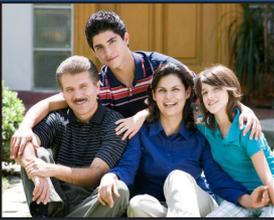




**AFTER
THE
FIRE**



RETURNING TO NORMAL

Message from the Chief...

Dear Seminole County Resident,

While our primary job is to protect the lives and property of the residents of Seminole County, we also realize the long lasting emotional, physical, and financial affects that fire can have on victims. The initial trauma of experiencing a fire is only compounded by the confusion of wondering, "What do I do now that the fire is out and the firefighters have left"?

Once the fire is out, you may be filled with many questions and uncertainties. You may find asking yourself questions such as: How do I secure my home? When should I contact my insurance agent? Can my furniture or carpets be salvaged?

We at the Seminole County Fire Department understand what you are going through and we want to assist you in any way that we can. This booklet was created specifically to answer those questions on what to do next. It was compiled from reputable sources such as the American Red Cross, the United States Fire Administration, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

If there is anything we can help you with, please call us at (407) 665-5175.

Sincerely,



Leeanna Mims,
Fire Chief



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COMMON QUESTIONS

Q. Why are my windows broken or holes cut in the roof?

As a fire burns, it moves upward, then outward. Breaking 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 actually means less damage will be done to your home in the long run.



Q. Why are holes in my ceilings and walls?

This is done so that the fire department is absolutely sure that the fire is completely out, and that there is not fire inside the walls, attic or in other hidden places.

Q. How can I get a copy of the fire report?

If you live in:	Your Fire Department is	Phone number
Unincorporated Seminole County, the City of Winter Springs, or the City of Altamonte Springs	Seminole County Fire Department	407-665-5175
Casselberry	Casselberry Fire Department	407-262-7700
Lake Mary	Lake Mary Fire Department	407-585-1470
Longwood	Longwood Fire Department	407-260-3490
Oviedo	Oviedo Fire Department	407-971-5610
Sanford	Sanford Fire Department	407-688-5040



IMPORTANT FIRST STEPS

Step #1

If you need a place to stay, contact the American Red Cross (407-894-4141) or have the fire department contact them for you. The Red Cross can assist you with:



- Temporary housing
- Food
- Medicine
- Eyeglasses
- Clothing
- Other essential items

Step #2

Contact your insurance agent. To get proper reimbursement from your insurance company, be sure to talk to your insurance agent before making repairs.

Step #3

When it is safe for you to go back into your home, try to locate:

- Drivers license or other identification
- Insurance information
- Birth, Death, Marriage Certificates, Wills, etc.
- Medication
- Eyeglasses or hearing aids
- Other valuables such as credit cards, cash, etc.

OUR FIREFIGHTERS WILL BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU IN LOCATING THESE ITEMS.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Family, friends, and other support systems are critical for providing emotional support during this time of rebuilding your life. There may be times when you need the help of a professional who can provide additional support and guidance. Here are some community resources that could help:

Seminole Behavioral Healthcare : 407-321-HELP (4357)

United Way for crisis counseling: 211

Red Cross for crisis & emotional assistance: 407-894-4141



SECURING YOUR HOME

Your home will still need to be protected from further damage by weather, theft, or vandalism.

When the fire department leaves, securing your home becomes your responsibility. If you cannot occupy it, remove all valuables and secure all doors, windows and other areas.



Your insurance company may be able to assist you with finding someone to board and secure your house. Many insurance companies have pre-designated contractors that can assist you. If they do not, you will have to arrange for a restoration company or a contractor to secure your building. There are many companies to choose from in the yellow pages and online.

LEAVING YOUR HOME

Give notice of your loss to your insurance company.

Contact your *local police department*, using a NON-emergency number, to let them know that your home will be unoccupied.



If you live in:	Your <i>Police Department</i> is	Phone number
Unincorporated Seminole County	Seminole County Sheriff's Office	407-665-6600
Altamonte Springs	Altamonte Springs Police Dept.	407-339-2441
Casselberry	Casselberry Police Department	407-262-7606
Lake Mary	Lake Mary Police Department	407-585-1300
Longwood	Longwood Police Department	407-339-1297
Oviedo	Oviedo Police Department	407-971-5700
Sanford	Sanford Police Department	407-688-5199
Winter Springs	Winter Springs Police Dept.	407-327-1000



LEAVING YOUR HOME (Cont'd)

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.

Many people and agencies should be notified of your relocation, including:

1. Your family and friends
2. Your mortgage lender
3. Your employer
4. Your child's school
5. Your post office
6. Any delivery services
7. Your utility companies

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

If you are uninsured, the following agencies may be able to assist you:

1. Red Cross
2. Salvation Army
3. Local religious organizations
4. Nonprofit crisis centers

PETS

Smoke can damage the lungs of a dog or cat in a matter of minutes and sparks can cause painful burns which can be hidden under their fur. As soon as possible, take your pet to a veterinarian. Accommodations for animals can be arranged through the Yellow Pages under 'Pet Sitting/Daycare'. If your pet is missing, contact Seminole County Animal Services at (407) 665-5201.



RE-ESTABLISHING UTILITIES

The normal procedure for fighting structural fires is to turn off all utilities. This includes power, water, and gas. This is a safety precaution our firefighters utilize to protect themselves, citizens, and property.

WARNING

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TURN THE UTILITIES BACK ON YOURSELF. THIS IS BECAUSE POWER, GAS AND WATER LINES MAY HAVE BEEN DAMAGED FROM THE FIRE. THESE UTILITIES MUST BE INSPECTED AND TURNED ON BY A QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL.

Electricity - If there is no damage to your home, contact a building inspector to do a safety inspection. Once the building inspector is finished, you can contact the electric company to have power restored. If there is damage to your home contact a qualified electrician to make repairs. Once repairs are completed, a building inspector will do a safety inspection. Once the building inspector is finished, you can contact the electric company to have power restored.

Water - You can turn this back on yourself. Use caution because the fire may have damaged the plumbing. Water damage may occur when the pipes are again filled with water.

Natural Gas & Propane - Do not turn the gas back on yourself. Contact your gas company to have a certified technician turn the gas back on and relight appliances.

Building Department Phone Numbers

Unincorporated Seminole County	407-665-7050
Altamonte Springs	407-571-8433
Casselberry	407-262-7700, ext. 1103
Lake Mary	407-585-1362
Longwood	407-260-3440
Oviedo	407-971-5750
Sanford	407-688-5150
Winter Springs	407-327-5972



CERTIFICATE, CREDIT CARD AND ID REPLACEMENT

Company/Agency	Phone Number
Driver's License	407-327-4761
Social Security Card	1-800-772-1213
Passport	1-877-487-2778
Bank of America	1-800-432-1000
Chase Bank	1-800-935-9935
Citibank	1-800-374-9700
Fairwinds Credit Union	407- 277-5045
Suntrust Bank	1-800-786-8787
The Fifth-Third Bank	1-800-972-3030
Trustco Bank	1-800-670-3110
Wachovia Bank	1-800-922-4684
American Express	1-800-528-4800
Discover Card	1-800-347-2683
Master Card	1-800-627-8372
Visa Card	1-800-VISA-911
Birth, death, & marriage certificates	904-359-6900 Ext. 9000
Veterans Affairs	1-800-827-1000
Citizenship Papers	1-800-375-5283

Money Replacement

Send your destroyed paper money by certified mail to:

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



Send your destroyed coins by certified mail to:

Superintendent
 U.S. Mint
 P.O. Box 400
 Philadelphia, PA 19105

CLEANING TIPS

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 its generic name of TSP and can be found at most hardware stores such as Lowes, Home Depot, or Ace Hardware. When handling TSP, wear gloves and keep out of the reach of small children.

Smoke odor and soot can often be washed from your clothing. The following formula will often work for clothing that can be bleached:

- 4 to 6 tbsps. of TSP;
- 1 cup of chlorine bleach;
- 1 gallon of water.



Mix well, add clothes, rinse with clear water. Dry thoroughly.

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.



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.



Refrigerator/Freezer - 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.

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.



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.

CLEANING TIPS (Continued)

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. 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. 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.

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 - 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.

Be sure to rinse your walls and furniture with clear warm water and dry thoroughly after washing 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.



FIRE INVESTIGATION

Some fires require a specially trained investigator to determine what caused the fire. Depending on where you live will depend on who is conducting the investigation. If you wish to check on the status of the fire investigation, you may call:

If you live in:	Your fire investigator is	Phone number
Unincorporated Seminole County	Florida State Fire Marshal's Office	386-323-0904 (To obtain case #)
Altamonte Springs	Altamonte Building/Fire Safety Division	407-571-8433
Casselberry	Casselberry Fire Department	407-262-7700
Lake Mary	Lake Mary Fire Department	407-585-1470
Longwood	Florida State Fire Marshal's Office	386-323-0904
Oviedo	Oviedo Fire Department	407-971-5610
Sanford	Sanford Fire Department	407-688-5040
Winter Springs	Florida State Fire Marshal's Office	386-323-0904 (To obtain case #)

To obtain a Fire Marshal's report

1. Please call or write the appropriate field office to determine if a fire investigation was conducted by the State Fire Marshal. If so, obtain the case file number of the report being requested.
2. Forward a letter specifically requesting a copy of the Fire Investigation Report(s), along with a check of \$10 for each report made payable to the Department of Financial Services. To assist us in completing your request, please include the following information:
 - State Fire Marshall's Case #
 - Date of Loss
 - Owner or occupant of the involved property.
 - Address of the fire loss
 - Any other helpful identifying information you may have
3. Please include your address and phone number so that we may communicate with you.
4. Forward your letter of request and check to:
Division of State Fire Marshal, Bureau of Fire & Arson Investigation
Revenue Processing • P.O. Box 6100 • Tallahassee, FL 32314-6100

DON'T LET THERE BE A NEXT TIME

- Cooking fires are the #1 cause of all household fires. Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking. If you must leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.
- Don't overload electrical outlets.
- Extension cords are only to be used temporarily. They are not designed to be plugged in full time.
- Inspect electrical cords. Replace cords that are cracked or damaged, have broken plugs, or have loose connections.
- Give space heaters some space. Keep fixed and portable space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that can burn. Turn off heaters when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Be careful when using candles. Keep candles at least 1 foot from anything that can burn. Blow out candles when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Teach children that matches, lighters, and candles are not toys and are for adults only.
- Do not smoke in bed or when you are sleepy. Use a sturdy, deep ashtray.

SMOKE ALARMS

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms, and outside sleeping areas. Interconnected smoke alarms are a good thing to have; when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test and dust smoke alarms at least once a month.
- Replace batteries twice a year. A good way to remember to change smoke alarm batteries is to do so when you change your clocks for daylight savings time.
- When the alarm "chirps" its telling you the battery is low.
- Replace any smoke alarm that is more than 10 years old.



MAKE A HOME ESCAPE PLAN



- A home escape plan is a plan to get out of your home quickly.
- Get everyone in your home together. Find all doors and windows that lead outside. Make sure they open easily.
- Windows or doors with security bars, grills, or window guards should have emergency release devices so they can be used for escape.
- Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. One way out will be the door and the second way out may be a window or another door.
- All stairways and exits should be clear of furniture or other obstructions.
- Choose a meeting place a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet once they've escaped.
- Have a plan for anyone in your home who may need assistance to escape, such as young children, older adults, or people with disabilities.
- Make sure everyone knows how to call 9-1-1.

MAKING A SAFE ESCAPE

- When a smoke alarm sounds, and there is smoke or fire, get out and stay out.
- If there is smoke blocking your way out, use your second way out. If you must escape through smoke, get low and crawl under the smoke.
- Close all doors behind you.
- Once outside, call the fire department from a cell phone or a neighbor's phone.
- Once you are out, stay out. Never go back into the burning building to rescue people, pets, or belongings.

CHECKLIST FOR THE FIRST 24 HOURS

Date of Fire: ___/___/___ Incident No: _____

- Contact Red Cross
- Contact insurance and mortgage company
- Check with your Fire Department to make sure your residence is safe to enter
- Gather essential items such as medications, clothing, and eye glasses
- Contact the police to let them know that your home will be unoccupied
- Save all receipts incurred due to the fire
- Locate important documents and I.D.'s, such as: drivers license, social security card, insurance information and wills
- Contact family, friends, employer, child's school and the post office

Notes: _____



Seminole County Fire Department

150 Bush Blvd • Sanford, FL 32773 • (407) 665-5175

