For some reason, B.C. home owners forget what the rest of Canada lives with for months on end: sub-zero temperatures. Every year, our office fields hundreds of calls from people wanting to know who is responsible for the damage caused when pipes freeze.

As well, the recent mild winters have lulled Snowbirds – who leave town for tropical climes in the winter month – into a false sense of security.

More than ever, the complaint is: What do we do when someone has turned off the heat and is away for the winter?

One townhouse owner went so far to have the gas and heat turned off for the winter to avoid costs, but forgot to turn off the water. This combination resulted in the pipes freezing, and not only the owner’s home but also the neighbouring homes on both sides suffered serious water damage. After six hours of running water, emergency access was required to the vacant townhouse and the damage is estimated at $70,000 to the three homes.

Strata Law: The strata corporation is responsible for maintaining the common property. That includes such items defined as common heating systems and common piping.

For more information on CHOA resources and benefits visit www.choa.bc.ca or contact the office at 1-877-353-2462 or email office@choa.bc.ca.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior written permission of CHOA.

This publication contains general information only and is not intended as legal advice. Use of this publication is at your own risk. CHOA will not be liable to you or any other person for any loss or damage arising from, connected with or relating to the use of this publication or any information contained herein by you or any other person.