

Appliances

Electrical Appliances

Do not run appliances until you have had a service man 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.

Refrigerators & 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 a open container, or a piece of charcoal can be placed in the refrigerator or freezer to absorb odor. **CAUTION:** When discarding any refrigerator or freezer be sure the doors are removed.

Cooking Utensils

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



Palm Beach County
Board of County Commissioners
Fire Rescue Department
www.pbcgov.com/fire

405 Pike Road • West Palm Beach, FL 33411

Reference Directory

American Red Cross	
Main Number - North County	(561) 833-7711
West County	(561) 992-9703
Humane Society	(561) 686-3663
PBC Planning, Zoning & Building	(561) 233-5100
Palm Tran (Bus Service)	(561) 841-4200
PBC Fire Rescue	
Main Administration	(561) 616-7000
Plan Review / New Construction Inspections	(561) 233-0050
Internal Revenue Service	(800) 829-1040
PBC Sheriff's Office	(561) 688-3000
Salvation Army	(561) 686-3530
Social Security Administration	(800) 772-1213
PBC Circuit Court	(561) 355-2986

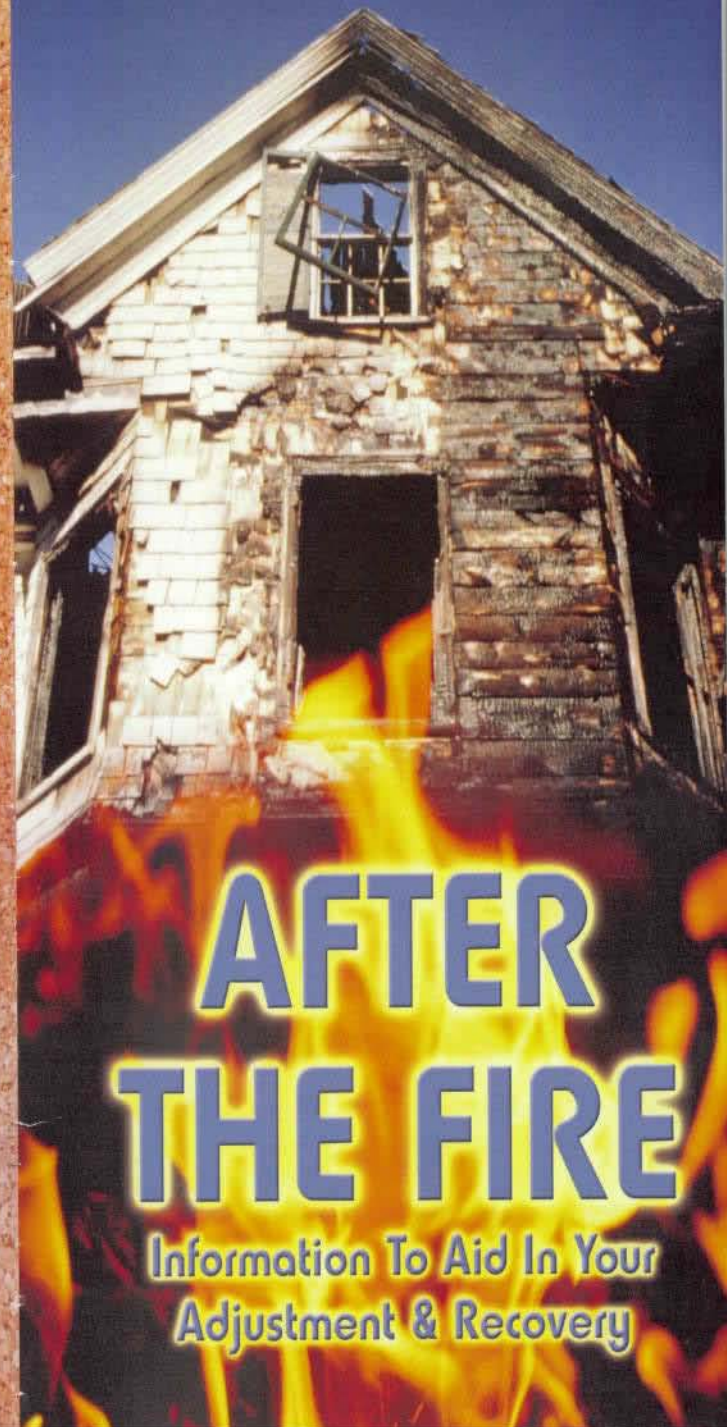
Utilities

Solid Waste Authority	(561) 640-4000
PBC Water Utilities	(561) 493-6000
Florida Power & Light	(561) 697-8000
Amerigas	(561) 844-1775
Florida Public Utilities	(561) 832-2461

**ALL EMERGENCIES
DIAL 911**



**PALM BEACH COUNTY
FIRE RESCUE**



AFTER THE FIRE

Information To Aid In Your
Adjustment & Recovery

Introduction

After the fire you may notice some damage that seems unnecessary. "Why broken windows?" or "Why holes in the roof?" Fires produce temperatures well over 1,200 degrees F, along with smoke and hot gases.

As a fire burns, it moves upward, then outward. Ventilation must be done quickly to reduce fire spread. Often, walls must be forcibly opened to find the "hidden" fires. This allows complete fire extinguishment.

Without the use of these firefighting techniques, the building could suffer total destruction by fire.

Property Insurance

The first thing to do after the fire is to contact your insurance company or the agent as soon as possible. If you are renting or leasing the property, you must contact the owner also. Your insurance adjuster may be able to help you in making immediate repairs or helping to secure your home. If you cannot reach your agency and need professional assistance in boarding up your home, a general contractor, a fire damage restoration firm or a fire service firm can help. Check your yellow pages.

Remove as many valuables as possible if you must stay elsewhere. If Palm Beach County Fire Rescue (PBCFR) is investigating the fire, an officer will accompany you through the house as you remove valuables. Be sure to inventory the property you remove. Further, you should check for important legal documents which may have been damaged.

If your property is not insured, or if your insurance will not cover all of your losses, contact your family lawyer or the Internal Revenue Service for directions. You may be eligible for a tax deduction.

If You Must Evacuate

This may be your decision or one based on the building inspector's judgement that the residence is unsafe. *If you do decide to leave:*

Contact the Local Police

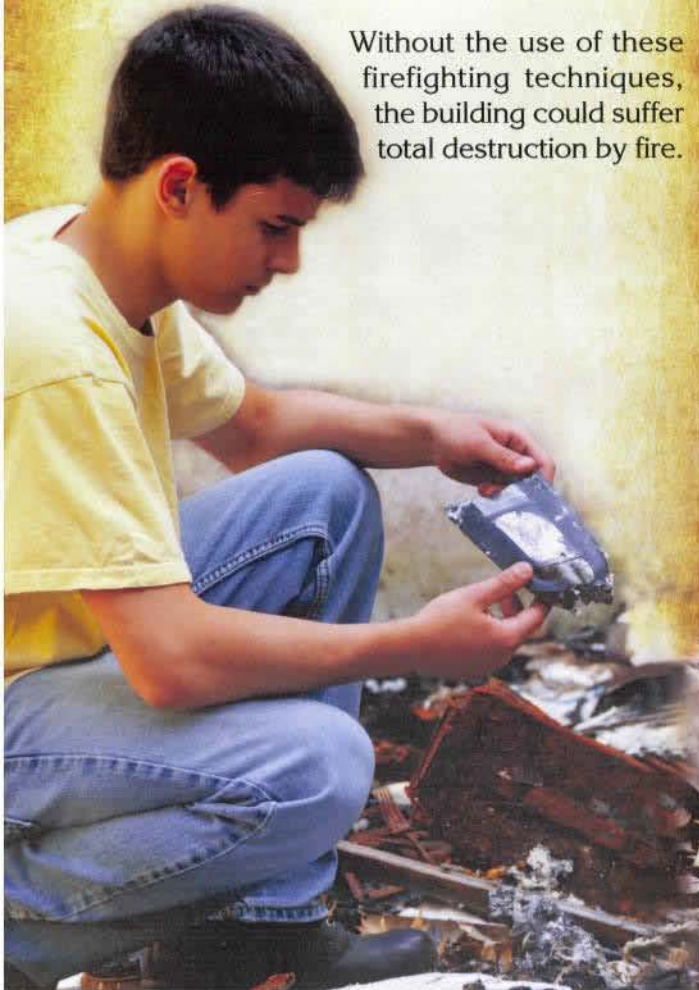
Police will keep an eye on the property during your absence.

Temporary Housing

Local relief services like the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army should be able to help you with temporary housing. If you are insured under a package homeowner's or tenant's policy, a section of your coverage may pay for the extra costs of temporary housing, such as a hotel.

Take the Following Items With You

- Identification
- Vital medicines such as blood pressure regulating drugs or insulin
- Eyeglasses, hearing aids or other personal aids
- Valuables such as credit cards, checkbooks, insurance policies, savings account books, money, jewelry, etc. If you have a safe do not attempt to open it. A safe involved in fire may hold intense heat for several hours. If the door is open before the safe has cooled down, the contents may burst into flames.



If You Must Evacuate

If You Have Moved

If you have moved, notify the following agencies

- the Post Office of your new address.
- your bank(s).
- your utilities departments.
- credit card companies.
- your local school district, if you have children.
- the Social Security Administration.
- Subscriptions to magazine and newspapers

Before Attempting Any Repairs

The Planning, Zoning and Building Department will be notified if there is structural damage to your home. Before attempting any repairs, check with them for the need of special permits.

Utilities

Often PBCFR will 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 company will not make repairs on the customers side of the meter such as house wiring or gas lines. A private contractor will have to be contacted to make the repairs. All repairs of this nature require permits and inspection by PBCFR and the Planning, Zoning and Building Department. The utility companies will not restore your utilities until the repairs are approved by the County.

Do not attempt to reconnect your utilities yourself.

Documents & Records

Documents are very important to your well being and can be damaged or destroyed as a result of a fire or other disaster. For this reason, the PBCFR recommends locating the following documents, if possible. Locating these documents will speed up the process of recovering from a disaster.

- Birth Certificate
- Driver's Licenses
- Bank Book
- Insurance Policies
- Military Discharge Papers
- Passports
- Social Security Cards
- Marriage Papers
- Divorce Decree
- Citizenship Papers
- Animal Registration
- Death Certificates
- Credit Cards
- Titles and Deeds
- Stocks and Bonds
- Wills
- Medical Records
- Payment Books
- Warranties
- Income Tax Records
- Auto Registration
- Automobile Title
- Prepaid Burial Contracts

Aid to Family Dependent Children (AFDC) and Welfare clients should notify their case worker if their I.D. card is damaged or destroyed.

Copies of marriage and divorce records can be obtained from the Clerk of the Circuit Court in the county of marriage or divorce.

Copies of birth and death certificates can be obtained from the Circuit Court for the County, Vital Statistics Department (see Reference Directory).

NOTE: It is wise to store all important documents in an approved container that is specifically designed for such purposes.



Money Replacement

If your U.S. Savings Bonds have been mutilated or destroyed, write to:

U.S. Treasury Department
Bureau of Loans and Currency
537 West Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Include name(s) and address(es) on bonds, approximate date or time period when purchased, denominations and approximate number of each.

Paper Money Replacement

If the money (paper) you have kept in your home is only half burned or less (if half or more of the bill is intact), you can check with any local commercial bank or take the remainder to the Federal Reserve Bank, or you can mail the remainder of the money via First Class Registered mail to:

U.S. Treasury Department
Main Treasury Building
Room 1123
Washington, DC 20220

Mutilated or melted coins can be taken to the Federal Reserve Bank or mailed via First Class Registered mail to:

U.S. Mint
5th and Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19015

Salvage Hints

Cleaning Walls, Furniture & Carpeting

- Vacuum all surfaces
- Change and clean air conditioner/heater filters
- 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.
- **Painted walls** - to remove soot and smoke from walls mix together:

4 to 6 tablespoons tri-sodium phosphate (can be purchased in paint stores) and one gallon of water. Keep away from children and pets. The use of rubber gloves and goggles is suggested. 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 that you use a smoke sealer (purchased in a paint store) before painting.

- **Wallpapered Walls** - usually wallpaper cannot be restored. Check with your wallpaper dealer.

- **Furniture** - Do not use chemicals on furniture. Very inexpensive products such as a type of Flax Soap (readily available in hardware and paint stores) is a 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.

- **Floors** - Use Flax type Soap on wood and linoleum floors. It will take 4 to 5 applications. Then strip and re-wax. For carpeting, steam clean, shampoo, and repeat steam cleaning.

- **Mattresses** - Reconditioning an 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 get smoke odor out of pillows - the feathers and foam retain the odor.

- **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. Hinges should also be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.

Clothing & Books

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 tri-sodium phosphate

(Can be purchased in paint stores)

1 cup Lysol or any household chlorine bleach

1 gallon warm water

Mix well: add clothes, rinse with clean water, dry well

To remove mildew, wash the fresh stain with soap and water. Then rinse and dry in the sun. If the stain isn't gone, use lemon juice and salt, or diluted solution of household chlorine bleach.

Test Colored Garments Before Using Any Treatment!

Take wool, silk, or rayon garments to the dry cleaners as soon as possible.

Leather & Books

Wipe your leather goods with damp cloth, then with a dry cloth. Stuff your purses and shoes with newspapers to retain their shape. Leave your suitcases open. Leather goods should be dried 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.

Books can be dried by placing them on end with the pages separated. Then they should be piled and pressed to prevent the pages from crinkling. Alternating drying and pressing will help prevent mildew until the books are thoroughly dry. If your books are very damp, sprinkle cornstarch or talc between the plates, 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 labels come off, be sure you mark the contents on the can or jar with grease pencil. **Don't use canned goods when cans have bulged or 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 as may as 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. Otherwise, if the fruits are not spoiled, they can be eaten at once.
- 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 - do not 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.

