

## **Cleaning Up and Removing Smoke Odor**

- There are some products available for reducing odors in fabrics. The products will list these properties on their label. A product with tri-sodium phosphate (TSP) is a common cleaning agent. It can be purchased under the generic name TSP. It is a caustic substance and should be used with care. Use and store it out of reach of children and pets. Read the label for further information and safety instructions. Any product that is not clearly described as suitable for use on personal clothing or fabrics that come in contact with skin should never be used for the removal of smoke odors from clothing.
- Test garments before using any treatment, and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Smoke odor and soot can sometimes be washed from clothing that can be bleached with 4 to 6 tbsp. Tri-Sodium Phosphate, 1 cup household cleaner or chlorine bleach, to every gallon of warm water. Mix well, add clothes and rinse with clear water. Dry thoroughly. Alternatively, consider washing clothes in cold water with your usual household laundry detergent, and adding one tablespoon of pure vanilla extract. This solution also has been shown to remove smoke odors on kitchen surfaces and washable furniture. To remove soot and smoke from walls, furniture and floors, use a mild soap or detergent or mix together 4 to 6 tbsp. tri-sodium phosphate and 1 cup household cleaner or chlorine bleach to every gallon of 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.
- 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 salt sprinkled on a piece of lemon, or salt sprinkled on a cloth saturated with vinegar.
- 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.
- Washable wallpaper can be cleansed like painted walls, but do not wet through the paper. Work from bottom to top to prevent streaking. Use a commercial paste to paste any loose edges or sections. Wash a small area of the walls at a 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. Reduce the chances of growth of mold and mildew by wiping down all surfaces that had gotten wet with a solution of one cup of liquid household bleach to a gallon of water. Test painted, textured or wallpapered surfaces to ensure that the bleach solution will not discolor these surfaces. To conduct this test, wipe a small area of the surface with the bleach solution, and allow it to dry at least 24 hours.
- Consult a professional about replacing drywall and insulation that has been soaked by water from fire hoses. Water-damaged drywall and insulation must be replaced. It can not be dried out and maintain structural integrity or resistance to mold and mildew.

Take photographs of the damage. You may need these to substantiate insurance claims later.

Prepare a list of damaged or lost items and provide receipts if possible. Consider photographing or videotaping the damage where it occurred for further documentation.

## **Electrical Systems**

- If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.
- If there is a pool of water on the floor between you and the fuse box or circuit breaker panel, use a dry wooden stick to try to reach to turn off the main fuse or breaker, but do not step or stand in water to do that. If you cannot reach the fuse box or breaker panel, call a qualified electrician for assistance.
- Inspect the panel box for any breakers that may have tripped. A tripped breaker may indicate damaged wiring inside your home. Do not turn on breakers that tripped; instead, turn tripped breakers to the "off" position and mark them with a piece of tape to indicate which ones were tripped when you found them. Have a qualified electrician determine if there are hidden internal electrical problems and fix them.
- Turn off all other circuit breakers except the one marked "main" and the breakers for the room(s) in which you will be working. When the power is restored, turn breakers back on, one at a time, for each room as you get to it during the recovery/ restoration process.

- Use a flashlight to inspect each fuse to see if it is still in working order. Replace each broken fuse with a fuse of exactly the same amperage rating. Do not use fuses of lower or higher ratings as replacements, or any other object such as a coin or strip of metal to bypass the protection that fuses provide.