



Soot (Furnace) Damage

While soot may resemble smoke residues from a fire, the restoration of soot damage often requires different techniques.

Incorrect action can make restoration more difficult and delay the return to normalcy.

Do...

- Change and save the old furnace filter.
- Blow off or brush-vacuum loose soot particles from upholstery, draperies and carpets.
- Cover upholstery with clean sheets before use.

Do not...

- Attempt to wash walls, ceilings or contents without professional assistance.



Vandalism Damage

Vandalism often involves spray paint on walls, defacement of furnishings, or spreading noxious substances. It is one

of the most difficult forms of damage to restore. Prompt action can often minimize the effect of vandalism or make restoration more successful.

Do...

- Hose down or wash egg damage from building exteriors as soon as possible.
- Vacuum glass particles from carpet and upholstery.
- Save discarded containers and spray cans, which can reveal the composition of inks and pigments.
- Save all chips and fragments from broken furniture, porcelain or art objects.

Do not...

- Attempt to remove ink, paint or cosmetic stains; they may be permanently set if not handled properly.

The Restoration Industry Association (RIA) is composed of professional damage repair contractors and service firms specializing in the restoration of homes, schools and businesses damaged by fire, smoke, water, vandalism and other perils. Member firms provide emergency services as well as full restoration of buildings and personal property.

As independent damage repair specialists, RIA members provide impartial advice on the scope of repairs required after disasters. They adhere to a comprehensive code of ethics and are backed by the technical expertise and laboratory resources of RIA. Member firms participate in research, seminars and training programs in the restoration arts. The RIA member in your area is a good firm to know and a reliable source for information and service when damage occurs.



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Emergency Tips

Do's and Don'ts When Disaster Strikes



The following Emergency Tips were compiled by RIA members and staff, based on their experience with various types of damage. It is unlikely that your situation will require all of these procedures, so apply those which common sense indicates are appropriate.



Fire & Smoke Damage

After fire damage it is natural to want to jump right in and clean the building and contents. Timely action can be a great

help, but incorrect action can jeopardize or impede satisfactory restoration

Do...

- Clean and protect chrome trim on faucets and other bright work by washing with detergent and applying a coating of Vaseline, oil or other corrosion inhibitor.
- Blow off or brush-vacuum loose smoke particles from upholstery, draperies and carpeting.
- Open windows for ventilation if weather permits.
- Empty refrigerators and freezers if electricity is off, and prop doors open with a rolled towel or newspaper to allow air circulation.
- Pour antifreeze in toilet bowls, tanks, sink and tub drains to prevent freeze damage if heat is off in winter.
- Call a plumber to drain and blow out all water lines if heat is off in winter.
- Remove pets to a clean environment if heavy fire residues are present.
- Send a sample group of garments for cleaning and deodorization in order to observe the results before submitting a large quantity.
- Retain a contractor to board up open windows, roofs, or other penetrations in order to prevent additional damage.

Do not...

- Wipe or attempt to wash fire residues from walls, ceilings or other absorbent surfaces.
- Use carpeting or upholstered furniture impacted by heavy smoke residues or debris.
- Use food items or canned goods exposed to heat.
- Turn on computers, televisions, stereos or electrical appliances until they have been cleaned and checked.



Water Damage

Water damage arises from fire damage, broken pipes, blocked drains, malfunctioning appliances, storms and other causes. The appropriate treatment

depends on the nature of the damage. Some water carries contaminants and should be considered hazardous (see Sewage and Flood Damage, below). Whatever the origin, the prospects for restoration depend largely on the speed with which your building and personal property can be dried. Even clean water can generate mildew and other bacterial growth if neglected.

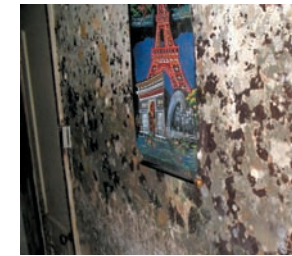
Do...

- Ventilate wet areas. Turn on air conditioning for accelerated drying in summer (if there is no visible mold); in winter, alternate cycles of opened windows and heating.
- Remove standing water from flat surfaces by sponging and blotting.
- Take up saturated rugs and carpets when hardwood floors are at risk.
- Stay out of rooms where ceilings are sagging from retained water.
- Transport computers and musical instruments to a dry environment, remove cases and blow dry with low pressure air.
- Remove lamps, telephones and decorative items from wet furniture tops.
- Open drawers and cabinet doors for interior drying, but do not force stuck drawers or doors.

- Freeze valuable books and documents to retard mildew growth until drying can be performed.
- Place aluminum foil squares, china saucers or wood blocks under furniture legs to avoid carpet staining.
- As soon as possible, call a professional water damage specialist for emergency drying.

Do not...

- Operate televisions, vacuums, computers or other electrical appliances while standing on wet carpet or floors, especially wet concrete floors. Serious injury may result.
- Use heat to dry closed building interiors; mildew and expanded moisture damage may result.
- Leave wet fabrics in place; space them apart and dry as soon as possible.



Sewage & Flood Damage

Raw sewage and flood waters contain bacteria and other micro-organisms that are hazardous to human health. These

can be transmitted by touching contaminated items or by tracking them into uncontaminated areas. Children and pets are especially vulnerable. Frequent hand washing is an important preventative measure. Absorbent materials such as carpeting and drywall may not be restorable after direct contact with sewage-contaminated or flood-contaminated water.

Do...

- Treat all water impacted surfaces and furnishings as toxic until properly decontaminated.
- Keep children and pets out of contaminated areas.

Do not...

- Track contaminated material into undamaged areas.
- Attempt to decontaminate surfaces with sprays and other over-the-counter germicidal products, which may not fully disinfect contaminated surfaces.