

After the Fire:

This information was developed as a resource tool to give you information you may need in the coming days to assist you in reducing your losses after the fire is out. In the event you cannot find the help you need, phone (815)747-6619, and we will assist you in locating the appropriate individuals or agency that can help. The East Dubuque Fire Department is concerned with your safety and the loss of your property.

General Cleaning/Salvage:

If insured, contact your insurance company. If not, here are some hints you might want to consider:

1. Vacuum all surfaces
2. Change and clean air conditioner/heater filters
3. Seal off the room in which you are working 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 4 to 6 tablespoons trisodium phosphate (can be purchased in paint/hardware stores) and 1 gallon of water. Suggest you use rubber gloves and goggles while working with this solution.

Warning - keep mixture away from children and pets.

Wash a small area at a time working from the floor up. Do ceilings last. Rinse thoroughly; do not repaint until completely dry. It is advised to use a smoke sealer (available 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. A very inexpensive product called FLAX SOAP (readily available in hardware and paint stores) is most 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 4 or 5 applications. Then strip and re-wax.

8. Carpeting - Steam clean, shampoo and repeat steam cleaning.
9. Mattresses - Reconditioning an inner spring mattress 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 in the sun to dry - then cover it with plastic sheeting. It is almost impossible to get smoke odor out of pillows. Feathers and foam retain odors.
10. 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 or keyhole and work the knob to distribute the oil. Hinges should also be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.

Warning - Do NOT use gasoline for cleaning.

11. Mildew - To remove mildew, wash the stain with soap and water. Rinse well and dry, if the stain remains, use lemon juice and salt, or a solution of household chlorine bleach and warm water.
12. Clothes - To remove smoke odor or soot from clothes that can be bleached, add 1/2 cup of ammonia to 2 gallons of water; then rinse with vinegar (use rubber gloves). Should you have any questions about the cleaning or preparation of clothing, it is wise to contact a cleaning service. Take wool, silk, or rayon garments to a dry cleaner as soon as possible.

Warning – Do NOT mix ammonia with bleach.

13. Electrical appliances - Do not run wet or damaged appliances until you have had a service person check them.
14. Cooking utensils - Your pots, pans, flatware, etc., should be washed with soapy water, rinsed and then polished with fine-powdered cleaner. You can polish copper and brass with special polish, salt sprinkled on a piece of lemon, or salt on a cloth saturated in vinegar.

General Information:

If You Need Emergency Assistance

If you need emergency assistance for food, clothing or lodging, contact the American Red Cross.

Pets

Smoke can damage the lungs of a dog or cat in minutes and sparks can cause painful bumps that may stay hidden under your pet's fur. As soon as possible, take your pet to a veterinarian. If your pet is lost in the confusion, call the Jo Daviess County Animal Control or the Dubuque Humane Society.

Counseling Support

After the fire, you may experience: anxious feelings, depression, difficulty concentrating, sadness, anger, fatigue, irrational (unfounded fears and nightmares) behavior. These are common responses to a traumatic event. If you or your family members need support, call the American Red Cross or check your yellow pages under Counselors. Some employers and/or health insurance carriers provide coverage for counseling services.

What About Cash or Negotiable?

If burned, handle with extreme care and as little as possible. Attempt to encase each crisp sheet in plastic wrap in order to salvage as much as possible. Take everything to your local bank for advice regarding replacement.

What About Perishables?

Any food, beverages and/or medications exposed to heat or smoke should not be consumed. Medication especially, can change strength by exposure to heat. Please check with your doctor first before taking these medications. If food was in a tightly closed or sealed container, or in airtight refrigerators or freezers, they may be salvageable. It is cheaper to replace the material than to jeopardize you or your family's health by taking a chance. If in doubt, throw it out!

What About Odors

Sometimes there is a residual smoke odor from a small fire that is annoying and lingering. Short of a good cleaning of everything in the house, you can place small saucers of household vanilla, wine, vinegar or activated charcoal about your home to help absorb these odors. Remember that the smoke is also inside the heating and cooling duct work and you get a fresh blast every time your air system is turned on.

If insured, consult your insurance company for assistance. If the odor does not go away in about a week, you may, and probably should, call a janitorial supply or cleaning service specializing in restoration of fire damaged property (refer to your yellow pages, under Fire and Water Damage Restoration). They have the equipment to scrub out the duct work and deodorize everything in the house.

If you Must Stay Elsewhere:

Getting Your Family Settled

If your home is uninhabitable, and you cannot find a place to stay (such as with family or friends), consult with your insurance company to see if you are covered for additional living expenses. The Red Cross may be able to provide temporary shelter until you can arrange a place to stay.

Take Valuables With You

If you must leave your home, try to locate the following items to take with you: important legal documents, identification, vital medications, eye glasses, hearing aids, valuables, credit cards, checkbooks, insurance policies, money, jewelry, photos, etc. (Note: Let safes cool down before opening).

Utilities

Often the Fire Department must have the utility services shut off or disconnected as a safety precaution and also to prevent further damage to the structure and its contents. The utility companies will not restore your utilities until the repairs are completed properly.

If You Move

If you move, notify the United States Postal Service, Secretary of State Department of Motor Vehicles, banks, water department, credit card companies, magazines/newspapers, etc., of your new address. Also contact the Social Security Administration and the Department of Economic Security, if you are receiving benefits.

Insured/not Insured Property:

If you are Insured

The first thing to do after the fire is to contact your insurance company or agent as soon as possible. If you are renting or leasing the property, you must contact the owner. Your insurance adjuster may be able to assist you in making immediate repairs or help in securing your home. If you are unable to contact your agent and need professional assistance in boarding up your

home, you may contact a general contractor or a fire damage restoration firm. (Refer to your yellow pages, under Contractors-General or Fire and Water Damage Restoration.)

To obtain a copy of the Fire Report, have your agent contact the East Dubuque Fire Department.

If you are not Insured

If your property is not insured, or if your insurance will not cover your losses, contact your family lawyer or the Internal Revenue Service for directions. You may be eligible for causality loss; check Publication 547, Tax Information on Disaster, Causality and Thefts, available from your local Internal Revenue Office.

If you are not insured and need assistance, the American Red Cross or Salvation Army is available to assist families who have been displaced from their homes through any type of disaster. They are available around the clock, every day of the year, with food, clothing, and housing.

Reference Directory:

American Red Cross	563-583-6451
City of East Dubuque	815-747-3416
East Dubuque Fire Department (Non Emergency)	815-747-6619
East Dubuque Police Department	815-747-3913
Social Security Administration	800-772-1213
Jo Daviess County Animal Control	815-591-2625
Dubuque Humane Society	563-582-6766

Vehicle Fires:

If Insured

Contact your insurance agent who can explain coverage and will assist you with your claim.

If your vehicle is damaged in a structure fire, contact both your home insurance and vehicle insurance agents.

If Uninsured

If vehicle is repairable, a list of repair facilities can be obtained in the yellow pages of your phone directory, under Automobile Repairing and Service.

If towing is required, refer to the yellow pages of your phone directory, under Automobile Road Service.

If vehicle is a total loss (beyond repair) it may have some value to a salvage yard. A list of vehicle salvage companies can be obtained in the yellow pages of your phone directory, under Automobile Salvage.