

Henry County Utility Encourages Residents to Weatherize Their Homes



With cold weather remaining in the forecast, the McDonough-based Henry County Water Authority encourages residents to weatherize their homes. Authority spokesman Chris Wood, Ph.D., said the effort can

prevent water lines from freezing and causing pipe bursts, leaks and property damage.

“Freezing temperatures can damage pipes and waste water and money,” he said in a statement. “Some simple preventative measures can go a long way in saving water and money when freezing temperatures become the norm this winter.”

The authority offers the following weatherization tips for residents and businesses to consider:

- Insulate pipes, either with wraps or tapes, making sure to locate all pipes that pass through unheated spaces or areas exposed to the outdoors.
- Consider adding or supplementing insulation to water heaters.
- Drain irrigation systems, since the tips of sprinkler heads and portions of sprinkler systems often continue to hold water, even when inactive.

- Disconnect garden hoses from all outdoor water faucets or spigots, allowing water to drain completely, and store hoses in a place with consistent, warmer temperatures.
- If a faucet is not frost free, find the shut-off valve where the pipe feeds the faucet outside of the home or building and turn it off, prior to opening the outside faucet until it drains completely. Spigot covers also can help protect outdoor faucets from freezing temperatures.
- Winterize air conditioning units as well, by draining all air conditioner pipes and hoses.
- Remove window air conditioning units and insulate those areas accordingly.
- Clean gutters, so winter rains and melting snow can drain.
- When leaving the home or office for an extended period of time, turn the temperature down to 55 degrees, rather than turning the heat completely off, to prevent problems from freezing temperatures, such as frozen air conditioner lines.
- Should a pipe burst due to freezing or under any other circumstances, always know how to shut off the main water line servicing the home or office building.

Read Excerpt: https://www.mdjonline.com/neighbor_newspapers/south_metro/community/henry-county-utility-encourages-residents-to-weatherize-their-homes/article_11da4a24-249b-11e9-8762-bb793ff7ad86.html

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6 Obstacles of Onboarding Remote Employees

How to improve the orientation process when your workforce is not in the office



Companies in fields like construction and energy often spend a lot of time and manpower putting in place processes and systems that allow them to

properly manage their remote employees—particularly field workers. Yet, many companies forget the importance of establishing and implementing processes and systems for onboarding. This is a mistake that can have major repercussions.

According to the content technology experts at Interact, effective employee onboarding can increase employee performance by up to 11 percent, and employees are 58 percent more likely to be at a company 3 years after starting if they complete a comprehensive onboarding process. But, onboarding remote employees has particular challenges that do not exist for those in the office. The following are a few of the obstacles your company may experience and how to overcome them so that your field employees feel equally as valuable as those in the main office.

1. Getting the HR Work Done

The first challenge is the most straightforward: How do you get the paperwork signed? New employees are required to fill out many forms, from providing payroll details to completing Forms W-4 or I-9.

Digital solutions can facilitate this process with field workers, but not all paperwork can be completed digitally. Most notably, original documents must be physically verified to complete Form I-9.

Be sure to inform employees of the documentation they need to bring and physically verify before their start date so that the paperwork can be filed and processed by the time they start (if they are able to physically come in to the office), or encourage the employee to use a notary service in his/her area to verify the documents. Don't forget to reimburse him/her for the notary fees.

2. Integrating Into Company Culture

Integrating new employees into the company culture—everything from the company's values, ways of working and dress code—is one of the primary purposes of onboarding. It's arguably more important to emphasize culture in onboarding for remote and field workers, who are not able to pick up cues about culture from spending the time in the office or with other employees.

For field workers, the culture of the worksite can be different from the culture of the main office, or the office where the onboarding materials are developed.

If this is the case, your onboarding process should include a briefing of new employees about the culture of their work location, as well as the culture of other offices. This will reduce misunderstandings and tension between field workers and office employees.

3. Establishing Communication Norms

Most of the time, field workers can't pop by a colleague's office to ask a quick question. If they urgently need a response from someone at another location, what is the best way to get one? What are the communication norms at the company?

Read Excerpt: <https://www.constructionbusinessowner.com/management/workforce-management/6-obstacles-onboarding-remote-employees>

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