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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City, Ute, and Clifton Water Providers Urge Precautions to Avoid Frozen Pipes

GRAND JUNCTION, CO January 18, 2013—Three area water providers are urging their water customers to take precautions during this cold snap to avoid frozen water pipes, water lines, and water meters.

The City of Grand Junction, Ute Water, and Clifton Water have all had an increase in calls from customers regarding water problems related to the prolonged cold snap.

“The frost level has now exceeded three feet in depth in areas of the Grand Valley. The depth of the frost is causing residential waterlines and water meters to freeze, leaving customers without water,” said Joseph Burtard, Ute Water Conservancy District.

Here are some suggestions from all three area water providers for keeping your water service operating in the cold:

- Close garage doors. Many water problems can be avoided by keeping the garage closed. Many homeowners leave garage doors open slightly for pets, but in this cold weather, you should keep pets indoors as well.
- Open the cabinet doors below sinks to let heated air from the room into that space, especially if water pipes are in outside walls.
- One of the most effective ways to prevent waterlines from freezing is to allow a reduced stream of water (just before a drippy faucet becomes a solid stream) to flow through faucets,

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particularly faucets on exterior walls. This is for the customer's plumbing protection and you must be aware that there will be additional water usage charges.

- Make sure that all heated areas, zones and plumbing are working properly.
- Install heat tape and insulation around exposed plumbing.
- It is really important that you properly mark your main shut-off valve. Knowing where this valve is located could save your home from costly damage due to a broken waterline.
- Customers should not forcefully heat their waterlines. Using a torch can cause additional stress on the waterline causing it to burst. It is best if they allow the lines to thaw naturally or by applying moderate heat, for example, heat tape or space heaters.

The water providers request that if you do experience no water flow in your house, contact your water provider so a technician can be dispatched to investigate whether or not the meter is frozen. If it is, then the technician can take actions to attempt to restore service. "We request that the meter pits NOT be accessed by customers or plumbers as that can allow additional cold air into the pit which could then cause the meter to freeze," cautioned Clifton Water's Assistant Manager Dave Reinertsen.

"This is a prolonged cold snap that the Grand Valley does not often see, and people need to take precautions to keep their pipes from freezing, unfortunately, even if it does mean using more water to do so," added Burtard.

"The formation of the Drought Response Information Project is to urge water conservation," said Burtard, "but we recognize that in some instances such as a severe cold snap, you have to keep some water running to prevent frozen pipes."

"The Grand Valley will start warming up within the next couple days," added Burtard, Ute Water Conservancy District. "As the frost levels change with the changing temperatures, we will start to see the ground shift. The shifting of the ground can cause waterlines to break which means that we may be experiencing temporary water outages across the valley."