

# After The Fire:

Fauquier County

Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management

62 Culpeper Street

Warrenton, VA 20186

Office: (540) 422-8800

Fax: (540) 422-8813

[www.fauquierfirerescue.org](http://www.fauquierfirerescue.org)



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## A QUICK CHECKLIST

*The following checklist serves as a quick reference and guide for you to follow after a fire occurs:*

1. Contact your local disaster relief service, such as The Red Cross, if you need temporary housing, food and medicines.
2. If you are insured, contact your insurance company for detailed instructions on protecting the property, conducting inventory and contacting fire damage restoration companies. If you are not insured, try contacting private organizations for aid and assistance.
3. Check with the fire department to make sure your residence is safe to enter. Be watchful of any structural damage caused by the fire.
4. Contact your utility companies (water, gas, electric) to have them ensure they are safe to use or ensure they are disconnected. DO NOT attempt to reconnect utilities yourself.
5. Conduct an inventory of damaged property and items. Do not throw away any damaged goods until after an inventory is made.
6. Try to locate valuable documents and records. Refer to information on contacts and the replacement process inside this brochure.
7. If you leave your home, contact the local police department to let them know the site will be unoccupied.
8. Begin saving receipts for any money you spend related to fire loss. The receipts may be needed later by the insurance company and for verifying losses claimed on income tax.
9. Notify your mortgage company of the fire.
10. Check with an accountant or the Internal Revenue Service about special benefits for people recovering from fire loss.
11. Contact Community Development – Building Official Office before making any repairs, rebuilding, etc.
12. Contact the Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue – Real Estate and Personal Property – to let them know about the fire and any damages.

- a. Real Estate 540-422-8140
- b. Personal Property 540-422-8150

**EMERGENCY AND NONEMERGENCY NUMBERS**  
*Please fill in this area with your local phone numbers  
and keep copies at locations other than your home.*

**Emergency:** 911

**Fire Department Non-Emergency:**  
(540) 347-1313

**Poison Control:** 1 (800) 764-7661

**United States Fire Administration:**  
16825 South Seton Avenue  
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727  
Ph. (301) 447-1000  
[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)

**Doctors:**

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**Insurance Company:**

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**Medical Policy Number:**

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**Home Policy Number:**

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**Auto Policy Number:**

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**Gas/Fuel Company:**

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**Banks:**

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**Neighbors:**

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**Accountant:**

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**Pharmacy:**

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\_\_\_\_\_ **Work Numbers:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Family:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Other:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Utilities

<b>Dominion Power</b>	<b>1-(866) 366-4357</b>
<b>NOVEC</b>	<b>1-(888) 335-0500</b>
<b>Rappahannock Electric Company (REC)</b>	<b>1-(800) 552-3904</b>
<b>Warrenton Water</b>	<b>(540) 347-1100</b>
<b>Warrenton Sewer</b>	<b>(540) 347-1858</b>
<b>Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA)</b>	<b>(540) 349-2092</b>
<b>Columbia Gas Of Virginia</b>	<b>1-(800) 544-5606</b>
<b>AmeriGas</b>	<b>1-(800) 222-0808</b>

LOCAL HELPFUL NUMBERS

**Fauquier County**  
**Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency**  
**Management**  
**62 Culpeper Street**  
**Warrenton, VA 20186**  
**Office: (540) 422-8800**  
**Fax: (540) 422-8813**  
**[www.fauquierfirerescue.org](http://www.fauquierfirerescue.org)**

**Services**

<b>Red Cross</b>	<b>1-(877) 292-1600</b>
<b>Salvation Army</b>	<b>(540) 341-8385</b>
<b>Dept. of Social Services</b>	<b>(540) 422-8400</b>
<b>Fauquier County Foodbank &amp; Thrift Store</b>	<b>(540) 359-6054</b>

## THE FIRST 24 HOURS

*Recovering from a fire can be a physically and mentally draining process. When a fire occurs, lives are suddenly turned around. Often, the hardest part is knowing where to begin and who to contact.* The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has gathered the following information to assist you in this time of need. Action on some of the suggestions will need to be taken immediately. Some actions may be needed in the future while others will be ongoing. The purpose of this information is to assist you as you begin rebuilding your life.

### **Securing Yourself and the Site**

Contact your local disaster relief service, such as the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army, to help with your immediate needs, such as:

- Temporary Housing
- Food
- Medicine
- Eyeglasses
- Clothing
- Other essential items
- Contacting your insurance agent/company

## CAUTIONS

- DO NOT enter the damaged site. Fire can rekindle from hidden, smoldering remains.
- DO NOT attempt to turn on utilities yourself.
- Be watchful for structural damage caused by the fire. Roofs and floors may be damaged and subject to collapse.
- Food, beverages and medicine exposed to heat, smoke, soot and water should not be consumed.

## Leaving Your Home

- Contact your local law enforcement to let them know the site will be unoccupied.
- In some cases it may be necessary to board up openings to discourage trespassers.
- Beginning immediately, save receipts for any money you spend. These receipts are important in showing the insurance company what money you have spent related to your fire loss and also for verifying loss claimed on your income tax.
- DO NOT throw away any damaged goods until after an inventory is made. All damages are taken into consideration in developing your insurance claim.
- If you are considering contracting for inventory or repair services, discuss your plans with your insurance agent/company first.

*If it's safe to do so, try to locate the following items:*

- Insurance information
- Medication information
- Eyeglasses, hearing aids, or other prosthetics and medical equipment
- Valuables, such as credit cards, cash and jewelry
- Identification, such as driver's license and Social Security cards

*There are many people/entities that should be notified of your relocations, including:*

- Insurance agent/company
- Mortgage company as well as informing them of the fire
- Family and friends
- Employer
- Children's school
- Local Post Office
- Local Fire and Police Department
- Local Utility Companies



## **If you are insured**

- Give notice of the loss to the insurance company or the insurer's agent/company
- Ask the insurance company what to do about the immediate needs of the dwelling, such as covering doors, windows, or other exposed areas, and pumping out water
- Ask your insurance agent/company what actions are required of you. Some policyholders may be required to make an inventory of damaged personal property showing in detail the quantity, description and how much you paid for the items

## **If you are not insured**

*Your recovery from a fire loss may be based upon your own resources and help from your community. Private organizations that may be sources of aid or information include:*

- American Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- Religious Organizations
- Department of Social Services
- Civic Organizations
- Non-Profit Crisis Counseling Centers

## REPLACEMENT OF VALUABLE DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

<u>For replacement of...</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Driver's License, Auto registration	Department of Motor Vehicles
Bank statements, checks, debit cards	Your Bank, as soon as possible
Insurance Policies	Your insurance agent
Military Discharge Papers	Department of Veterans Affairs
Passports	State Department - Passport Service
Birth, Death and Marriage Certificates	County Clerk
Divorce Papers	Circuit court where decree was issued
Social Security or Medicare cards	Local Social Security Office
Credit Cards	Issuing Company
Titles to deeds	County Clerk
Stocks and Bonds	Issuing Company
Wills	Your Lawyer
Medical Records	Your Doctor
Warranties	Issuing Company
Income Tax Records	IRS Center where you filed originally
Citizenship Papers	U.S. Immigration and Naturalization
Prepaid Burial Contract	Issuing Company
Mortgage Papers	Lending Institution

## SALVAGE HINTS

*Professional fire and water damage restoration businesses may be the best source of cleaning and restoring your personal belongings. Companies offering this service can be located in the phone directory or in a web search.*

### Restoration Services

*There are companies that specialize in the cleaning and/or restoration of fire damaged structures and personal items. Whether you or your insurer obtains this type of service, be clear on who will pay. Be sure to request an estimate of cost for the work and agree to it in writing.*

### Clothing

#### **Words of caution before you begin:**

*Test garments before using any treatment, and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Several of the cleaning mixtures described in this section contain the substance Tri-Sodium Phosphate. This substance can be purchased under the generic name, TSP. Tri-Sodium Phosphate is a caustic substance used commonly as a cleaning agent. It should be used with care and stored out of reach of children and pets. Wear rubber gloves when using if you have sensitive skin. Read the label for further information.*

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

- 4 to 6 tbsp. of Tri-Sodium Phosphate
- 1 cup household cleaner or chlorine bleach
- 1 gallon warm water

Mix well, add clothes, and rinse with clear water. Dry thoroughly.

An effective way to remove mildew from clothing is to wash the fresh stain with soap and warm water, rinse and then dry in the sun. If the stain has not disappeared, use lemon juice and salt or a diluted solution of household chlorine bleach.

### **Cooking Utensils**

Your pots, pans, flatware, etc., should be washed with soapy water, rinsed and then polished with a fine-powered cleaner. You can polish copper and brass with special polish, salt sprinkled on a piece of lemon, or salt sprinkled on a cloth saturated with vinegar.

### **Electrical Appliances**

Don't use appliances that have been exposed to water or steam until you have a service representative check them, this is especially true of electrical appliances. In addition, steam can remove the lubricant from some moving parts.

If the fire department turned off your gas or power during the fire, call the electric or gas company to restore services – *DO NOT TRY TO DO IT YOURSELF.*

### **Food**

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

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. Baking soda in an open container or a piece of charcoal can also be placed in the refrigerator or freezer to absorb odor.

## **Rugs and Carpets**

Rugs and carpets should be allowed to dry thoroughly. Throw rugs can be cleaned: by beating, sweeping or vacuuming, and then shampooing. Rugs should be dried as quickly as possible – lay them flat and expose them to a circulation of warm, dry air. A fan turned on the rugs will speed drying. Make sure the rugs are thoroughly dry. Even though the surface seems dry, moisture remaining at the base of the tufts can quickly cause the rug to rot. For information on cleaning and preserving carpets, call your carpet dealer or installer or a qualified carpet cleaning professional for advice or services.

## **Leather and Books**

Wipe leather goods with a damp cloth, then a dry cloth. Stuff purses and shoes with newspaper to retain their shape. Leave suitcases open. Leather goods should be dried away from heat and sun. When leather goods are dry, clean them with saddle soap. Rinse leather and suede jackets in cold water and dry away from heat and sun.

Wet books must be taken care of as soon as possible. The best method to save wet books is

to freeze them in a vacuum freezer. This special freezer will remove the moisture without damaging the pages.

If there will be a delay in locating such a freezer, than place them in a normal freezer until a vacuum freezer can be located. A local librarian can also be a good resource.

## **Locks and Hinges**

Locks (especially iron locks) should be taken apart and wipe with oil. If locks cannot be removed, squirt machine oil through a bolt opening or keyhole, and work the knob to distribute the oil. Hinges should also be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.

## **Walls, Floors and Furniture**

To remove soot and smoke from walls, furniture and floors, use a mild soap or detergent or mix together the following solution:

- 4 to 6 tbsp. Tri-Sodium Phosphate
- 1 cup household cleaner or chlorine bleach
- 1 gallon warm water

Wear rubber gloves when cleaning with this solution. Be sure to rinse your walls and furniture with clear water and dry thoroughly after washing them with this solution.

Wash a small area at a time, working from the floor up. Then rinse the wall with clear water immediately. Ceilings should be washed last.

***Do not repaint until walls and ceilings are completely dry.***

Your wallpaper can also be repaired. Use a commercial paste to reseal a loose edge or section. Contact your wallpaper dealer or installer for information wallpaper cleaners. Washable wallpaper can be cleaned like any ordinary wall, but care must be taken not to soak the paper. Work from bottom to top to prevent streaking.

### **Wood Furniture**

- Do not dry your furniture in the sun. The wood will warp and twist out of shape.
- Clear off mud and dirt.

- Remove drawers. Let them dry thoroughly so there will be no sticking when you replace them.
- Scrub wood furniture or fixture with a stiff brush and a cleaning solution.
- Wet wood can decay and mold, so dry thoroughly. Open doors and windows for good ventilation. Turn on your furnace or air conditioner, if necessary.
- If mold forms, wipe the wood with a cloth soaked in a mixture of borax dissolved in water.
- To remove white spots or film, rub the wood surface with a cloth soaked in a solution of ½-cup household ammonia and ½-cup water. Then wipe the surface dry and polish with was or rub the surface with a cloth soaked in a solution of ½-cup turpentine and ½-cup linseed oil. Be careful – turpentine is combustible. You can also rub the wood with a fine grade steel wool pad dripped in liquid polishing wax; clean the area with a soft cloth and then buff.

## MONEY REPLACEMENT

Handle burned money as little as possible. Attempt to encase each bill or portion of a bill in plastic wrap for preservation. If the money is only half-burned or less (if half or more is still intact), you can take the remainder of the bill to your regional Federal Reserve bank for replacement. Ask your bank for the nearest one. Or you can mail the burned or torn money by registered mail, Return receipt requested.

**Department of the Treasury**  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing  
OCS, BEPA, Room 344  
P.O. Box 37048  
Washington, D.C. 20013

***Mutilated or melted coins can be taken or mailed to:***

**United States Mint**  
Attn: Mutilated Coin Redemption Section  
P.O. Box 400 for Post Office Shipments only  
151 N. Independence Mall East  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

If your U.S. Savings Bonds have been destroyed or mutilated, you must obtain Department of Treasury Form PD 0149 (1) from your bank or online and mail them to:

**U.S. Treasury Department**  
Bureau of Loans and Currency  
537 W. Clark Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60605  
Attn: Bond Consultant

## **Tax Information**

Check with an accountant tax consultant or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) about special benefits for people with limited financial needs after a fire loss.

## *COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS*

### **Q Why are windows broken or holes cut in the roof?**

As a fire burns, it moves upward then outward. Breaking the windows and/or cutting holes in the roof (called ventilation) slows the damaging outwards movement, helps remove blinding smoke that obscures the actual fire, and enables firefighters to fight the fire more efficiently. The result of this action is less damage to the structure in the long run.

### **Q Why are holes cut in walls?**

This is done so that the fire department is absolutely sure that the fire is completely out, and that there is no fire inside the walls or other hidden places.

### **Q Is it possible to obtain a copy of the fire report?**

In most localities, a fire report is a public document and is available at the fire department headquarters or Fire Marshall's office.

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