



After we leave

Advice and guidance after an emergency in residential properties and commercial premises



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

We are sorry you have experienced an emergency. Please read this leaflet carefully as it contains information that you may find helpful.

Alternatively, you can contact us on:

020 8555 1200

For business continuity advice

in commercial premises, ask to speak to someone from Regulatory Fire Safety.

For advice on incidents related to a fire or flood in your home

ask for the contact details of your local fire station.

Information is also available online at

london-fire.gov.uk



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YOUR HOME

- If your home is unsafe for any reason, do not attempt to enter any restricted areas as it may be dangerous to do so.
- Follow any instructions given to you by local authority officers, the police or fire services.
- If anyone with authority has implemented restricted access to any part of your home, ask permission before entering those areas or removing any items.

COMMERCIAL PREMISES

- Do not be tempted to use the premises until it has been cleared and made safe.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that fire alarms, fire doors and fire extinguishers have been checked or replaced and are in full working order.
- If the premises is still in use, a means of escape must be available for occupants to use in the event of another fire.
- Having a good business continuity plan will help to prepare you for emergencies. Further advice is available from:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-continuity-planning
- Inspecting officers from LFB's local fire safety teams can also provide you with advice on fire safety law and how it applies to you and your premises.
- Please note, failure to comply with fire safety legislation such as the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 may result in criminal proceedings.

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

- If your home is very badly damaged it may not be safe to stay there. Contact your local housing or social services departments who may be able to arrange emergency temporary accommodation for you.
- To find your local authority or council contact details including out-of-hours emergency information go to: www.gov.uk/financial-help-after-fire

- In the event of a major incident the LFB officer in charge of the fire can also ask the British Red Cross to provide a Fire Victim Support Vehicle with trained volunteers who will be able to give you immediate practical and emotional support.

CRISIS SUPPORT

- Local councils are now responsible for providing help and support if you are in a position of immediate hardship. You don't have to be claiming benefits to apply. The type of help can vary as there are no set rules about what they have to provide.
- Contact your local council for more information:
www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

HEALTH

- If you have concerns about your health or the health of anyone else involved in the incident, dial the NHS Choices non-emergency number – 111, for advice.
- Return any medicines that may have been damaged or contaminated, to your pharmacy for disposal.

ELECTRICITY, GAS, WATER SUPPLIES

- Tell your utility suppliers what has happened as soon as you can. Do not attempt to turn on any services that have been shut off, until they have been checked by a qualified person, and they have confirmed it is safe to do so.
- Do not use any electrical appliances that have come into contact with fire or water, until they have been checked and approved for use by a qualified electrician.

SECURITY

If you are not able to remain in your home, ensure that all windows and doors are locked. Remove any valuables if it is safe to do so.

ARSON OR DELIBERATE FIRES

- If it looks like the fire was caused deliberately, the police will be notified and specialist fire investigators may also attend the scene. Do not enter any sealed off areas.
- It is your responsibility to make the property or business premises secure once the emergency services have left. This will also help to reduce the risk of an arson attack or vandalism.

CLEANING AND DAMAGE

- Flames, hot gases, smoke and water can all cause damage. Smoke stains can be removed from some painted walls and ceilings using sugar soap.
- Specialist companies can help to provide equipment such as dehumidifiers or wet vacuum cleaners or arrange for help to recover documents and valuables.
- Check for details of specialist companies in your local phone directory or use internet services provided in your local library.
- Food may have been damaged or contaminated by the incident, if in doubt don't take any risks and dispose of it safely.

INSURANCE

- Always contact your insurance company as soon as you can and follow their advice on the actions you need to take.
- If your policy has been damaged you can ask them to send you a replacement copy.
- You will need to complete a claim form and they may wish to inspect your home or business premises before anything is moved, cleaned up or thrown away.
- Make a list, and if possible take photos of important or valuable damaged household items or stock and merchandise. Try to store receipts securely – they may be required by your insurer.

AFTER A VEHICLE FIRE

- Some vehicle fires produce toxic by-products that are unsafe if they come into contact with the skin. Wear rubber gloves if you need to remove any items and remember parts of the vehicle may also be sharp and dangerous.
- Consult your insurers before arranging for disposal of your vehicle. Most councils offer a vehicle collection service.

AFTER A FLOOD

- Our firefighters can use equipment to pump out water and do some salvage work, but the remainder of the drying and clearing up is your responsibility.
- Don't try to pump out your own property, fumes caused by mechanical pumps are toxic and can be fatal if breathed in. Always get expert advice and assistance from a professional.
- The cost of ongoing work may be covered by your insurance policy.
- Consult a qualified plumber if any water pipes have been damaged and need to be repaired.
- Flood water may be hazardous to health. Don't take risks, if you suspect that any food or medicines have been contaminated, make sure these are disposed of safely.
- Contaminated water may make goods unusable, seek advice from your local authority environmental health department.

To limit the damage any future flooding may cause consider these tips:

- Fix TVs to the wall at least 1.5 metres above floor level.
- Keep valuable or irreplaceable items on high-mounted shelves.
- Homes with more than one level – try to ensure that any furniture can be easily moved upstairs.

- Business premises should raise stock above floor level or store in a way that it can be easily moved.

AFTER A CHIMNEY FIRE

- Place a metal bucket, half filled with water, in the fireplace to catch any falling debris.
- Keep the fireguard in place.
- Leave for a minimum of 24 hours and ensure the chimney is swept before use.
- Always fit a carbon monoxide detector in the room where solid fuels are used.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL PREMISES

Fire Risk Assessments should be reviewed regularly and especially after a fire or flood. Include checks on the following as part of the review and inform the person in control of the property of any deficiencies identified, so that remedial action can be taken.

Means of escape

- Escape routes may have been compromised and become unsafe to use due to a combination of fire, structural damage or obstructions.
- The alternative means of escape (stairs/fire exits) may now be inadequate for the number of occupants; if the main escape route is compromised.
- If escape routes are compromised there may now be excessive travel distances to places of relative safety (lobbied areas etc).

Detection and warning

- If the fire developed unnoticed, it may be because of inadequate means of detection and warning arrangements in the premises.
- Smoke detection systems may no longer be working.

Prevention and identifying risks

- Check if there were any contributory factors such as large amounts of combustible material in areas where the fire occurred.

- Look for evidence of rapid fire growth due to lack of separation between fire resisting walls and ceilings, or in voids or unprotected vertical shafts.
- Make sure that ducting extract systems are adequately cleaned and maintained.
- Check that appropriate doors are fire resistant and are installed correctly.
- Check electrical installations or equipment for signs of overloading, inadequate ventilation or any signs of fire/water damage.
- Check if combustible materials involved in the fire may have come into contact with an ignition source e.g. hazardous chemicals or cylinders.

JUVENILE FIRESETTERS INTERVENTION SCHEME (JFIS)

LFB works with children up to the age of 18 who have carried out any type of fire play or firesetting. To find out more about the scheme visit london-fire.gov.uk or email firesetters@london-fire.gov.uk

LFB EQUIPMENT

If LFB equipment has been left at your home or business premises please contact LFB to arrange collection on 020 8555 1200.

HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS

LFB offers a free home fire safety service to all residents and homeowners, officers can visit your home and provide fire safety advice suited to your needs and your home. They can fit free smoke alarms if required, including specialist alarms for people with visual or hearing impairments.

There are lots of ways to book a visit for yourself or someone you know:

Freephone: **0800 028 4428**

Email: smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk

Text/SMS: **07860 021 319**

Book via our website: london-fire.gov.uk

