



# Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service



## Getting back to normal

Helpful advice after a fire in your home



# Fire

This booklet is designed to help you get back to normal as quickly as possible after a fire. The advice is presented in different sections for easy reference.

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Whilst every effort has been made to check the information contained in this booklet, telephone numbers and legislation may change. This information is given in good faith.

However, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service does not accept responsibility for actions, events or associations arising from any information, omissions or inaccuracies in this booklet.

If you would like any specific advice please contact:

### **Community Fire Safety**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

St Michael's Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 2HJ

Telephone: 01743 260 260

# Is it safe?

## Structural

After a fire has been extinguished it will take many hours for the building to cool down. During this time noises may be heard coming from the area involved.

Due to the expansion and contraction of different areas of the building, parts of it may become dislodged and fall.

Do not enter unless you have to and then make sure you protect yourself with a hard hat, heavy clothing and sturdy footwear.

Often walls must be breached to ensure that no 'hidden' fires are still burning. After the fire, damage may appear excessive but we must ensure that there is no further risk from fire.

## Services

It is likely that the Fire and Rescue Service will have isolated gas, electric and water supplies.

**Do not** attempt to reconnect these until checked by a competent gas engineer, electrician or plumber.

**Failure to do so may result in a fire or flood.**

See 'Essential telephone numbers' on page 15.



# What do I do first?

## Security

When we leave, the building becomes your responsibility.

If you cannot occupy it, remove all valuables and secure all doors, windows and other areas against unauthorised entry.



Should boarding up be necessary a contractor may be contacted through your business telephone directory under 'Glaziers'.

If you are a tenant contact your Housing Association or Landlord who will do this for you.

When it is necessary for the Fire and Rescue Service to cover a roof with tarpaulins they are on loan for 6 days. After this a charge, per day, is made so you should make arrangements to have them replaced.

It is impossible to state whether such expenses are covered by your insurance policy; telephone your agent or broker as soon as possible.

If the premises are to be left unoccupied, contact your local police station and inform them. Also ask neighbours to check on the premises.

## Health

If you suffer from any respiratory problems and you have inhaled smoke or you feel unwell after a fire seek immediate medical assistance from your general practitioner or go to your nearest hospital accident and emergency department.



## Accommodation

If your accommodation is not habitable and you cannot stay with friends or relatives it may be necessary to make alternative arrangements.

Contact the Housing Department of your Local Authority who may be able to assist.

See '**Essential telephone numbers**' on page 15.

Your insurance policy may cover the cost of a bed and breakfast or hotel accommodation. This should be checked with your insurance company and arrangements made accordingly.

## Pets

Accommodation for animals can be arranged through your business telephone directory under 'Boarding Kennels'.



# Insurance and insurance documents

As soon as possible contact your insurance agent, broker or company for approval. This should ideally be before you incur any expenses or commit yourself to any expense (for example, asking a builder to protect your roof).

- They may wish to inspect your property or contents before anything is moved or disposed of
- If you incur expenses - keep receipts

You may have two separate policies, with different companies, one for the structure and one for the contents.

**Ensure you contact both of them.**

- Obtain and complete a claim form, list all property, goods or contents damaged and return it to the address given
- Your insurance company will advise when specialist cleaners are to be employed by them

If you have lost policies, your broker or agent will be able to provide duplicates.

# Drying out and cleaning up

## Storage

If your premises are not habitable then furniture may need storing.

Contact companies who specialise in your business telephone directory under 'Removals and Storage'.



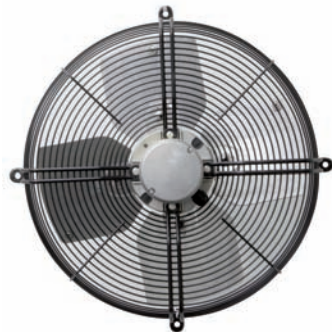
## Drying out

Do not use LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas) heaters as they create additional water vapour.

Dehumidifiers which will remove water from the atmosphere may be hired from 'Hire Services'. (See Business telephone directory)

Premises will need to be thoroughly heated and ventilated, with open windows, for several days.

This will also assist in the removal of odours.



## Carpets and rugs

Wall to wall carpet is best cleaned with a wet/dry vacuum cleaner. These may be hired from carpet stores, dry cleaning shops or tool hire companies.

See 'Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners', 'Dry Cleaning and Launderers' and 'Hire Services' in your business telephone directory.



Rugs should be dried quickly and thoroughly.

Clean by sweeping and vacuuming, then shampoo with a commercial rug shampoo.

Lay the rug on a flat surface and expose to a circulation of warm, dry air.

Ensure no moisture remains at the base of the tufts as this may rot the rug.

If you have expensive floor coverings, contact a carpet cleaning company under 'Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners' in your business telephone directory.

Other floor coverings, such as vinyl, should be lifted to prevent mildew.



## Clothes and bedding

Before treating, always read the Care Label for proper instructions.

Most clothing and bedding is capable of laundering in a domestic washing machine.

Other items may have to be attended to by specialist cleaners who can be found under 'Dry Cleaners' in your business telephone directory.



## Freezers and Food

Consider transferring frozen food to a neighbour's freezer.

Food sealed in glass jars or undamaged tins should be alright if not subjected to heat.

Your contents insurance may cover the loss of frozen food.



## Furniture

Upholstered furniture may be soiled, stained and wet.

Contact specialist cleaners under 'Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners' in your business telephone directory.

Other furniture should be moved from wet or damp areas and allowed to dry in a well ventilated place after removing drawers and stored items.

Advice can be sought from 'Furniture Repair and Restoration' companies in your business telephone directory.



## Telephone

If your telephone, or associated wiring, is damaged contact your telephone provider.



## Wall coverings and ceilings

Painted surfaces may be washed with mild soap or detergent. Sugar soap may also be used.

Washable and vinyl wall coverings may be carefully washed using mild soap or detergent.

Care should be exercised near electrical switches, sockets, etc. Preferably isolate the electrical supply.

# Documents

Householders should keep all important documents in a safe place, however in the event of a fire or flood most companies and organisations will be able to provide you with new original copies.

We have provided a list below of who you should contact for certain types of documentation.

## Bank and Building Society books

Your bank or building society can issue statements or duplicate books.



## Birth, Marriage and Death certificates

Contact the original office of registration, they will provide duplicates.



## Deeds

Contact your solicitor.

## Divorce Decree

Contact the court office where the decree was made, they will assist in providing duplicates.

# Driving Licence and vehicle documents

All types of driving licenses may be replaced by the **DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1AT**

Your insurance company will provide a duplicate vehicle insurance certificate.

You will need to contact the garage which issued your MOT certificate for a replacement or have the vehicle retested.



## Income Tax Records

Your employer will know which tax office to contact.

## Money

Take burnt money to your bank. They will send it to the Bank of England for verification and then credit you with the amount agreed.



## Passports

Contact the office of issue.



## Payment books / schemes

Contact the organisation you are paying.

## Pension documents

Contact your local Department for Work and Pensions whose number is in the phone book.

If you receive a company pension, contact your pension provider.



## Stocks and bonds

Your broker may have details and a solicitor may be required to legally reconstruct the certificate.

Post Office Bonds - your local Post Office will advise or know how to claim duplicates.

## Travel documents

Contact the travel agent who made your original booking.

## Warranties

Contact the manufacturer.

The address may be obtained from the shop where you bought the items or from a reference library.

## Photocopying of important documents

Some documents may be irreplaceable and it may be advisable for householders to have a photocopy of their important documents whilst storing originals at another location (ie. at their bank or with relatives). The copies may be useful for reference purposes in the event of a fire or flood.

If photocopies are impractical it maybe advisable to note all your document policy numbers (ie. passport, car insurance, house insurance, driving license) and keep them in a safe place, at your bank or with relatives.

**Please note:** A photocopy of any document can provide crucial information such as dates and reference numbers. However in the event of a claim, insurance companies may require original copies. For further clarification it is advisable to seek advice from your insurance provider.



# Essential telephone numbers

<b>Advice</b>		
Accommodation	<b>Telford and Wrekin Council</b> – 24 hour homeless helpline	01952 381 925
	<b>Telford and Wrekin</b> – General enquires	01952 380 000
	<b>Shropshire Council</b> – General and emergency enquiries	0345 678 9000
Fire Safety	<b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b>	01743 260 260
Floods	<b>Environment Agency Floodline</b> 24 hour advice and Information line	0845 988 1188
Police	Ask for your local policing team who can offer advice and reassurance	0300 333 3000
<b>Services</b>		
Home repairs	<b>Trader Register</b>	08456 789 023
Money	<b>Benefit Enquiry Line</b> For disabled people and carers	0800 882 200 0800 243 355 (Textphone/minicom)
	<b>Social Fund</b> - Crisis loan please contact Job Centre Plus	0800 055 6688
	<b>The Pension Service</b>	0845 606 0265 0845 606 0285 (Textphone/minicom)
Support	<b>Samaritans</b>	08457 909 090
	<b>Victim Support</b> - Practical and emotional help for all Victims of crime	01743 362 812
<b>Utilities</b>		
Electricity	<b>Central Networks</b> (Western Region)	0800 328 1111 18001 0800 328 1111 (Textphone/minicom)
	<b>E-on (Central networks)</b> – to find your supplier	0845 603 0618
Gas	<b>Gas Emergencies/Gas Leaks</b> - National Gas Emergency Service	0800 111 999 0800 371 787 (Textphone/minicom)
	<b>National Grid</b> – general enquiries	0845 605 6677
	<b>National Grid</b> – to find your supplier	0870 608 1524
Water	<b>Severn Trent Water</b>	0800 783 4444

# Don't let there be another time

## Plan together now



### Take everyone into account

- Make your fire action plan with everyone in your household, especially children, elderly and disabled people

### Your best escape route is your normal way in and out of your home

- Decide on a different route as well, in case the normal one is blocked
- Keep all escape routes clear



### Tell everyone in your household where you keep your door and window keys

- You can be safe as well as secure if you make sure that everyone who needs to get out in an emergency can easily open doors and windows



### When it's safer to stay in your home

- If your escape route is blocked, it may be safer to stay put and protect yourself until the Fire Service arrives
- Find a suitable room now. Choose one with a window that opens and, if possible, a phone so that you can call 999



# Safety steps to save lives

## Fit smoke alarms on each floor level in your home

You are 6 times more likely to die in a fire if you do not have a working smoke alarm.

**Test your smoke alarms every week.**

**Ensure that when fitting alarms that they are fitted and batteries replaced in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, which will be enclosed with the smoke alarm.**

## Make a bedtime checklist

**You are more at risk from a fire when asleep. So it is a good idea to check your home before you go to bed.**

- Close internal doors at night to stop a fire from spreading
- Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on - like your freezer
- Check your cooker is turned off
- Don't leave the washing machine or tumble dryer on
- Turn heaters off and put up fire guards
- Put candles and cigarettes out properly
- Make sure exits are kept clear
- Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them

## Practice your fire action plan

**Knowing what to do and acting quickly will save lives**

- Regularly take a few minutes to 'walk' the escape route with everyone in your household and check that everyone can unlock and open doors and windows easily
- Review your plan regularly, especially if you make any changes in your home

# What to do if there's a fire

## Raise the alarm



- If your smoke alarm goes off while you are asleep, don't investigate to see if there is a fire - shout to wake everyone up, get everyone together, follow your plan and get out
- Check closed doors with the back of your hand - if they are warm, do not open them
- If there is smoke, keep as close to the floor as possible where the air will be cleaner

## Escaping from a window



If you are on the ground floor or first floor you may be able to escape from a window:

- check that the fire is not coming from the room below;
- if you have to break the window cover the jagged glass with towels or thick bedding;
- throw some more bedding out of the window to break your fall;
- don't jump out of the window - lower yourself down to arm's length and drop to the ground;
- if there are any children, elderly or disabled people with you, plan the order you will escape in order to assist each other.

## Don't go back inside your home



- Dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Fire Service, from a mobile phone, a neighbour's house or a phone box
- Give the address of the fire
- Don't stop or go back for anything

## What to do if your escape route is blocked



- Get everyone in one room and close the door. Smoke and fumes can kill people quickly, so put bedding or towels along the bottom of the door to seal the gap
- Dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Fire Service, or shout for help so that someone else can phone for you
- Open the window and stay near it for fresh air and to let the firefighters see you

# Free Home Fire Safety Check

**Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service offer Home Fire Safety Checks to all residents of Shropshire.**

A Home Fire Safety Check can provide the household with information on preventing a fire and how to escape in the event of an emergency. This information is specific to both the property and occupier(s).

The fire service can also check your smoke alarms are in working order; positioned in the correct place and that you have a minimum of one smoke alarm per floor.

To book your free Home Fire Safety Check telephone

**01743 260 298** (24 hour answerphone)



# Shropshire

## Fire and Rescue Service

Brigade Headquarters  
St. Michael's Street  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire  
SY1 2HJ

Telephone: 01743 260 200

Website: [www.shropshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk)

Email: [enquiries@shropshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@shropshirefire.gov.uk)

Community Fire Safety

Telephone: 01743 260 260



**Putting Shropshire's Safety First**

[www.shropshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk)