

A small installation but big effectiveness

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In the bright sunny day to water the garden lawn, wash the vehicles on your drive way or watch the kids playing water guns, these could be the most relaxing and entertainment of the family in summer. Therefore, the exterior hose bibs are generally installed on the front & rear wall of the house, which facilitate everyday life but this has to be given a little attention otherwise it may cause trouble.



Although the weather is mild in our lower mainland even in winter, it might have several extreme cold days ex. the snow at the end of 2006 and beginning of 2009. Many home exterior hose bibs cracked due to the frost damage. This is not only the cost of replacement but could have further water intrusion for the late discovery, which could be adverse effect on the property. In fact, It only needs the little attention from the homeowner. We normally remind the clients during our inspection. Lots of exterior hose bibs have an interior shut-off valve which is exactly the same as the bath & kitchen tabs shut-off under the sink. Once something wrong with taps which need fix or replacement, we only need shut off this valve rather than go to turn off the main water shut-off for the building to cut off the whole water supply. The first function of the interior shut-off for hose bib is to avoid frost damage in harsh winter. The operation is to shut off the interior valve before winter and open the exterior bib to discharge stagnant water. In the coming spring when the weather is getting warm to open the interior shut-off and as the water drains out from bib we can close it. The hose bib is back to the normal function. However, not every building has the interior shut-off. In order to go through the winter safely, to wrap this bib with insulation even thick cloth is an option. Many stores have the expanded Polystyrene moulded cover for it. Also, some bibs with anti-frost sign are free of worry about frost.

We normally help clients to locate this interior shut-off in buildings but it is not easy due to the different pipe arrangement. As the figure showing, it could be in crawl or under the kitchen, laundry, bath sinks even hiding behind wall. Due to the limited time of inspection & seldom touch on this valve, we do not operate it. Therefore, unless it is apparent, we would like the home owner to explain if this valve is in place. This is not hard to the inhabitants but necessary.