

EMERGENCY TIPS

The following **Emergency Tips** were compiled by members of the **National Institute of Fire Restoration** and are based on their wide experience in this field. It is not likely that you will require all the procedures listed, so examine your situation and use those steps which common senses dictates.

Fire and Smoke Damage

After fire damage, it is natural to want to clean a building and its contents. Timely action can be a great help, but incorrect or delayed action can jeopardize or seriously impede satisfactory restoration.

Do...

- Clear and protect chrome trim on kitchen appliances with a light coating of vaseline or other oil.
- Blow off or brush-vacuum loose smoke particles from upholstery, drapery and carpet.
- Open windows for ventilation.
- Change furnace filter if blower is operating.
- Empty freezer and refrigerator completely if electricity is off, and prop doors open with a rolled towel or newspaper.
- Clean and protect smoked bathroom faucets, tub fittings and towel bars with light coating of oil.
- Pour antifreeze in toilet bowls, sinks, and tubs to prevent freezing if heat is off in winter.
- Wash plants with water on both sides of leaves (water softener helps).
- Call plumber to drain heating system if heat is off in winter.
- Remove pets (especially birds) to clean environments.

Do Not...

- Wipe or attempt to wash walls, ceilings or other absorbent surfaces.
- Use upholstered furniture if it can be avoided.
- Use exposed food items, or canned goods which have been subjected to excessive heat.
- Use TVs, stereos, or electrical appliances until cleaned and checked.
- Send smoked garments to an ordinary dry cleaner. Improper cleaning may set smoke and odor.

Water Damage

Water is an essential part of many cleaning processes, but under some circumstances, although it usually cleans, it can damage articles. The harmful effect of water is sharply reduced by prompt and wise action. Some procedures are obvious; others require fore-sight and experience. This list of Emergency Tips has been compiled from many years of experience in water damage repair & cleaning.

Do...

- Remove as much excess water as possible by mopping and blotting.
- Wipe water from wood furniture after removal of lamps and tabletop items.
- Remove and prop up wet upholstery cushions for even drying (check for possible bleeding).

- Place aluminum foil, china saucers or wood blocks between furniture legs and wet carpeting.
- Turn on air conditioning for maximum drying in summer; open windows to speed drying in winter.
- Open drawers and cabinet doors for complete drying (do not force, however).
- Remove valuable oil paintings and art objects to a safe place.
- Blot wet carpeting with clean white towels.
- Open suitcases and luggage to dry, in sunlight if possible. Punch small holes in sagging ceilings to relieve trapped water (don't forget to place pans beneath!).

Do Not...

- Leave wet fabrics in place; dry as soon as possible. Hang furs and leather goods to dry separately at room temperature.
- Leave books, magazines or other colored items on wet carpets or floors.
- Use your household vacuum to remove water.
- Use TVs or other appliances while standing on wet carpet or floors, especially not on wet concrete floors.
- Turn on ceiling fixtures if ceiling is wet, and keep out of rooms where ceilings are sagging from retained water.

Soot (Furnace) Damage

Although smoke and soot may seem to be identical, experienced professionals recognize the important differences and appropriate emergency action can help in restoring walls and furnishings damaged by soot. Wrong action can make restoration difficult and could greatly delay your "return to normal." These Emergency Tips can increase the chances for prompt and successful restoration.

Do...

- Change furnace filter.
- Cover upholstery with clean sheets before use.
- Tape doubled pieces of cheesecloth over air registers with masking tape.
- Blow off or brush-vacuum loose soot particles from upholstery, drapes and carpeting.

Do Not...

- Attempt to clean walls or ceilings.
- Use do-it-yourself, home carpet or upholstery cleaners.

Vandalism Damage

Vandalism is upsetting even when the motivation is not malicious. While timely action can minimize or prevent lasting damage, it is just as true that wrong or delayed action can increase it; sometimes beyond hope of repair. Emergency Tips listed below will minimize the effects of the damage, and make the eventual repair more successful.

Do...

- Hose down or wash egg damage from building exterior as soon as possible.
- Wipe up freshly spilled food from carpets and fabrics with a dampened cloth or sponge (but don't over-wet!). DO scrape and blot (don't rub; it may cause fuzzing or damage fibers).
- Vacuum glass particles from carpets and upholstery.
- Save containers which will reveal the composition of spilled inks, cosmetics and paints.

Do Not...

- Attempt to remove ink, paint or cosmetic stains.
- Operate damaged lamps or appliances.
- Throw out wood chips, broken pieces from furniture, porcelain or other art objects.