

Salvage Methods After The Fire

Cleaning Walls, Furniture, and Carpeting

1. Vacuum all surfaces.
2. Change and clean air conditioner/heater filters.
3. Seal off the room you are working in with plastic wrap to keep soot from moving from one location to another. Try to keep windows closed.
4. Painted Walls -- To remove soot and smoke from walls, mix together: four to six tablespoons trisodium phosphate (tsp) purchased in hardware or paint stores and one gallon of water. Keep away from children and pets! The use of RUBBER GLOVES and GOGGLES is recommended. Wash small area at a time, working from the floor up. Do ceilings last. Rinse thoroughly. Do not repaint until completely dry. We suggest you use a smoke sealer (purchased in paint stores) before painting.
5. Wallpapered Walls -- Usually, wallpaper cannot be restored. Check with your wallpaper dealer.
6. Furniture -- Do not use chemicals on furniture. An inexpensive product called FLAX SOAP (purchased in hardware and paint stores) is an efficient product to use on wood, including kitchen cabinets. Do not dry furniture in the sun as the wood will warp and twist out of shape.
7. Floors -- Use FLAX SOAP on wood and linoleum floors. It will take four to five applications. Then strip and re-wax. For carpeting -- steam clean, shampoo, and repeat steam cleaning.
8. Mattresses -- Reconditioning inner-spring mattresses at home is very difficult if not impossible. Your mattress can probably be renovated by a company that builds or repairs mattresses. If you must use your mattress temporarily, put it out into the sun to dry, then cover it with plastic sheeting. It is almost impossible to get smoke odor out of pillows. Foam and feathers retain the odor -- replace pillows.
9. Locks and Hinges -- Locks (especially iron locks) should be taken apart, wiped with kerosene, and oiled. If locks cannot be removed, squirt machine oil through a bolt opening or keyhole and work the knob to distribute the oil. Thoroughly clean and oil hinges.

There are many commercial cleaners on the market that will assist you in cleaning. "Grease Relief" by Texize, and others, may be used with success. As with all cleaning agents, test a small area first to see if the cleaning agent will damage the article. Always read the instructions and follow safety instructions when using cleaning agents.

Electrical Appliances

Don't run wet appliances until you have had a serviceman check them. If the Fire Department turned off your gas or power during the fire, call the electric or gas company to restore these services.

DO NOT TRY TO DO IT YOURSELF.

Cooking Utensils

Wash your pots, pans, flatware, etc. with soapy water, rinse and then polish with a fine-

powdered cleaner. Polish copper and brass with special polish, salt sprinkled on a piece of lemon, or salt sprinkled on a cloth saturated in vinegar.

Clothing

Smoke odor and soot can sometimes be washed from clothing. The following formula will often work for clothing that can be bleached:

- 4 - 6 teaspoons trisodium phosphate (tsp)
- 1 cup Lysol or any household chlorine bleach
- 1 gallon warm water

* Mix well -- add clothes, rinse with clean water, then dry well. To remove mildew, wash the fresh stain with soap and water. Then rinse and dry in the sun. If the stain is not gone, use lemon juice and salt, or a diluted solution of household chlorine bleach.

Test colored garments before using any cleaning treatment!

Take wool, silk, or rayon garments to a dry cleaner as soon as possible.

Leather and Books

Wipe your leather goods with a damp cloth, then with a dry cloth. Stuff your purses and shoes with newspaper to retain their shape. Leave your suitcases open. Dry leather goods away from heat and sun. When leather goods are dry, clean with saddle soap. You can use steel wool or a suede brush on suede. Rinse leather and suede jackets in cold water and dry away from heat and sun. Dry books by placing them on end with the pages separated. Then they should be piled and pressed to prevent the pages from crinkling. To help prevent mildew, alternate drying and pressing until the books are thoroughly dry. If your books are very damp, sprinkle cornstarch or talc between the pages, leave for several hours, then brush off. A fan turned on the books will help them dry.

Food -- "If in Doubt -- Throw it Out"

Wash your canned goods in detergent and water. Do the same for food in jars. If the labels come off, be sure you mark the contents on the can or jar with a grease pencil. Do not use canned goods when cans have bulged, are dented, or rusted.

- If your home freezer has stopped running, you can still save the frozen food:
- Keep the freezer closed. Your freezer has enough insulation to keep food frozen for at least one day -- perhaps two or three days.
- Move your food to a neighbor's freezer or commercial freezer firm. Wrap the frozen food in newspapers and blankets, or use insulated boxes.
- If your food has thawed, observe the following procedures:
- Fruits can be re-frozen if they still taste and smell good.
- Do not re-freeze vegetables if they have thawed completely. Re-freeze only if there are ice crystals in the vegetables. If your vegetables have thawed and cannot be used soon, throw them out. If you have any doubts whether your vegetables are spoiling, throw them out -- don't wait for a bad odor.
- Meats may be re-frozen (if ice crystals remain) but cook very thoroughly before tasting. If odor is poor or if you question these foods, throw them out as bacteria multiply rapidly.

Refrigerators and Freezers

To remove odor from your refrigerator or freezer, wash the inside with a solution of baking soda and water or use one cup of vinegar or household ammonia to one gallon of water. Some baking soda in an open container or a piece of charcoal can be placed in the refrigerator or freezer to absorb odor.

When cleaning or discarding a refrigerator or freezer. **BE SURE THE DOOR IS REMOVED OR SECURED TO PREVENT THE DOOR FROM BEING CLOSED.**