

## Remembering President Carter:

President Jimmy Carter, a proud native of a small town, understood the challenges faced by families in rural communities like those we serve across our nine counties. This deep connection fueled his lifelong dedication to improving the lives of income-eligible households around the world. His most enduring legacy is his work with Habitat for Humanity, particularly through the Carter Work Project.

The first Carter Work Project took place in 1986 in Chicago, Illinois, where President Carter and volunteers helped build a four-unit complex on the city's west side. His final project was in St. Paul, Minnesota, where 30 homes were constructed. Over the years, the Carter Work Project mobilized 108,100 volunteers to build, renovate, and repair 4,447 Habitat for Humanity homes in 14 countries, all while raising awareness of the urgent need for affordable housing.

The profound impact President Carter made on communities worldwide will never be forgotten. Here at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity, we honor his legacy by continuing our mission to create more affordable housing opportunities for families in need.

Wild rivers will be hosting a traveling memorial starting on the 13th of January and going through the 17th of January. For more information please check our Facebook page, Wild Rivers Habitat.



## Ongoing Project Updates:

We are excited to share updates on our ongoing and recently completed repair projects. In Polk County, we are currently working on a flooring and shower repair. Our Housing Program Specialist has conducted a site visit and is actively seeking contractors and estimates to move the project forward.

Similarly, in Ashland County, we have a window repair project underway. Estimates have been gathered, and an in-person evaluation with a prospective contractor has been completed to take measurements and finalize plans.

Additionally, we recently completed a repair project in Polk County, we are working on a repair, thanks to funding from the Lowe's grant. These projects reflect our continued commitment to improving housing conditions for families in need across our community.



## Hours:

**Wednesday - Saturday:  
9am - 5pm**

**Sunday-Tuesday:  
CLOSED**

**Phone:  
(715) 635-4771**

**Donation hours are by appointment. To schedule an appointment, please call the ReStore during business hours. We are unable to schedule pick-ups of donated items.**



## Office Hours:

**Monday- Friday:  
8am-4pm**

## Located At:

**1357 North River St.  
Spooner, WI 54801**

## Preventing Frozen Pipes: Essential Tips to Protect Your Home This Winter

One of a homeowner's or renter's worst fears is a frozen pipe that bursts during winter. Not only can this leave you without water, but it can also result in the destruction of sentimental items, costing you thousands of dollars. So, how can you prevent this from happening?

Here are some helpful tips.

1. Insulate Your Pipes: Insulating your pipes makes them less vulnerable to freezing (State Farm, n.d.).
2. Seal Air Leaks: Check for air leaks around electrical wiring, dryer vents, and pipes, then seal them with caulk or insulation to help keep the cold out and protect your pipes (State Farm, n.d.).
3. Disconnect Garden Hoses: Before freezing temperatures arrive, disconnect any garden hoses. If possible, use an indoor shutoff valve to turn off and drain faucets that lead to the outside (State Farm, n.d.).
4. Let Water Drip: If temperatures drop inside your home, let warm water drip from faucets along exterior walls to prevent pipes from freezing completely (State Farm, n.d.).
5. Open Cabinet Doors: Opening cabinet doors can allow heat to reach uninsulated pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls, helping to keep them warm (State Farm, n.d.).
6. Maintain a Consistent Temperature: If you plan to leave your home for an extended period, keep your thermostat set to at least 55°F (12°C) and turn off the water in your home to prevent freezing (State Farm, n.d.).

By taking these precautions, you can help protect your home from the costly damage caused by frozen pipes.

## The Benefits of Programmable and Smart Thermostats

Like many people in the Midwest, my thermostat is constantly being adjusted—sometimes I want it colder, and other times I want it warmer. However, did you know that a programmable thermostat offers more than just comfort? It can also save you money. By setting your thermostat back when you're not home or while you're asleep, you could save up to 10% a year on your utility bills (U.S. Department of Energy, n.d.). The same principle applies to your central AC in the summer: keeping your home warmer while you're away can help reduce energy costs (U.S. Department of Energy, n.d.).





When choosing a thermostat, it's important to consider which one suits your needs. Most programmable thermostats are digital, electromechanical, or a combination of both (U.S. Department of Energy, n.d.). Smart thermostats offer the most features, such as smartphone connectivity, while electromechanical systems tend to be simpler with mechanical controls like pegs or sliding bars (U.S. Department of Energy, n.d.). No matter which option you choose, it's important to do your research and pick the thermostat that works best for your lifestyle.



## Tips for First-Time Homeowners/Renters to Manage Utility Bills

As temperatures drop, heating bills can rise significantly. Here are some practical tips from energy.gov to help you keep those costs down, so you can enjoy your home or apartment without worrying about high utility bills.

- **Seal and Repair Windows:** Properly sealing and caulking windows helps keep heat inside and the cold out. For an extra layer of protection, consider covering window frames with shrink-wrap plastic to make them airtight.



- **Replace Dirty Filters:** A dirty furnace filter makes it harder for warm air to circulate through your home. Replacing the filter regularly improves your furnace's efficiency, allowing your heating system to work better and your utility bills to go further.
- **Use Your Ceiling Fan:** Ensure your ceiling fan is running clockwise at a low speed during the winter. This creates an updraft that circulates warm air around the room. Don't forget to switch it back to counterclockwise when warmer weather arrives.

By following these simple tips, you can lower your utility bill and stay warm this winter. Stay tuned for more energy-saving tips in future newsletters!

### Citations:

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Wild Rivers  
**Habitat**  
for Humanity®  
**Upcoming Events**



**Blog**  
**2025**

Ongoing | <https://wildrivershabitat.org/blog>

*Build strength, stability, and self-reliance  
through shelter.*



Visit Our Blog for Housing Tips and Inspiring Stories!

Discover helpful housing advice, DIY tips, and inspiring stories about the work we do at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity.

Stay Connected and Informed!

Check out our blog for exclusive insights and practical resources to support your home and community.

## Start the New Year with Smart Giving

As you settle into the new year, it's a perfect time to think about how your generosity can benefit both the community and your finances. If you didn't get a chance to maximize your charitable giving before the holidays, there's still time to make a meaningful impact while planning for the upcoming tax season.

By designating part or all of your tax refund as a donation, you can help us continue our mission of building homes, hope, and brighter futures for local families. Whether it's a cash gift, item donations to our ReStore, or other contributions, your generosity will have a lasting impact.

Consult your tax professional to learn how giving now can align with your financial goals for the year ahead. Together, we can turn your refund into something truly life-changing!



Scan Here to Donate!

