

AFTER THE FIRE



Guide to Fire Recovery CITY OF MANITOWOC FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT



900 Quay Street
Manitowoc WI 54220
(920) 686-6540



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INCIDENT INFORMATION

Immediately after a fire, there are some important steps to take and decisions to make to help protect your property. The following pages will serve as a guide to help make your recovery easier and faster.

INCIDENT INFORMATION

LOCATION: _____

DATE: ____ / ____ / ____ TIME: _____

NIFRS #: _____

You may obtain a copy of the Fire Incident Report at:

City of Manitowoc Fire Rescue Department Administrative Office
900 Quay Street
Manitowoc WI 54220
(920) 686-6540

If you telephone in advance, a copy of the report will be ready for you upon your arrival.
Our normal office business hours are from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through
Friday.

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

Here are a few questions and answers that people usually have about a fire scene operation:

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) stops that damaging outward movement and enables fire fighters to fight the fire more efficiently, resulting in less damage to the structure in the long run.

Why are holes cut in the walls and/or the ceiling?

This is done so the Fire Rescue Department can be absolutely sure the fire is completely out, and that there is no hidden fire inside the walls or ceiling.

Why was the insulation removed from the house?

In some instances, insulation is not completely fire proof and may hold hidden embers that could start another fire later on (rekindle). This is done so that the Fire Rescue Department is absolutely sure that the fire is completely out and there is no chance for a rekindle.

Why were the utilities shut off?

The utilities are shut off for several reasons. The first of which would be to reduce the possibility of extra damage to the structure. Examples are: gas explosion, additional water damage, and electric hazards. Secondly would be the safety of our firefighters. Utilities are left off until it is determined by a qualified technician that it is safe for them to be turned back on.

Who will repair my property?

You have the final say on who will repair your home/property. The Manitowoc Fire Rescue Department does have a list of contractors that are willing to assist us any time (day or night) to secure your building. If your home is not habitable, the Red Cross and Salvation Army will be able to assist you.

PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

COMPLETED

DESCRIPTION

_____	Contact your insurance company immediately to report your loss. They will send out an adjuster to discuss your situation and help arrange for immediate repairs and, if needed, accommodations.
_____	Check your insurance coverage for payment of temporary housing or the availability of immediate funds.
_____	Arrange for board-up of your property if necessary. The Manitowoc Fire Rescue Department can assist you in contacting a board-up contractor.
_____	If you are the tenant, contact the property manager, or the owner of the building. It is the responsibility of the owner to prevent any further damage or loss. See that your personal belongings are secure either in the building or at another location.
_____	Contact your local disaster relief services whether you are insured or not. The Salvation Army or American Red Cross can help arrange temporary housing, food, medication, and other items destroyed by the fire. Telephone numbers are listed in the telephone section of this manual.
_____	Consider removing valuables remaining in the building if you plan to leave.
_____	Contact the Manitowoc Police Department (920) 686-6500, to direct any inquiries that you may have concerning the security of your property.
_____	Contact the following parties. Notify them of your situation and where you will be temporarily staying: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ _____ your insurance agent◆ _____ your employer◆ _____ your children's school◆ _____ your family and friends◆ _____ the Post Office◆ _____ the newspaper◆ _____ the utility companies

PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

COMPLETED

DESCRIPTION

Save all receipts for any money spent. These are used to verify to the insurance company the funds spent that were related to your fire loss. They are also used to verify losses claimed on your Federal Income Tax return.

Make sure all utilities, that have been turned off, remain off until they have been inspected by the appropriate utility company or a professional. If you smell gas in your home, apartment, or business, evacuate the property and call 9-1-1 from a telephone outside the building.

During the winter months, drain all water from pipes to prevent freezing and damage to the plumbing system.

Do **not** throw away any damaged property until a full inventory is made.

Do **not** sign anything immediately after any property damage to your home, business, or apartment. Take the time to thoroughly read any fine print on work orders. Make sure you see a detailed estimate of the work to be done.

DO **NOT** leave the site until it has been secured.

If you need assistance with any of the items listed in this section, please contact the Manitowoc Fire Rescue Department, (920) 686-6540.

AFTER YOUR PROPERTY HAS BEEN DECLARED SAFE

In many cases, the board-up service can assist in securing the occupancy to prevent further damage to your possessions. Items that should be considered include:

SMOKE AND FIRE DAMAGE:

- ▶ Dispose of all food exposed to heat, water, or smoke.
- ▶ During winter months, pour biodegradable anti-freeze in toilets, sinks, and tubs during cold weather to prevent freezing.
- ▶ Open windows for ventilation.
- ▶ Clean and protect chrome trim in your kitchen and bathroom with a light coat of oil or Vaseline.
- ▶ Change the furnace filter.
- ▶ Vacuum any loose dirt or smoke particles from upholstery.
- ▶ Do not use electrical appliances until they have been cleaned and checked.
- ▶ Do not send garments to an ordinary dry cleaner. If cleaned improperly, smoke and odor may be set into the fabric.

WATER DAMAGE:

- ▶ Prop up wet cushions for even drying.
- ▶ Place blocks between furniture legs and wet carpeting.
- ▶ To speed drying, turn on the air conditioning in the summer or open windows during the winter. Do not use heat.
- ▶ Open cabinets and drawers to speed drying.
- ▶ If the ceiling is sagging, punch holes in the ceiling to let trapped water out.
- ▶ Do not turn on ceiling fixtures if the ceiling is wet - watch for sagging ceilings.
- ▶ Do not use your household vacuum cleaner to remove water.
- ▶ Do not leave books or printed items on wet carpet.
- ▶ Do not use televisions or other appliances while standing on wet floors.

INSURANCE

IF YOU ARE NOT INSURED

If you are not insured, your recovery from a fire loss will be based upon your own resources and help from your community.

Private organizations that help with disaster relief include the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Your church or synagogue can put you in touch with your denomination's helping group. Local civic organizations such as the Rotarians may be sources of aid.

Some state and local governments have emergency aid programs. Check with your state or municipal emergency services office or the state department of social services for information on what help is available.

Disaster relief services, both privately funded and government sponsored, usually work together to coordinate their services to those in need. For instance, Red Cross will refer clients to groups which have clothing and furnishings available, if these are needed.

State social services agencies are aware of what groups in the community offer housing or food grants. A contact with one helping group will usually connect you to a network of agencies who will work together to help you.

Losses due to fire are deductible from your Federal income tax. Get receipts and keep records of the money you spend in repairing

or replacing damaged property and in covering your living expenses during the loss recovery period. These records and receipts will be the basis for calculating the casualty loss on your income tax.

Check Publication 547, Tax information on Casualties, Disasters, and Thefts, available from the local Internal Revenue Service Office or online, for rules governing casualty losses; or check with an accountant for guidance.

IF YOU ARE INSURED

Your insurance will be the most important single component in recovering from a fire loss. A homeowner's, tenant's, or condominium owner's insurance policy is really a package of a number of coverages. Standard forms are developed and then amended from state to state and from insurance company to insurance company. You will have to check your individual policy to see how your insurance works.

Your insurance policy is a contract between you and the insurer. The insurer promises he will do certain things for you. In turn, you have certain obligations to the insurer.

If you have questions concerning your policy contact your local agent.

REPLACEMENT OF VALUABLE DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

Here is a check list of documents you will need to replace if they have been destroyed and who to contact for information on the replacement process.

<u>Item(s)</u>	<u>Who to Contact</u>	<u>Item(s)</u>	<u>Who to Contact</u>
Drivers license	Local Department of Motor Vehicles	Wills	Your lawyer
Bank books	Your bank, as soon as possible	Medical records	Your Doctor
Insurance policies	Your insurance agent	Warranties	Issuing company
Military discharge papers	Local Veterans Administration	Income tax records	The Internal Revenue Service Center where filed or your accountant
Passports	Local passport office	Auto registration title cards	Department of Motor Vehicles
Birth, Death, Marriage Certificates	State Bureau of Records in the state of birth, death, or Marriage	Citizenship	The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service
Divorce papers	Circuit Court where decree was issued	Prepaid burial contracts	Issuing company
Social Security or Medicare cards	Local Social Security Office	Animal registration papers	Society of registry
Credit cards	The issuing companies, as soon as possible		
Titles to deeds	Records department of city or county in which the property is located		
Stocks and bonds	Issuing company or your broker		
		Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Welfare clients should notify their caseworkers if their identification cards for check cashing, their medical aid, or food stamp cards have been destroyed.	

Salvage Hints

A word of caution before you begin. Several of the cleaning mixtures described in this section contain the substance Tri-Sodium Phosphate (TSP). Tri-Sodium Phosphate is a caustic substance commonly used as a cleaning agent. It should be used with care and stored out of the reach of children or pets. Wear rubber gloves when using to protect your skin. Read the label for further information.

CLOTHING

Smoke odor and soot can sometimes be washed from clothing. The following formula will often work **with clothing that can be bleached:**

- 4-6 tbsp. TSP
- 1 cup Lysol or chlorine bleach
- 1 gallon warm water

Wear rubber gloves. Mix well, add clothes, rinse with clear water. Dry well.

WALLS AND FURNITURE

To remove soot and smoke from walls, furniture and floors do the following:

- 4-6 tbsp. TSP
- 1 cup Lysol or chlorine bleach
- 1 gallon warm water

Wear rubber gloves when cleaning. After washing article, rinse with clear warm water and dry thoroughly.

Walls may be washed down while wet. Use a mild soap or detergent. Wash a small area at one 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.**

For wallpaper contact your dealer or installer for information on wallpaper cleaners.

WOOD FURNITURE OR FIXTURES

Wood furniture or fixtures can be treated in the following way:

1. DO NOT DRY YOUR FURNITURE IN THE SUN. The wood will warp and twist out of shape.
2. Clear off mud or dirt.
3. Remove drawers. Let them dry thoroughly so there will be no sticking when they are replaced.
4. Scrub with stiff brush and cleaning solution.
5. Wood can decay and mold, so ventilate the area where objects are drying.
6. If mold forms, wipe wood with a cloth soaked in a mixture of hot water and borax.
7. To remove white spots or film, rub the wood surface with a cloth soaked in a solution of:
 - 2 cup ammonia
 - 2 cup waterthen wipe dry and polish with wax, or rub the surface with a cloth soaked in:
 - 2 cup turpentine
 - 2 cup linseed oil

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

American Red Cross of Northeast Wisconsin ----- (414) 659-0373

Comcast Cable ----- (920) 682-6511

Internal Revenue Service ----- 1-800-829-1040 (individual)

1-800-829-4933 (business)

Appleton Office ----- (920) 996-4860

Green Bay Office ----- (920) 662-5999

Milwaukee Office ----- (414) 231-2100

Manitowoc Public Utilities

Electric & Water ----- (920) 683-4600

Manitowoc Public Schools ----- (920) 686-4741

(Pupil Services)

Manitowoc Co. Register of Deeds ----- (920) 683-4013

Manitowoc Co. Human Services ----- (920) 683-4230

Salvation Army ----- (920) 684-7117

Social Security Administration ----- 1-800-772-1213

U.S. Post Office - Manitowoc ----- 1-800-275-8777

Wisconsin Public Service

Gas ----- 1-800-450-7280

Wisconsin Dept. Motor Vehicles ----- (608) 264-7447

3651 Dewey Street, Manitowoc