



# IICRC

Institute of Inspection Cleaning  
and Restoration Certification

# SAFE WILDFIRE SMOKE DAMAGE AND ASH CLEANUP

It's important for consumers to be aware of the many dangerous health effects caused by returning to smoke-salvageable and smoke-damaged buildings. It's imperative that fire and smoke odor cleanup be performed correctly and safely to stave off any ill health effects and permanent property damage.

## FOLLOW THESE TIPS

To help home and business owners returning to fire and smoke damaged properties, the IICRC offers the following tips:

- Safety is most important. Wear an N-95 ANSI-approved dust mask (like a painter's mask) and work gloves during cleanup.
- Ventilate the home. Place a box fan in an open window to draw smoke-odor laden air and char out of the building.
- Replace ventilation filters as soon as possible, then run the ventilation system to filter-out smoke-related particles.
- Clean the exterior of the building of fire-damaged debris, smoke and char particles. Exterior cleaning includes washing off the building, sidewalks, driveways and decks with detergent and fresh water scrubbing followed by rinsing.
- Clean the interior by dry HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air), vacuuming the ceiling, upper and lower walls and then flooring. In some situations, detergent wet cleaning must be applied to remove a smoke film which impacts and absorbs onto surfaces.

- Vacuum contents and upholstery. Make sure your house or building vacuum is HEPA rated, otherwise, you risk blowing smoke and soot into the air. Draperies, clothing and machine-washable items such as towels may be dry cleaned or laundered.
- Unless the upholstery manufacturer says otherwise, use a mild alkaline cleaner to neutralize acid in smoke, soot, char and ash.
- When smoke and soot damage and residue is moderate or heavy, or you cannot complete smoke and soot odor removal on your own, consider hiring a professional who is certified in fire and smoke damage restoration to cleanup and restore your home or business and belongings. To find a trained and certified professional in your area, visit the IICRC website at [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org) and select “Locate a Certified Pro.”
- Check with your insurance provider to determine if smoke damage from outdoor sources is covered under your policy. Insurance companies can often provide a list of credible restoration companies from which property owners can choose.
- If the fire has warped or distorted the structure, consult a general contractor who can also be found in the IICRC list of approved restorers.



When hiring a fire and smoke removal professional in your area, make sure that the technician is a certified Fire and Smoke Restoration Technician (FSRT) to ensure they are educated on the latest techniques for proper remediation. In some cases, a mold remediator may also be necessary as the volume of water used to combat fires can result in an abundance of standing water within a property, leading to mold growth.

## FIND IICRC CERTIFIED RESTORERS

To find certified restorers in your area or to confirm the certification of any company that has contacted you, call the IICRC at 1-844-464-4272 or visit [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org) and select “Locate a Certified Pro.”