

Freezing and Irrigation

By: Melinda Sperl

When we have a hard freeze it is necessary to prepare your irrigation system to ensure that your back flow device does not break. The Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB) is intended to take the pressure off the irrigation system in the case of a freeze so the underground pipes do not freeze and break. If not properly turned off during a hard freeze this valve can freeze and the replacement is well over \$200 to replace. The steps to prepare it are as follows:

1. Run your irrigation system during the day if it has not rained. Plants do better if watered well into the roots during a freeze but do not water if already freezing.
2. Turn your irrigation controller to the off position
3. Turn the bottom knob on lower part of the PVB valve to the off position. This will be the position where it is crossing the pipe or not in line with the pipe.
4. On the Irrigation Controller choose only one zone and turn it on to run the water out of the system that may be left in the main line. In this instance there may be very little water coming out of the pipe so turn it to the off position when water stops running.
5. Open the two screws to release any air left in the pipes
6. Turn off the top valve to the closed position
7. Cover any exposed pipe with anything but plastic

Happy Gardening!

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