

REDOAK FIRE RESCUE

AFTER THE FIRE



INSTRUCTION BOOKLET

PRIDE-COMMITMENT-DEDICATION

WWW.REDOAKTX.ORG

After the Fire Cover Letter

Dear Citizen:

The Red Oak Fire Rescue strives to serve the community of Red Oak by saving lives and property. Firefighters are familiar with the devastation and trauma resulting from fire. Generally, those who experience fire are not. The difficult period directly after a fire is confusing and traumatic. We recognize this and have created this booklet to assist you through this trying and tragic period.

While firefighters are on the scene they will attempt to assist you and your family as best they can. After they leave questions may arise. By referring to this booklet, many of your concerns may be addressed. A list of important resources and telephone numbers are also included to speed your recovery from this unexpected event.


If we can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to call the Red Oak Fire Rescue at 972-617-7632.

The logo for Red Oak Fire-Rescue is a shield-shaped emblem. At the top, the words "RED OAK" are written in a white, sans-serif font. Below this, there is a central graphic featuring a white star on a blue background, with a red and white circular element below it. At the bottom of the shield, the words "FIRE-RESCUE" are written in a large, white, sans-serif font. The entire emblem is set against a dark blue background with a red border.

Eric Thompson
Fire Chief
City of Red Oak

After the Fire General Information

TELEPHONE NUMBERS



American Red Cross	(903) 519-9549
Animal Control	972-576-3414
Auto Registration (County Tax Office)	972-923-5155
Building Inspections & Permits	972-576-3414
Chamber of Commerce	972-617-0906
City Hall	972-617-3638
County Courthouse	972-825-5000
Driver's License (Dept. of Public Safety)	972-937-5370
Social Security	800-772-1213
Fire Department (Administration)	469-218-7713
Police Department	972-617-7632
Humane Society (SPCA of Ellis County)	972-935-0756
Internal Revenue Service	800-829-1040
Medical Emergencies	911
Police Emergencies	911
Veterans' Information	214-767-4687
Voters Information	972-923-5195

The First 24 Hours - 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

Contact your insurance agent/company.

Cautions!!!

Do not enter the damaged site. Fires can rekindle from hidden, smoldering remains.

Normally, the fire department will see that utilities (water, electricity and natural gas) are either safe to use or are disconnected before they leave the site. 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 police departments 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 losses claimed on your income tax.

If it is safe to do so, try to locate the following items:

- identification, such as driver's licenses and Social Security cards
- insurance information
- medication information
- eyeglasses, hearing aids or other prosthetic devices
- valuables, such as credit cards, bank books, cash and jewelry

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

- your insurance agent/company
- your mortgage company (also inform them of the fire)
- your family and friends
- your employer
- your child's school
- your post office
- any delivery services
- your fire and police departments
- our utility companies

Do not throw away any damaged goods until after an inventory is made. All damages are taken into consideration in developing your insurance claim.

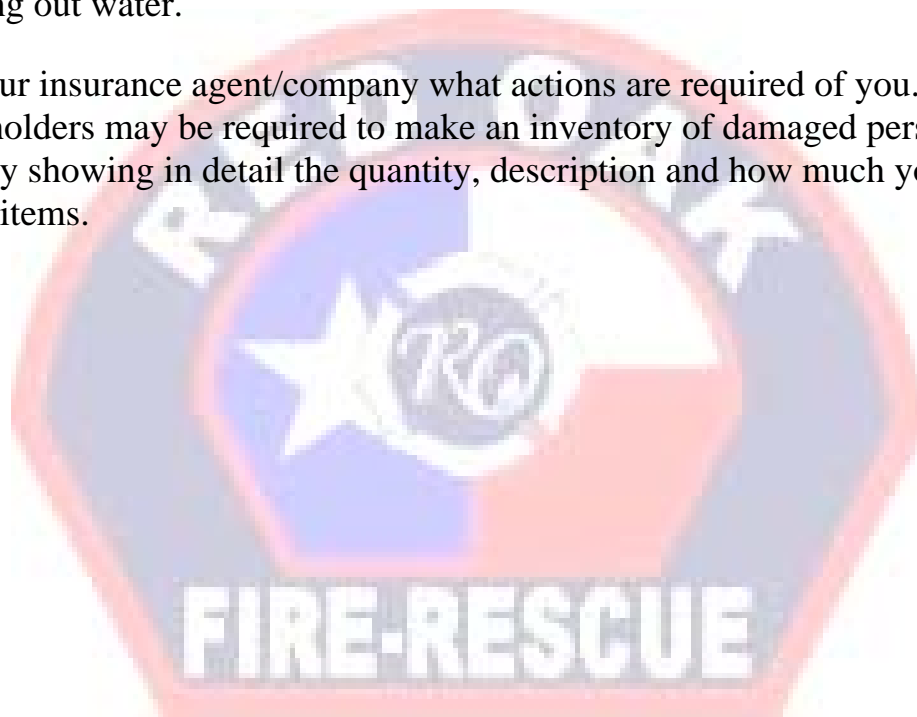
If you are considering contracting for inventory or repair services discuss your plans with your insurance agent/company first.

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, and 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.



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:

- American Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- religious organizations
- department of social services
- civic organizations
- state or municipal emergency services office
- non-profit crisis counseling centers

Check with your local Internal Revenue Service office for PUBLICATION 547, TAX INFORMATION ON DISASTERS, casualty losses and thefts. A quick refund is possible if you file Form 1045, APPLICATION FOR TENTATIVE REFUND. Check with the I.R.S. first.

Valuing Your Property

You will encounter different viewpoints on the value of your property in adjusting your fire loss or in claiming a casualty loss on your federal income tax. Knowing the following terms will help you understand the process used to determine the value of your fire loss:

- **Your personal valuation:** Your personal loss of goods through fire may be difficult to measure. These personal items have SENTIMENTAL VALUE to you; however, it is objective measures of value that you, the insurer, and the Internal Revenue Service will

use as a common ground for discussion. Some of these objective measures are discussed below.

- **Cost when purchased:** This is an important element in establishing an item's final value. Receipts will help verify the cost price.
- **Fair market value before the fire:** This concept is also expressed as ACTUAL CASH VALUE. This is what you could have received for the item if you had sold it the day before the fire. The price would reflect its cost at purchase minus the wear it had sustained since purchase. Depreciation is the formal term used to express the amount of value an item loses over a period of time.
- **Value after the fire:** This is sometimes called the item's salvage value.

Restoration Services

There are companies that specialize in the restoration of fire damaged structures. Whether you or your insurer employs this type of service, be clear of who will pay. Be sure to request an estimate of cost for the work. Before any company is hired check their references. These companies provide a range of services that may include some or all of the following:

- securing the site against further damage
- estimating structural damage
- repairing structural damage
- estimating the cost to repair or renew items of personal property
- packing, transportation, and storage of household items
- securing appropriate cleaning or repair subcontractors
- storing repaired items until needed

Replacing Documents & 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.

Passports

ITEM	WHO TO CONTACT
Driver's license, Auto registration	Department of motor vehicles
Bank books (checking, savings, etc.)	Your bank, as soon as possible

Insurance policies	Your insurance agent
Military discharge papers	Department of Veterans Affairs

Passports	Passport service
Birth, death and marriage certificates	Bureau of Records in the appropriate state
Divorce papers	Circuit court where decree was issued
Social Security or Medicare cards	Local Social Security office
Credit cards	The issuing companies, as soon as possible
Titles to deeds	Records department of the locality in which the property is located
Stocks and bonds	Issuing company or your broker
Wills	Your lawyer
Medical records	Your doctor
Warranties	Issuing company
Income tax records	The IRS Center where filed or your accountant
Citizenship papers	U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service
Prepaid burial contract	Issuing company
Animal registration papers	Humane Society
Mortgage papers	Lending institution

Salvage Hints

Clothing

A word 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 sometimes can be washed from clothing. The following formula may work for clothing that can be bleached:

- 4 to 6 tbsp. Tri-Sodium Phosphate;
- 1 cup household cleaner or chlorine bleach; and
- 1 gallon warm water. Mix well, add clothes, 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-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 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 these 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 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 also can 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 warm, circulated, 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.

Leather and Books

Wipe leather goods with a damp cloth, then a dry cloth. Stuff purses and shoes with newspaper to retain shape. Leave suitcases open. Leather goods should be dried away from heat and sun. When leather goods are dry, clean 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, place them in a normal freezer until a vacuum freezer can be located.

A local librarian also can be a good resource.

Locks and Hinges

Locks (especially iron locks) should be taken apart and wiped 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 also should be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.

Walls, Floors and Furniture

To remove soot and smoke from walls, floors, and furniture 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; and
- 1 gallon warm water.

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

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.

Your wallpaper also can be repaired. Use a commercial paste to repaste a loose edge or section. Contact your wallpaper dealer or installer for information on wallpaper cleaners. Washable wallpaper can be cleansed like any ordinary wall, but take care 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 fixtures 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 hot water.
- To remove white spots or film, rub the wood surface with a cloth soaked in a solution of 1/2 cup household ammonia and 1/2 cup water. Then wipe the surface dry and polish with wax or rub the surface with a cloth soaked in a solution of 1/2 cup turpentine and 1/2 cup linseed oil. Be careful—turpentine is flammable (depending on turpentine's flashpoint).

You can also rub the wood surface with a fine-grade steel wool pad dipped 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 money is only half-burned or less (if half or more is still intact), you can take the remainder 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" to

Department of the Treasury
Bureau of Engraving and Printing
Office of Currency Standards
P.O. Box 37048
Washington, DC 20013

Mutilated or melted coins can be taken to your regional Federal Reserve Bank or mailed by "registered mail, return receipt requested" to:

Superintendent

U.S. Mint

P.O. Box 400

Philadelphia, PA 19105

If your U.S. Savings Bonds have been destroyed or mutilated, you must obtain Department of Treasury Form PD F 1048 (I) from your bank or www.ustreas.gov and mail to:

Department of the Treasury

Bureau of the Public Debt

Savings Bonds Operations

P.O. Box 1328

Parkersburg, WV 26106-1328

Tax Information

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

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.

Fire Department Operations

Common Questions

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 outward 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.

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.

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

Yes, a fire report is a public document and is available at the Red Oak Fire Central Fire Station, 547 N. Methodist.

Emergency Numbers

Please fill this area in with your local phone numbers and keep copies at locations other than your home.

Emergency Numbers

EMERGENCY

POISON CONTROL

DOCTORS

INSURANCE COMPANY

MEDICAL POLICY NUMBER

HOME POLICY NUMBER

AUTO POLICY NUMBER

GAS/FUEL COMPANY

MUNICIPALITY

BANKS

NEIGHBORS

ACCOUNTANT

FAMILY

AMERICAN RED CROSS

SHELTER/ASSISTANCE

PHARMACY

WORK NUMBERS

OTHER

After the Fire Strikes - More Information

The following checklist serves as a quick reference and guide for you to follow after a fire strikes.

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. The fire department should see that utilities are either safe to use or are disconnected before they leave the site. 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.

SECURING THE SITE

The Fire Department will remove as much water and debris as possible from the fire building before turning the building over to the owner. It is the responsibility of the owner to see that the property is secure after the Fire Department leaves the scene. In the event the Fire Department feels the building is unsafe, we will secure the property as best we can.

CAUTIONS

Household wiring which may have been water damaged should be checked by an electrician before the current is turned back on.

The Fire department will see that the utilities (water, electric, or natural gas) are either safe to use or are disconnected before we leave. The utility companies will not make repairs on the customer's side of the meter, therefore, a private contractor will have to be contacted to make repairs. All repairs of this nature require permits and inspection by proper building department personnel. The utility companies will not restore your utilities until the repairs are approved by the building department. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RECONNECT UTILITIES YOURSELF!

Be watchful for any structural damage caused by the fire. The Fire Department will secure property we believe to be a safety hazard.

Any food or beverages that had contact with smoke, soot, or heat should be discarded. Wash your canned goods and jars in soapy water. If the label comes off, remark them with a permanent marker if you know the contents. Don't use canned goods when cans have bulges, are dented or show rust. **IF YOU ARE UNSURE, THROW IT OUT!**

Any medication that had contact with smoke, soot, or heat should also be thrown out. If you are uncertain about the reusability of the medication,

DISCARD IT. Notify your physician and /or your pharmacist for replacement.

If your power has been turned off KEEP DOORS TO REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER CLOSED! Refrigerators and freezers left unopened will hold their temperature for a short time. If your food becomes spoiled or thawed, THROW IT OUT! (For more information on saving foods, see salvage hints.)

If you have a safe, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO OPEN IT! Hot gases could burst into flames when the door is opened. Wait until the safe has cooled.

A final note The Red Oak Fire Rescue is here for you. It is made up of 25 state certified firefighters. All paramedics and EMT's are certified firefighters. There are two fire stations throughout the city for your protection. Both advanced and basic life support are available on our fire engines.

We are here to serve. Our greatest concern and commitment is for the safety and well being of the citizens of Red Oak and our Emergency Services District.

If you have any questions or comments about any part of our operations, call the Fire Department.

