrant yellow blossoms appear in early spring. Azaleas like high overhead shade, organic, acid, well drained soil.

A free seminar on growing and caring for blueberries and blackberries will be conducted by Steve Brady, Cobb County Extension Agent, 6 – 8 p.m on Tuesday, **March 9** at the Cobb County Water Lab located at 662 South Cobb Drive, Marietta.

For a free brochure, call 770-528-4070.

Calendar of Events

Jan. 15 – Master Gardeners begins Lunch and Learn series. noon Cobb Central Library, 226 Roswell Street, Marietta. For more information, visit cobbmastergardeners.org or call 770-971-1309.

Jan. 18 – All Cobb County government offices closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Jan. 19 – Board of Commissioners public hearing on comprehensive plan amendments. 9 a.m. BOC Room, second floor, 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Jan. 20 – Cobb Works Youth Council. 2 p.m. Mansour Center, 995 Roswell Road, Marietta.

Jan. 21-24 – Encore Series concert: AIDA, an award-winning Broadway musical. 8 p.m. Jennie T. Anderson Theatre, Cobb Civic Center. Tickets are available now. For more information, call 770-528-8490.

Jan. 23 – Adopt-a-Stream chemical monitoring workshop. 9 a.m. Cobb County Water Quality Laboratory, 662 South Cobb Drive, Marietta. For more information, visit georgiaadoptastream.com.

Jan. 25 – Transit Advisory Board meeting. 6:30 p.m. 463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 114, Marietta.

Jan. 26 – Board of Commissioners regular meeting. 7 p.m. BOC Room, second floor, 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Feb. 1 – District 3 Town Hall meeting. 7 p.m. Mountain View Library, 3320 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta.

Feb. 1 & 3 – AARP Driver Safety Class. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. West Cobb Senior Center, 4915 Dallas Highway, Powder Springs. \$12 for all AARP members. Registration is required. Must attend both days. Call 770-528-5355.

Feb. 2 – Planning Commission zoning hearing. 9 a.m. BOC Room, second floor, 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Feb. 2 – Keep Cobb Beautiful monthly board meeting. 5:30 p.m. Cobb County Water Lab, building 660 South Cobb Drive, Marietta.

Feb. 5 – Cobb Senior Services “Bingo Bonanza.” 1 - 3 p.m. North Cobb Senior Center, 4100 Highway 293, Acworth. \$3 for all residents of Cobb County. Snacks provided. For more information, Call 770-975-7740.

Feb. 8 – Board of Commissioners agenda work session. 9 a.m. Board Room, third floor; 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Feb. 9 – Board of Commissioners regular meeting. 9 a.m. BOC Room, second floor, 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Feb. 10 – Board of Zoning appeals variance hearing. 1 p.m. BOC Room, second floor, 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Feb. 12 – Master Gardeners presents Lunch and Learn series, “Making the Right Cut.” 12 p.m. Cobb Central Library, 226 Roswell St, Marietta. For more information, visit cobbmastergardeners.org or call 770-971-1309.

Feb. 13 – Keep Cobb Beautiful is sponsoring a Kennesaw Mountain Trail cleanup. 8 a.m. Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield, 900 Kennesaw Mountain Drive NW, Kennesaw. For more information, call 770-528-1135.

Feb. 13 – Encore Series concert: The 5th Dimension. 8 p.m. Jennie T. Anderson Theatre, Cobb Civic Center. Tickets are available now. For more information, call 770-528-8490.

Feb. 16 – Board of Commissioners zoning hearing. 9 a.m. BOC Room, second floor, 100 Cherokee St., Marietta.

Library re-opening at new location

The Cobb County Public Library System’s Merchant’s Walk Library will be moving to 4880 Lower Roswell Road in the Parkaire Mall in Marietta this month.

During the transition to the new facility, a reduction in service is anticipated. This will allow the staff to pack and relocate the 75,574 items in the collection to the new facility. For more information, visit cobbcat.org.

Diabetes self-management class

Learn how to manage your diabetes by attending the Diabetes Self-Management class taught by the Diabetes Association of Atlanta. The class will meet Friday, **Jan. 15** from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Cobb County Extension Office, 678 South Cobb Drive, Marietta. Registration is required. Call DAA at 404-527-7150 for registration and more information. Medicare and some insurances are accepted.

Celebrate Dr. King’s legacy on Jan. 18

The 24th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration will be held at 10 a.m., **Monday, Jan. 18**, at the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre. The event is free and open to the public and includes the annual presentation of the “Living the Dream” award to a community member who exemplifies King’s ideals. The event is sponsored by Cobb County NAACP and Cobb County Government. For more information call 770-425-5757.



Town hall meeting keeps you informed

The public is invited to attend a town hall meeting this month. Town hall meetings inform residents about projects and progress in the county.

Commissioner Tim Lee will host the District 3 town hall meeting at 7 p.m., **Monday, Feb. 1**, at the Mountain View Library, 3320 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta. For more information about this meeting, call 770-528-3317.



Tim Lee

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Cobb County...Expect the Best!

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