



**Prince William County Department of Fire & Rescue
Office of the Fire Chief
1 County Complex Court, #200
Prince William, VA 22192**



Mission

To protect lives, property and the environment through timely, professional, humanitarian services essential to the health, safety and well-being of the community.

Vision

The Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue is a trusted community leader comprised of dedicated professionals, upholding proud traditions of commitment and teamwork while pursuing innovation and providing exceptional customer service to the public and fire and rescue service members.



Prince William County
Department of Fire & Rescue
1 County Complex Court
Prince William, VA 22192-9201
703-792-6800

We have extinguished the fire in your home and completed some basic clean-up work. The feeling of being overwhelmed considering your loss of property, repairs to be made and replacement of damaged-items is understandable. This document was developed as a resource tool to assist you in reducing your losses after the fire is out. We hope the information provided will help you to effectively overcome the problems and difficulties associated with the fire while assisting you in bringing your life back to normal as quickly as possible.

If you have additional questions concerning any aspect of the fire, please contact the Fire Marshal's Office during regular business hours at 703-792-6360.

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

If You Are Insured

Immediately contact your insurance company notifying them of the loss.
Ask your insurance agent/company what actions are required of you.

Depending on your coverage:

- Some policies will assist with temporary relocation costs.
- Some policyholders may be required to make an inventory of damaged personal property showing, in detail, the quantity, description and value/replacement cost.

****Avoid independent insurance adjusters who appear on site offering fee-based services.***

If You Are Not Insured

Your recovery from a fire loss may be based upon your own resources and help from your community.

Private organizations that may be sources of aid or information:

- American Red Cross • Salvation Army • Religious Organizations • Department of Social Services
- Civic Organizations • Non-Profit crisis counseling centers • State or municipal emergency services offices

Take care of yourself and family

If you need assistance, your local disaster relief agencies such as the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army can assist you. They will help you find a place to stay for awhile and assist with food, clothing, medicine, and other important things.

Do not eat, drink, breathe, or wear anything that has been near the fire's flames, smoke, soot, or water used to put the fire out. (We recommend clothing and other cloth items be professionally cleaned.)

Help your pets

If you have pets, find them and comfort them. Scared animals often react by biting or scratching. Handle them carefully, calmly, and gently. Try to leave pets with a family member, friend, or veterinarian if you are visiting or cleaning your damaged home. Keep your pets out of the house until the cleanup is complete to keep them safe. Check with your veterinarian if needed.

If you're unable to stay in your home and must relocate, Animal Control will provide food and shelter for your pets until such time they're able to relocate with your family. (see Resources)

WHAT TO EXPECT?

Recovery from a fire can be a mentally and physically draining process. Knowing where to begin and who can help you is important in getting through the things you must do after the fire.

DO NOT RE-ENTER THE HOME TO RETRIEVE BELONGINGS

The building and many of the things in your home may have been badly damaged. You will find that things the fire and heat did not burn up are now ruined by smoke and soggy with water used to put out the flames. Firefighters will provide assistance, on scene, to victims and their families and will escort individuals into their burned homes to recover important items such as medicine, documents and photos if needed.

Firefighters may have cut holes in the walls of the building in order to eliminate heat and gas in the structure so it is safe for them to enter the home. You may have noticed them breaking windows, doors, or cutting holes in the roof to let out the heat and smoke to ventilate the home. Beyond ventilation, firefighters are looking for hidden fires that may not be visible or may be creating a lot of smoke.

Once the damage has been assessed, the cleanup process may begin; this will take time and patience. In addition, items you want to save or re-use will need to be carefully cleaned.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Following, you will find answers to some commonly asked questions concerning our fire ground operations.

Q. Why did they break windows and cut holes in the roof?

A. As a fire burns, it moves upward and then outward. Removing windows and cutting holes in the roof allows much of the heat and smoke to escape from openings rather than further damage your property.

Q. Why do firefighters cut holes in the walls?

A. Fire often hides behind walls or between partitions. Cutting holes allows us to extinguish all hidden fire and check for otherwise undetected fire spread. If the hidden areas are not checked, the fire is likely to rekindle.

Q. Why have certain areas been roped off?

A. It is imperative that you realize that the area may have been roped off or secured with fire line tape because it is too dangerous for you to enter. Be aware that it is unlawful to enter this secured area without permission from the fire department officer in charge. The Fire Chief is charged by law to determine the cause and origin of every fire, and the area must not be disturbed until that has been accomplished.

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

A. The fire report is a public document. Contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 703-792-6360 to receive the fire report. The fire report will help you with information that your insurance company and other official offices may request.

Q. Why did a Building Inspector post a placard on my home or building?

A. The Fire Chief may decide to request an Emergency On-Call Inspector from the Building Department to conduct a building safety assessment. The Emergency On-Call Inspector will make a determination on whether or not the building is an Unsafe Structure or Unfit for Human Occupancy and will post a placard if appropriate. The Emergency On-Call Inspector is also responsible for preparing a Post Damage Report, which will be available within 2 to 3 business days.

Q. How can I get a copy of the Post Damage Report?

A. The Post Damage Report will be mailed to the homeowner or building owner. You can also contact the Building Development Division at 703-792-6930 to request that a copy be made for pick-up or emailed to you. The Post Damage Report will help you, your insurance company and restoration contractor in understanding what plans and permits are required.

Q. Do you have additional questions?

A. For more information, please contact the Fire Marshal's Office during regular business hours at (703) 792-6360.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

DO NOT enter a damaged home or apartment unless the fire or Building department says it is safe to go in. Fires can start again even if they appear to be out. Watch for damage caused by the fire. Roofs and floors may be damaged and could fall down.

The fire department will make sure that the utility services (water, electricity, and gas) are safe to use. If they are not safe, fire-fighters will disconnect them before they leave the site. **DO NOT** try to turn them back on yourself.

Contact your police department to let them know that you will be away from home.

WHERE DO WE LIVE?

What To Do If You Are Forced To Relocate

If you are forced to leave your home for an extended period of time after a fire, you may contact the Police Department via their website (www.pwcgov.org/police), call the Eastern District Station at (703) 792-7200, or call the Western District Station at (703) 792-5111, and request extra patrol. Officers will patrol your neighborhood as time permits in an effort to prevent further damage.

Depending on your policy, insurance will usually pay for extra costs of temporary housing such as a hotel. Keep all receipts. For insurance purposes make a list of all items you remove for your temporary stay, e.g. 6 shirts, 2 pair pants, etc.

If you cannot continue to live in the home and you need assistance, tell the investigating officer, officer in charge, or fire department Chaplain as soon as possible. (see Resources)

Certain community organizations are prepared to offer immediate and temporary assistance which can include housing, food, eyeglasses, medicines, and clothing. The fire department Chaplain will assist you in contacting an organization.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE, SECURE THE SITE!

If you are the property owner, notify your insurance company immediately. They must be notified of the fire and may be able to help you in making immediate repairs. Your home needs to be protected from further damage by weather, theft and vandalism.

DO NOT RE-ENTER THE HOME TO RETRIEVE BELONGINGS

Before you leave the fire site, try to **remove any valuables remaining in the house. Do not leave until the site has been secured.** See that your personal belongings are either secure within the house or that they are moved to the home of a friend or relative. If the Fire Marshal's Office is investigating the fire, an officer may accompany you through the house to inventory the property you take. Please be aware, that the investigation may prevent you from gaining entry. This includes the safety of the structure as determined by the Building Official.

Upon approval to gain entry, remember to look for items such as the following:

Identification cards	Savings account books
Vital medicines (<i>if near heat, may need to be</i>	Securities
Eyeglasses	Insurance policies
Hearing aids	Money
Prosthetic devices	Jewelry
Credit cards	Phone numbers
Checking account books	

If you are a **tenant, contact the resident manager, the owner, or the owner's representative.** It is their responsibility to prevent further loss to the site. (The owner is responsible for the structure and site, not the contents.)

If you have **renter's insurance**, contact your insurance company immediately.

If you do not have renter's insurance, contact the owner and ask if the owner's insurance will cover your loss.

OBTAIN RECEIPTS FOR ANY MONEY YOU SPEND ON REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS

Do not throw away any damaged goods until after an inventory has been made and the adjuster says to discard. All damages are taken into consideration in developing your total insurance claim.

Prior to contracting for estimating, inventorying, or repair services, we recommend you consult your insurance agent or adjuster.

FINANCES

Your first priority should be to contact your insurance company. If you are forced to relocate, try to contact the company prior to leaving the scene. They will be able to discuss your benefits and give important guidance for your next action steps. Many companies will have a representative on the scene within hours. Don't forget to also contact your mortgage company when time permits. In addition, contact your credit card company(s) to report credit cards lost in the fire and request replacements. Save all receipts for any money you spend. These receipts are important in showing the insurance company what money you have spent concerning your fire loss. This will help prove you bought things you may want to claim on your income tax forms.

Make every effort to retrieve important items from the fire. Check with the on-scene firefighters to determine if it is safe to enter the building to acquire the needed important papers or other items. If determined safe, firefighters, with your assistance, will enter your home and locate the items. You should consider retrieving; wallets, purses, medications, checkbooks, insurance documents, safes, car titles, wills, cell phones, legal documents, etc. If the fire was not too severe, consider asking firefighters to evacuate laptops and personal computers.

Many individuals keep larger amounts of cash, coins, and savings bonds in their homes. If you are one of these people and any of these have been partially destroyed or damaged contact your local bank. They can help you to determine if replacement is a possible option for any damaged monetary instruments. Your bank may be able to provide other financial advice.

Restoration Estimates/Costs

There are companies that provide cleaning or restoration services for your home or personal items. Before hiring any clean up or restoration company, discuss with your insurance company first. Insurance companies often work with certain companies and will initiate the steps to acquire the right company for the job.

Whether you or your insurer provide this type of service, clearly define who will pay for it. Be sure to ask for an estimate of cost for the work and agree to it in writing. You will find the names and phone numbers for companies that do this work in the phone book and on the Internet or ask your insurance company for names of companies you can trust to do a good job at a fair price.

Before you hire any company, ask for references to ensure the quality of their work. Talk to someone who has used them to make sure they did good work because some companies that claim to provide board up and cleaning services are not honest.

The majority of professional cleaning and/or restoring companies are covered by your basic home owner's policy and provide services that include some or all of the following:

- Securing your home against more damage
- Estimating damage
- Repairing damage
- Estimating the cost to repair or renew items of personal property
- Storing household items
- Hiring cleaning or repair subcontractors
- Storing repaired items until needed

Remember to check these items after a fire:

- Call your insurance agent immediately
- Ask about restoration companies that can help with cleaning up soot, boarding up windows and other construction

- Separate damaged property from undamaged property
- Save undamaged property from further destruction
- Cooperate fully with the insurance company's investigation
- Find somewhere to stay if you can't live in your home

SAFETY

FMO'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) provides a wide range of services in safeguarding the community.

One of their primary responsibilities is to provide assistance, on scene, to victims and their families; firefighters will escort individuals into their burned homes to recover important items such as medicine, documents and photos if needed.

In addition, Fire Marshals investigate the origin and cause of fires and work closely with insurance investigators. Investigations into the cause of fires provides vital information used by investigators.

For more information, contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 703-792-6360.

BUILDING OFFICIAL'S ROLE

A Building Official ensures the buildings in which we live, work and play are safe.

If your home or business is damaged as the result of a fire, an emergency inspection is required. The Emergency On-Call Inspector is notified to respond to the scene to determine if the building is unfit for human occupancy or an unsafe structure in accordance with the Virginia Building Construction Code. The Emergency On-Call Inspector will complete a Post Damage Report to document the damage and requirements for repairing or demolishing the structure.

For more information, contact the Building Development Division at 703-792-6930.

FOR YOUR SAFETY

The fire department will see that the utilities (water, electricity, gas and heat) are either safe to use or are disconnected before they leave the site. If a utility has been disconnected, contact the utility company (for a list of local utility companies, see Resources) or an authorized representative to have the apparatus checked for proper working order.

USE CAUTION

It is important to understand the risk to your safety and health even after the fire is out. Smoke, soot and dirty water can travel and penetrate into other rooms affecting paint, carpet, upholstery, drapes, clothing and any other belongings. Residue left behind may contain things that could make you sick so be very careful when entering your home.

Proper and thorough cleaning of household items is hard to do and dangerous should you touch or breath in some of the smoke and soot filled environment. Smoke-inhalation problems can occur and/or last even after the fire has been put out.

When cleaning, be sure to wear heavy duty cleaning gloves, long-sleeved shirts and pants to avoid skin contact. (if your skin comes in contact with fire residue, wash it off as soon as possible.) Wear personal protective gear, such as a dust mask, to avoid breathing in ash and other airborne particles. Wear footwear that fully covers and protects your feet such as steel toe shoes. In addition, ventilate the area, (open windows, etc.) to remove soot and odor. Ventilation of the fire scene or debris removal is an effective first step to clean up after a fire. Thorough cleaning and neutralizing of both the deposits and odors should be implemented prior to redecorating your home.

Prior to cleaning up or making repairs, ask the advice of the fire department, local building official, your insurance agent, and restoration specialists.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RECONNECT UTILITIES YOURSELF!

Household wiring, which may have been water damaged, should be checked by an electrician before the current is turned back on.

Food, beverages and medicines exposed to heat, smoke or soot **should not be used** and should be discarded after the insurance company indicates that their records are complete.

Refrigerators or freezers left unopened will hold their temperature for a short period of time. **However, do not attempt to re-freeze thawed food items.** Contact the Cooperative Extension with specific questions. *(see Resources)*

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO SALVAGE DAMAGED GOODS

SALVAGING YOUR RECORDS

Water and fire damaged records can often be saved by prompt action. As soon as possible, separate damp or soggy pages.

SALVAGING FOOD

Canned and jarred goods should be washed in detergent and water. **Do not use canned goods when the cans have bulged or are dented or rusted.** You may call the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service with questions on food safety. *(see Resources)*

SALVAGING COOKING UTENSILS

Your pots, pans and flatware should be washed with soapy water, rinsed and then polished with a fine-powder cleaner.

SALVAGING FLOORING AND RUGS

Remove linoleum if water has gotten underneath it to prevent odors and warping of the wooden sub-floor. Dry the floor completely before replacing the linoleum.

Dry rugs and carpets thoroughly. Lay them flat and expose them to a circulation of warm, dry air. A fan turned on the rugs will speed the drying process. Make sure the rugs are thoroughly dry beyond just the surface. Any moisture remaining at the base of the tufts can quickly rot a rug. For more information on cleaning and preserving carpets, call a professional carpet cleaner.

SALVAGING MATTRESSES

Reconditioning an innerspring mattress at home is very difficult, if not impossible; we recommend having your mattress professionally cleaned by a certified company.

RESOURCES

HOSPITALS/MEDICAL FACILITIES

In the event you or a loved one become injured during the fire and are in need of further medical evaluation and treatment, fire and rescue personnel will provide transport to one of the following medical facilities:

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center 2300 Opitz Boulevard Woodbridge, VA 22191 (703) 523-1000	Prince William Hospital 8700 Sudley Road Manassas, VA 20110 (703) 369-8000	Novant Health Haymarket Medical Center 15225 Heathcote Boulevard Haymarket, VA 20169 (571) 284-1000
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FAIRFAX COUNTY

Inova Trauma Center Inova Fairfax Medical Campus 3300 Gallows Road Original Building, 2nd Floor Falls Church, VA 22042 (703) 776-2274	Inova Mount Vernon Hospital 2501 Parkers Lane Alexandria, VA 22306 (703) 664-7000
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WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington Hospital Burn Center 110 Irving Street, N.W. #3B55 Washington, D.C. 20010 (202) 877-6662	George Washington University 900 23rd Street Northwest NW Washington, D.C. 20037 (202) 715-4000	Children's Hospital 111 Michigan Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20010 (202) 476-5000
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LONG TERM RECOVERY

Various organizations can offer help and assistance for your recovery. The American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, ACTS, and S.E.R.V.F. are organizations that have programs to assist you in getting good used clothing, bedding, furniture, etc. Contact them directly during normal business hours. The United Way is another excellent resource for assistance.

DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS THAT YOU WILL NEED

Here is a checklist of documents you will need to replace if they have been destroyed and who to contact for information on the replacement process.

It is important you replace legal documents that have been damaged or destroyed. If you require assistance in this area, you may contact the Clerk of the Circuit Court or the Department of Social Services.

<i>Abstract of Titles</i>	Records department of the locality in which the property is located
<i>Animal health and registration papers</i>	Humane Society
<i>Auto registrations and vehicle titles</i>	Department of Motor Vehicles
<i>Bank books and records (checking, savings etc.)</i>	Your bank, as soon as possible
<i>Birth certificates and adoption papers</i>	Bureau of Records
<i>Citizenship papers</i>	U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service
<i>Credit Cards</i>	The issuing companies, as soon as possible
<i>Deed and Trusts</i>	Record department of the locality in which the property is located
<i>Driver's License</i>	Department of Motor Vehicles
<i>Income tax records</i>	The IRS Center where filed or your accountant
<i>Insurance policies</i>	Your insurance agent
<i>Marriage and divorce papers</i>	Bureau of Records
<i>Medical records</i>	Your doctor
<i>Mortgage papers</i>	Your bank
<i>Military discharge papers</i>	Department of Veteran Affairs
<i>Passports</i>	Passport service
<i>School diplomas and education records</i>	Issuing institution
<i>Social Security cards</i>	Social Security Office
<i>Stocks, bonds and certificates</i>	Issuing company or your broker
<i>Warranties</i>	Issuing company
<i>Wills</i>	Your lawyer

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ACTS	703-441-8606	SERVE	571-748-2600
American Red Cross	703-368-4511	United Way of National Capital Area	202-488-2000
Animal Control	703-792-6465		
Clerk of Circuit Courts	703-792-6029		
Department of Social Services	703-792-7500		
Fire Marshal's Office	703-792-6360		
Police Department	703-792-6500		
Salvation Army	703-580-8991		

Utility Companies

Electric Companies

Dominion Virginia Power	1-866-366-4357 or 1-866-DOM-HELP
Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC)	703-335-0500

Gas Companies

Columbia Gas	1-800-543-8911
Dominion Virginia Power	1-866-366-4357 or 1-866-DOM-HELP
NOVEC	703-335-0500
NOVEC Energy Solutions	1-888-627-7283
Stand Energy Corporation	1-800-598-2046
Washington Gas	703-750-1000

Telephone

Verizon	1-800-VERIZON
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Water & Sewer

Prince William County Service Authority	703-335-7900
Virginia American Water	1-800-452-6863

Cable Television

Comcast	703-670-0189
Verizon	1-800-VERIZON or 1-800-836-4966

Residential Trash Removal

Visit Trash Collection of the Public Works Dept. (located at the Prince William County Government Complex)	703-670-0189
Virginia Cooperative Extension	703-792-6289

Veterinary Hospitals

VCA Woodbridge Animal Hospital 2703 Caton Hill Rd. Woodbridge, VA 22192 (571) 229-5097	Dale City Animal Hospital 2980 Dale Blvd. Woodbridge, VA 22193 (703) 670-6181
VCA Healthy PAWS Medical Center 14840 Washington Street Haymarket, VA 20169 (571) 445-5910	Minnieville Animal Hospital 14005 Minnieville Rd. Woodbridge, VA 22193 (703) 680-4000
Ridge Lake Animal Hospital 1400 Old Bridge Rd. Woodbridge, VA 22192 (703) 278-2732	Tackett's Mill Veterinary Hospital 12793 Harbor Dr. Woodbridge, VA 22192 (703) 494-8293
Ohana Veterinary Care 10386 Bristow Center Dr. Bristow, VA 20136 Phone: (571) 379-5812	Montclair Animal Hospital 4385 Kevin Walker Dr. Montclair, VA 22025 (703) 878-3442
Caring Hands Animal Hospital 12733 Braemar Village Plz. Bristow, VA 20136 (703) 368-7300	Dumfries Animal Hospital 17552 Main St. Dumfries, VA 22026 (703) 221-1880

Occoquan Animal Hospital
14234 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Woodbridge, VA 22191
(703) 491-1400

Nokesville Veterinary Clinic
12831 Fitzwater Dr.
Nokesville, VA 20181
(703) 594-3216

River Oaks Veterinary Clinic
15508 Neabsco Mills R.
Woodbridge, VA 22191
(703) 580-0707

Old Bridge Veterinary Hospital
3604 Old Bridge Rd,
Woodbridge, VA 22192
(703) 494-0094

Prince William Animal Hospital
10227 Nokesville Rd
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 361-5223

Companion Animal Clinic
14760 Lee Hwy.
Gainesville, VA 20155
(703) 754-8387

Artemis Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Services
7951 Gainsford Ct., Ste. 115
Bristow, VA 20136
(703) 722-9159

Pearl Veterinary Hospital
4074 Squire L.
Triangle, VA 22172
(703) 687-6201

Stonewall Veterinary Clinic
7627 Heritage Village Plz.
Gainesville, VA 20155
(703) 754-9888

Staples Mill Animal Hospital
5548 Staples Mill Plz.
Woodbridge, VA 22193
(703) 897-0100

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How did Fire and Rescue Services treat you?

Please take a moment to fill out this comment card so that we may improve our services. Check the appropriate responses and provide comments as needed. Thank you.

Incident Date: _____ Incident Location/Address: _____

	Poor	Marginal	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
911 Operator					
Response Time					
Firefighting Actions					
Medical Treatment					
Other Service					
Specify:					
Performed Jobs Efficiently					
Communicated Clearly					
Answered Questions					
Anticipated Needs					
Quality of Service					
Overall Service					

Comment Card