***After the Fire …*

***This brochure was developed as a resource to give you information that may be needed in the coming days to assist in reducing your losses after the fire is out. In the event you cannot find the help you need, please call the Town of Porter Office at (716) 745-3730 and we will assist you in locating the appropriate individual or agency. If you receive our voicemail, please leave a message with your name and phone number and we will return your call as soon as possible.***

Contact your insurance company or agent as soon as possible. If you are renting, you must also contact the property owner or management company. Your insurance adjuster may be able to assist you in making immediate repairs or help in securing your home. If you are unable to contact your agent and need professional assistance in boarding up your home, you may contact a general contractor or fire damage restoration firm (usually listed as Contractors – General or Fire & Water Damage Restoration).

The American Red Cross is available to assist families who have been displaced from their homes through natural disasters to include fires. If families need clothes, food, or a place to stay following a recent residential disaster, Red Cross can aid with emergency needs.

If your property is not insured or your insurance will not cover all of your losses, contact an attorney or the Internal Revenue Service for directions. You may be eligible for Casualty Loss; check publication 547, Tax Information on Casualty Losses and Thefts, available from your local Internal Revenue Service Office.

***DO NOT ENTER YOUR DAMAGED HOME; CODE OFFICAL AUTORIZATION IS REQUIRED FIRST !!!***

***(Not sure who to ask? Call Town of Porter or your Fire Department)*** 1

***If you must stay elsewhere …***

If your home is unlivable, and if you cannot find a place to stay, such as with family or friends, consult with your insurance company to see if you are covered for additional living expenses. The Red Cross may be able to help with emergency needs.

If you must leave your home, try to locate the following items (if possible) to take with you: important legal documents, identification, vital medicines, eyeglasses, hearing aids, valuables, credit cards, checkbooks, insurance policies, money, jewelry, photos, etc. (note: let safes cool down before opening).

The Fire Emergency Services/Department will notify the Town Code enforcement Officer if your home has sustained damage because of fire. The Town’s code Enforcement officer will conduct an inspection of your home to assess the extent of the fire damage and to determine what permits are required to repair and/or remediate the fire damage. ***Before attempting any repairs, please contact the Town’s Code Enforcement Officer at (716) 745-3730, ext. 7.***

***Change of Address …***

If you move, notify the US postal Service, Town’s Assessor, Banks, Utility Companies, Credit Card companies, Magazines/newspapers, etc. of your new address. Also Contact Social Security Administration and the Department of Social Services if you are receiving benefits.

***Pets …***

Smoke can damage the lungs of a dog, cat, and/or pets in minutes and sparks can cause painful burns that may stay hidden under pet’s fur. As soon as possible, take your pet to a Veterinarian. If your pet is lost in the confusion, call the Niagara SPCA/humane Society agency for help. American Red Cross may also aid with those whose pets have died due to a natural disaster.

***Counseling Support …***

After a fire, you may experience anxious feelings, depression, difficulty concentrating, sadness, anger, fatigue, irrational fears and nightmares. These are common response to a traumatic event. If you or your family members need support, call the American Red Cross or seek a counselor. Some employers and/or health insurance carriers provide coverage for counseling services.

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***Cash or Negotiables?***

If burned, handle with extreme care and as little as possible. Attempt to encase each crisp sheet in a plastic wrap in order to salvage as much as possible. Take everything to your local Bank for advice regarding replacement.

***What about Perishables?***

Any Beverage and/or medicines exposed to heat or smoke should not be consumed. Medicines, especially, can change strength by exposure to heat. Please check with your doctor first before taking these medicines. If food was in tightly closed or sealed containers, or airtight refrigerators/freezers, they may be salvageable. It is cheaper to replace the material that to jeopardize your health by taking a chance. When in doubt, throw it out!

***Vehicle Fires …***

If insured, contact your insurance agent who can explain coverage and will assist with your claim. If your vehicle is damaged in a Structure Fire, contact both your home and auto insurance agents.

If you are uninsured, you will need to determine if the vehicle is repairable. If vehicle is a total loss (beyond repair), it may have some value to a salvage yard. A list of vehicle salvage companies can be found in a internet search or phone directory under Automobile Salvage.

Occasionally, fire crews will have to force entry into the vehicle to check for fire extension and extinguish the fire. To ensure that the fire is completely extinguished, it may be necessary for fire crews to:

1. Cut and/or disconnect battery cables to prevent electrical shorting of wires where insulation of wiring has been damaged.
2. Complete removal of padding from seats, especially where cotton padding is used.
3. Forced entry into passenger compartment, engine compartment, an trunk of a vehicle to extinguish and/or check for fire extension, and gain access to battery cables.

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***Checklist for After the Fire* …**

Contact the Town of Porter Code Enforcement Officer (716 745-3730, ext.7)

*(The Code enforcement Officer can Guide you with the following information)*

Niagara County Emergency Services – phone: (716) 438-3171

Fire Incident Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Agent: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Landlord Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Other Contacts Made:***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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***Checklist continued …***

Contact Red Cross for assistance with emergency needs.

Try to make arrangements to stay with family or friends.

□ If you are insured, contact your insurance company for detailed instructions on protecting your property, conducting inventory, and contacting fire damage restoration companies.

□ Check with the Fire Department to make sure your home is safe to enter. Be watchful of structural damage.

□ The Fire Department and/or Code Enforcement Officer should see that all utilities are either safe to use or disconnected before they leave. Do not attempt to reconnect them yourself. Do not turn on Breakers (or replace fuses) that have been de-energized until an professional electrician has inspect for safety issues.

□ Conduct an inventory of damaged property and items prior to throwing them away. A video and/or photograph record of the conditions is a great inventory documentation method, with a mobile phone or tablet.

□ Try to locate important documents and records such as a drivers license, social security cards, bank records, insurance policies, etc.

□ If you leave your home, contact Niagara County Sheriff Department or Youngstown police Department (as appropriate) to notify them that your home will be vacant because of the fire damage. Ask them to parole, when possible.

□ Save all receipts related to the fire loss. They may be needed later by the insurance company, the IRS, and or Red Cross for the losses claimed.

□ Notify your mortgage company of the Fire.

□ Check with an accountant or the IRS about benefits for those recovering from fire loss.

□ Notify others of your temporary situation including Family, Friends, Schools, Employers, Post Office, and utility companies.

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***What about Odors?***

Sometimes there is a residual smoke odor from a small fire that is annoying and lingering. Short of a good cleaning of everything in the house, you can place small saucers of household vanilla, wine, vinegar, or activated charcoal around your home to help absorb these odors. Remember that the smoke odor is also inside the heating and cooling ducts, and you get a fresh blast every time the air system activates.

If insured, consult your insurance company for assistance. If the odor does not go away in about a week, you may want to contact a cleaning service specializing in restoration of fire damaged property. They have the equipment to scrub out the duct work and deodorize everything in the house.

***Other Tips:***

* Vacuum all surfaces.
* Change and clean air conditioner/heater filters.
* Seal off the room in which you are working with plastic sheeting/wrap to keep soot from moving from one room to another. Try to keep windows closed (reducing drafts)
* To remove soot and smoke from painted walls, mix together, 4 to 6 tablespoons of tri-sodium phosphate (can be purchased at paint stores) and 1 gallon of water. Use rubber gloves and goggles when working with this solution.

***Warning – Keep mixture away from Children and Pets***

Wash a small area at a time working from the floor up, saving the ceiling for last. Rinse thoroughly; do not repaint until completely dry. It is advised to a use a smoke sealer (available at paint stores) before painting. If your walls are wallpaper, usually the wallpaper cannot be restored.

* Furniture – Do not use chemicals on furniture. A very inexpensive product called FLAX SOAP (readily available in hardware stores) is a most efficient product to use on wood, including kitchen cabinets. Do not dry furniture in the sun as the wood will warp and twist out of shape.
* Floors – Use FLAX SOAP on wood and linoleum floors. It will take 4 or 5 applications. Then strip and re-wax. 6
* Carpeting – Steam clean, shampoo, and repeat steam cleaning.
* Mattress – Reconditioning an inner-spring mattress at home is very difficult if not impossible. Your mattress can probably be renovated by a company that builds or repairs mattresses. If you must use your mattress temporarily, put it out into the sun to dry, then cover it with plastic sheeting. It is almost impossible to get smoke out of pillows. Feathers and foam retain odors.
* Locks and hinges – Locks (especially iron locks) should be taken apart, wiped with kerosene and oiled. If locks cannot be removed, squirt machine oil through a bolt opening or keyhole and work the knob to distribute the oil. Hinges should also be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.

***Warning – Do Not Use Gasoline for Cleaning***

* Mildew – To remove mildew, wash stain with soap and water. Rinse well and dry. If stain remains, use lemon juice and salt, or a solution of household bleach and warm water.
* Clothes – To remove smoke odor or soot from clothes that can be bleached, add ½ cup of ammonia to 2 gallons of water –agitate and soak in a tub; then rinse in vinegar (use rubber gloves). Should you have any questions about cleaning or preparation of clothing, it is wise to contact a cleaning service. Take wool, silk, or rayon garments to dry cleaner as soon as possible.

***Warning – Do Not Mix ammonia with Bleach***

* Electrical Appliances – Do not run wet appliances until you have had a service person check them.
* Cooking Utensils \_ Your pots, pans, flatware, etc. should be washed with soapy water, rinsed then polished with 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 in vinegar.

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Helpful Phone Numbers:

American Red Cross 800-842-7349

Care & Share Food Pantry 716-791-1268

Catholic Charities 716-218-1484

National Grid 716-831-7752

National Fuel 716-857-7003

Niagara County Clerk’s Office 716-439-7022 Niagara Co. Dept. of Motor Vehicles 716-743-4599

Niagara County Economic Development 716-278-8750

Niagara county Emergency Services 716-438-3171 Niagara County Sheriff (non emergency) 716-438-3393

Niagara County Social Services 716-278-8400

Niagara SPCA and Humane Society 716-731-4368

NYS Dept.of Enviro.ConservationOfficer 844-332-3267 Ransomville Fire Department 716-791-4411

Ransomville Fire Chaplin 716-791-???? Servpro of WNY (Fire-Water Cleanup & Restoration) 716-304-2239

Social Security Administration 800-772-1213 Spectrum Customer Services 855-243-8892

Town of Porter Code Enforcement Officer716745-3730 Town of Porter Highway/Water & Sewer716-791-3831 VillageOfYoungstownDept.ofPublicWork 716-745-7839

Wear & Share Clothing Closet 716-791-1268

[www.greengeniewny.com](http://www.greengeniewny.com) (Board Up Co.) 716-466-6653

Youngstown Fire Department 716-745-3324

YMCA 716-278-9662

Youngstown Police Dept. (non emergency) 716-745-3623





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Helpful Website Addresses:

**Restoration and Cleaning resource:**

<https://jenkinsrestorations.com/how-to-clean-smoke-damage/#initial>

or

<https://rainbowintl.com/blog/how-to-clean-a-smoke-damaged-house>

or

<https://www.ci.vacaville.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/5993/636234161698230000>

**Red Cross – Home Fire resources:** - <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire.html>

Care & Share Food Pantry – Wear & Share Free Clothing Closet - <http://intercommunityservices.org/>

**Catholic Charities** - <https://www.catholiccharities.cc/>

**National Grid** - <https://www.nationalgridus.com/Upstate-NY-Home/default?regionkey=nyupstate&customertype=home>

**National Fuel** - <https://www.nationalfuel.com/>

**Niagara County** - <https://www.niagaracounty.com/>

**Niagara County Sheriff's Office** - <https://www.niagarasheriff.com/>

**Niagara County Social Services** - <https://www.niagaracounty.com/socialservices/>

**New York State Department of Environmental Conservation** - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/>

**Servpro Fire & Water – Cleanup & Restoration** - <https://www.servpronorthniagaracounty.com/?y_source=1_MTUwMTAyNzYtNzE1LWxvY2F0aW9uLndlYnNpdGU%3D>

**Social Security Administration** - <https://www.ssa.gov/>

**Spectrum Cable Customer Service** - <https://www.spectrum.net/support>

**Town of Porter** - <https://www.townofporter.net/>

**Village of Youngstown** - <http://youngstownnewyork.us/>

**YMCA** - <https://www.ymcabn.org/>

**Board Up, Fire & Water – Cleanup & Restoration** – <https://www.greengeniewny.com/>

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