After The Fire . . .

Your Survival Guide

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department
4100 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
703-246-3801

Introduction

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Vision

Dedicated to being the best community-focused fire and rescue department ensuring a safe and secure environment for all.

Mission

Provide the highest quality services to protect the lives, property, and environment of our community

The tragedy and destruction of a fire does not end when the flames are extinguished. ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*** firefighters and paramedics respond to fires each year where victims are in a state of confusion, shock, and despair. The loss of property and personal belongings, especially family keepsakes, is painful and traumatic. The clean-up process from smoke damage is often long and overwhelming for the average citizen.

This pamphlet is designed to assist you in dealing with your loss. Please take this opportunity to carefully read the information provided. If you still have questions or need further assistance, call the ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department at 703-246-3801 or TTY 711*** and we will be glad to help you. Our department has a caring and ready staff who want to assist you in your time of need.

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We always strive to provide you, our customer, the best possible service.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department

The ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*** is committed to providing you with the best service. To help us serve you even better, please take a moment to tell us about our service, attitude, and responsiveness. Please help us by completing the self-addressed post card located on the back cover.

YOUR THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Residents often ask why broken windows, doors or holes in the roof are necessary when fighting a fire. Fires produce smoke, hot gases, and temperatures that rise to more than 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit. Often, it is necessary to eliminate heat, smoke, and hot gases before firefighters can enter a building to extinguish a fire. Ventilation must be done quickly to help reduce fire spread. Most often, walls must be forcibly opened to find hidden fires and to allow firefighters to visibly ensure the fire is completely out. Without the use of this firefighting technique, a building could suffer total destruction by fire.

After the firefighters depart, your home again becomes your responsibility. **You are responsible for securing doors, windows, and other areas against unauthorized entry and for ensuring no further damage occurs to the structure or contents.** Fairfax County Building Inspectors may be notified by fire department officials to determine the structural stability of your home. They can be contacted at 703-324-1056.

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If You Cannot Live in Your Home . . .

Individuals who have experienced a fire and cannot reoccupy their home may choose to stay with family or friends. Consult your insurance company to see if you are covered for additional living expenses. A representative from ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*** will assist you in contacting agencies that will help provide needed assistance. If you need emergency assistance for food, clothing, or lodging, contact:

American Red Cross 703-584-8400
Fairfax County Human Services 703-222-0880
Salvation Army (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.) 703-385-8700

Counseling Support . . .

After a fire, you may experience depression, difficulty concentrating, anxiety, sadness, anger, fatigue, and nightmares. These are common and normal responses to a traumatic event. Some employers and health insurance carriers provide coverage for counseling services. If you or your family need support, contact:

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, 24-hour emergency services ..... 703-573-5679 and TTY 703-207-7737
CrisisLink Hotline 24-hour 703-527-4077

Take Valuables With You . . .

If you must temporarily leave your home, take with you: legal documents, identification, medicines, eye glasses, hearing aids, valuables, credit cards, checkbooks, insurance policies, cash, jewelry, photos, and other items that cannot be replaced. (Note: Let a safe cool down before opening.) Should firefighters be on the scene, they will accompany and assist you.

Reminders . . .

If you have to move, notify the Post Office of your new address and request a moving kit. If you are in temporary housing, consider having the Post Office hold your mail until permanent housing arrangements can be made. Other places you may need to contact are shown below:

- ❑ Financial institutions
- ❑ Credit card companies
- ❑ School district
- ❑ *Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213
- ❑ Utility companies (water, electric, gas, cable, and telephone)

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Utilities . . .

The Fire and Rescue Department may have utility services shut off or may disconnect service as a safety precaution to prevent further damage to your home and your personal belongings. The procedure for re-establishing various utility services are provided below:

Natural Gas

DO NOT turn the gas back on! A natural gas company representative is available 24-hours-a-day to turn on your gas and relight appliances.

Washington Gas 1-800-752-7520
703-750-1000
TTY: 703-750-7975
Columbia Gas 1-800-543-8911

Electricity

An electrical inspector must check the wiring throughout your home to ensure it is safe before the power can be reconnected.

Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative 1-888-335-0500
Dominion Virginia Power 1-888-667-3000
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Water

This service may be turned back on by you. **Be careful. The fire may have damaged the plumbing** and water damage may occur when the pipes are filled with water.

Fairfax County Water Authority 703-698-5800
Falls Church Water Department 703-248-5071
Fairfax City Water Department 703-385-7915
Vienna Water Department 703-255-6385
Herndon Water Department 703-435-6814

Telephone

Verizon 1-800-483-4200
703-954-6222
Repair 1-800-275-2355
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

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Property Insurance . . .

If you own or are purchasing your property, contact your insurance company and agent as soon as possible. If you are renting or leasing the property, you also must contact the owner. Your insurance agent will provide details on claims processing and other insurance-related questions. A list of insurance companies and their toll free numbers is provided for your use.

Note: All items in the building should be inventoried and no item should be thrown away without the approval of the insurance company.

Your duties after a fire loss

- Immediately notify insurance company of loss
- Protect property from further damage by making reasonable repairs such as covering holes and broken windows
- Inventory damaged personal property in detail; include any bills or documents which can help establish its value and age
- Cooperate with the insurance adjuster
- Submit a formal statement of loss in a timely manner
- Notify your mortgage company of the fire and keep them informed of restoration efforts

Insurance Companies . . .

Allstate Insurance Co. 1-800-326-0950
Armed Forces Insurance Exchange . 1-800-255-6792
Auto Insurance Co. of Hartford 1-800-423-0033
Erie Insurance Exchange 1-800-322-3743
Farmers Insurance Exchange 1-800-327-6377
Federal Insurance Co. 1-800-362-4822
Greater Northern Insurance Co. 1-800-362-4822
Hartford of the Midwest 1-800-243-5860
Highland Capital Brokerage 1-800-445-6256
Horace Mann Insurance Co. 1-800-999-1030
Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance Co. ... 1-800-746-7421
Metropolitan P & C Ins. (Metlife) ... 1-800-854-6011
Montgomery Mutual Insurance Co. . 1-800-638-8933
Nationwide Mutual Fire Insurance .. 1-800-421-3535
Pacific Indemnity Co. 1-800-362-4822
Prudential Insurance & Financial 1-800-843-7625
Royal First 1-800-847-6925
Safeco Insurance Co. of America 1-800-332-3226
Southern Insurance Co. of VA 1-800-468-1127
State Fairm Insurance 703-218-0400
..... 1-800-394-1792
Travelers Indemnity Co. 1-800-252-4633
Travelers Insurance. 1-800-787-2851
Union Insurance Co.(Continental Western Group)
..... 1-800-456-7688
USAA Insurance Co. 1-800-531-8222
Vigilant Insurance Co. 1-800-362-4822
Virginia Farm Bureau 1-800-447-8323

24-Hour Toll Free Numbers

Property Insurance

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Requesting a Fire Report . . .

To obtain copies of your ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*** incident report, please write to the following address or visit our website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire:

Attn: Incident Reports
Information Technology
Data and Information
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department
4100 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

The request should include the location of the incident, the type of incident (i.e., house fire, vehicle fire), the date and approximate time of the incident, your work and a day-time phone number. A non-refundable processing payment of $5 for each report must be submitted with your request. Checks must be made out to the County of Fairfax.

Please allow at least one week upon receipt of your request for processing. Reports also can be picked up at the Massey Building, 4100 Chain Bridge Road or mailed to you. Please call 703-246-3992 to confirm the availability of the report.

Vehicle Fires . . .

Contact your insurance agent who will explain your coverage and will assist you with your claim. A list of insurance companies and their toll free numbers is provided in the Property Insurance Section. If your vehicle is damaged in a structure fire, contact both your home insurance and automobile insurance agents.

If you are not insured and the vehicle is repairable, a list of repair facilities can be obtained from 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. For 24-hour emergency road service for AAA members, call 703-222-5000 or 1-800-763-5500.

If your vehicle is a total loss, it may still have some value. A list of vehicle salvage companies can be obtained in the yellow pages of your phone directory under automobile salvage. You may also want to donate your vehicle to a local charity.

Public Transportation . . .

Fairfax Connector	703-339-7200	TTY 703-339-1608
Metro	202-637-7000	TTY 202-638-3780
Metro Access	301-562-5360	TTY 301-588-7535
FASTRAN	703-222-9764	TTY 703-324-7079
Virginia Railway Express	703-684-0400	TTY 703-684-0551

Incident Reports/Vehicle Fires

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Emergency Telephone Numbers . . .

Fire and Ambulance ..... 911 (Voive/TTY)
Police, to report a crime in progress or accident ..... 911 (Voice/TTY)
Non-Emergencies 703-691-2131
..... TTY 703-204-2264
Poison Control 202-625-3333
..... TTY 202-362-8563
Flooding 703-691-2131
Sanitary Sewer Line breaks or emergencies 703-323-1211
..... TTY 703-239-8498

In the event of a natural disaster or other major area-wide emergency, tune in to Fairfax County Cable Television Channel 16.

General County Information . . .

Assistance for persons with hearing impairments ..... 1-800-828-1120 (TTY/VA Relay Center)
Citizens Assistance 703-324-3185
..... TTY 711
Fairfax County Home Page ..... http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Home Page ..... http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/
24-Hour Recorded Information (via touch-tone phone) 703-324-INFO

Frequently Called Numbers . . .

Air Quality & Chemical Hazards 703-246-2300
Animal
- Animal Control 703-830-1100
- Animal Services 703-830-1100
- Dog Licenses 703-830-1100

Building & Construction
- Permits 703-222-0801
- Inspection Requests 703-222-0455
- Home Occupation Permits 703-222-1082

Children
- Child Abuse Complaints 703-324-7400
  TTY 703-222-9452
- Child Care Information 703-449-9555
  TTY 711
- SACC Information 703-449-1414

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) 1-866-368-5463
TTY 1-800-272-9268
Fire and Rescue Department (non-emergency) 703-246-2126
TTY 711
Health Information 703-246-2411
TTY 703-591-6435
Housing and Community Development 703-246-5010
TTY 703-385-3578
Human Services Access/Coordinated
- Services Planning 703-222-0880
  TTY 703-803-7914

Information (General County) 703-324-3185
TTY 711
Land Records/Deeds 703-691-7320
Marriage Licenses 703-691-7320
Mental Retardation Services 703-324-4400
TTY 703-324-4495
Operator (County) 703-324-2000
Passports ..... Check with your local post office
Police (non-Emergency) 703-691-2131
Non-Emergency: TTY 703-204-2264 and Emergency TTY 911
Public Affairs 703-324-3187
TTY 711
Public Assistance 703-324-7500
TTY 711
Public Works 703-324-5033
- Emergency (24-Hours) 703-323-1211
- Sanitary Sewers 703-323-1211

Storm Drainage-Flooding 703-934-2800
School Information 703-846-8670
Senior Citizen Information 703-324-5411
TTY 703-449-1186
*Social Security 1-800-772-1213
Social Services 703-324-7500
TTY 703-222-9452
Tax Information (county) 703-222-8234
TTY 703-222-7594
Tenant-Landlord Commission 703-222-8435
TTY 711
Transportation 703-324-1100
TTY 703-324-1102

Trash (county)
- Collection 703-802-3322
- Household Hazardous Waste 703-324-5068
- I-66 Transfer Station 703-631-1179
- I-95 Landfill 703-690-1703

Vehicle Registration 703-222-8234
Vital Records (death certificates, etc.) 703-246-7122

Voting Information 703-222-0776
- Recorded Information 703-324-4700

Water Authority 703-698-5800
TTY 703-698-7025
Wills, Probate 703-691-7320

*Denotes a state or federal agency.

Telephone Numbers

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Pets

Smoke can damage the lungs of a dog or cat in minutes and sparks can cause painful burns that may stay hidden under your pet's fur if not located and treated. As soon as possible, take your pet to a veterinarian. If your pet is missing, call the Fairfax County Animal Shelter at 703-830-1100.

Damaged Monies or Negotiables

If paper currency is burned, handle with extreme care. Place each bill in plastic wrap for preservation. To reclaim paper currency and coins, ask your local financial institution for advice regarding replacement. If your U.S. Savings Bonds have been damaged or destroyed, write to the U.S. Treasury Department Bureau of Public Debt, Division of Loans and Currency, 537 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605, Attn: Bond Consultant. Include name(s) and address(es) on bonds, approximate date or time period when purchased, denominations, and number of each.

Food Management

Any food, beverages and/or medicines exposed to heat or smoke should not be consumed. Exposure to heat may alter the potency of medication. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking these medicines. If food was in tightly closed or sealed containers, or in an airtight refrigerator or freezer, it may be salvageable. It is safer to replace items than to take an unnecessary risk to your health. ***If in doubt, throw it out.***

Cleaning Tips

Residual smoke odor that remains following a small fire is an annoyance. Placing small saucers of household vanilla, vinegar, baking soda, or activated charcoal around your home will absorb these odors. Remember, the smoke odor also will be inside your heating and cooling ductwork which will need to be cleaned before it is used.

A janitorial supply or cleaning service specializing in restoration of fire damaged property should be contacted to assist you in cleaning ducts and deodorizing your home.

General Cleaning Hints

Here are some hints you may want to consider if you decide to clean your own home:

- Change and clean air conditioner/heater filters.
- Vacuum all surfaces
- Seal off the room in which you are working with plastic to keep soot and dust from moving from one location to another. Try to keep windows closed.

Painted Walls

To remove soot and smoke from walls, mix together four to six tablespoons tri-sodium phosphate (TSP) and one gallon of water. Use rubber gloves and eye protection when working with this solution.

Floors

Clean all hard surface floors with an appropriate soap solution. Unless these surfaces are "pre-finished" or "no-wax" strip and wax them. Determine if water has been trapped between flooring and subfloor. This can cause odors and deteriorate both surfaces.

Books

Books can be dried by placing them on end, separating the pages and letting them air dry. You also may separate pages and place unmarked dry paper between the pages and press together to prevent crinkling or distorting. If the books are very wet, air dry until they are only damp, then sprinkle cornstarch between the pages. Wipe with a dry cloth and press together.

A Word About Smoke Alarms . . .

Smoke Alarms are Required by Law

Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC), Section 61-5-2, requires smoke alarms in all homes and residential buildings with one or more dwelling units, including single-family homes, highrise apartments, and condominiums, must have smoke alarms outside sleeping areas and in the basement.

Rental Units

The ordinance requires the owner of the dwelling, or the owner's agent, to maintain the smoke alarms in good working order. The tenant is responsible for reasonable care (including changing the battery) and for interim testing of all alarms.

Maintenance and Testing

Routine maintenance includes vacuuming, testing, and changing the battery. ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*** recommends testing and vacuuming your smoke alarms monthly. All batteries should be replaced annually. When setting your clocks back from daylight saving time, change your batteries in your smoke alarms. Smoke alarms do not last forever. Therefore, it is a good idea to replace any smoke alarm that is more than ten (10) years old.

For more information about smoke alarms or home escape planning, contact ***Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*** at **703-246-3801 or TTY 711**.

Note: Through fire and rescue department outreach programs, smoke alarms and batteries will be provided to county residents upon request. Call PublicAffairs and Life Safety Education at 703-246-3801, 703-246-3947 or TTY 711.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms . . .

Homes that contain appliances such as furnaces and water heaters that burn oil, propane or natural gas; fireplaces and woodstoves; space heaters that run on fuel; gas ranges and ovens or gas dryers all should have carbon monoxide alarms.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas produced by burning fuel. A carbon monoxide alarm will provide you with early warning when carbon monoxide levels are approaching a dangerous level. For more information, call Public Affairs and Life Safety Education Section at 703-246-3801 or TTY 711.

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations, call Public Affairs and Life Safety Education at 703-246-3801 or TTY 711. Please allow seven working days to make the necessary arrangement. You can also contact the Department through our web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire

August 2007

How Did The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Treat You?

Please take a moment to fill out this comment card so that we may improve our services. Circle the appropriate responses and provide comments as needed. Thank you.

	Poor	Marginal	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	
911 operator	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Our response time	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Fire suppression	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Medical treatment	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Other service	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Specify: _____						
Performed jobs efficiently	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Communicated clearly	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Answered questions	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Anticipated needs	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Took special care of you	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Were enthusiastic about their jobs	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Overall service	P	M	S	G	E	N/A

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

Comment Card

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FIRE CHIEF
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department
4100 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, VA 22030