

## Emergency Inspection Restoration Process...by JARDY Group

While insurance companies settle claims with monetary payments, Professional Restoration Firms provide the services, which actually return fire/water-damaged property to active use. Without this translation of dollars into services, insurance settlements would have no relevance. Professional restores save millions of dollars in insurance costs every month of the year. It is no exaggeration to state that professional restoration of fire/water damaged property plays an essential role in the insurance scene.

### The Fire/Smoke/Residuals Damage Situation

Fire damage occurs with a wide range of severity, from minor smoke damage to total destruction. Whatever the severity, most victims (and field adjusters included) find themselves in “uncharted waters”. In addition to the disruption of their customary living/working patterns, all are required to make numerous decisions that have a long-term impact on their personal/business and financial affairs. Most of the time all lack sound basis for making these decisions.

The effect of smoke and fire damage in and on buildings raises major questions after the fire event. How severe is it? What is the appropriate way to treat it, and what results can reasonably be expected? In a business environment the restoration time required may be a paramount factor for businesses anxious to resume operations. Insurance companies and their responsiveness play a major role in the aftermath of a fire, and the insurance personnel may exert a defining influence on the course of recovery.

Every fire damage situation is unique; there are no truly typical occurrences. In the aftermath of a fire the victim’s desire to return to normal is a compelling force, often balanced by an equally compelling desire to see the restoration and repairs performed properly. Any uncertainty regarding insurance coverage and the availability of funds adds to those pressures. Unfamiliarity with the fire damage situation makes it difficult for fire victims to formulate accurate expectations, leaving them vulnerable to the opinions of co-workers, relatives, neighbors, and other outside influences (such as the web).

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To alleviate this concerns dramatically would be the introductions of the **Emergency Inspection Restoration Process (EIRP)**. Before any proper emergency services can be performed someone/group must perform an **EIRP** to determine what materials, equipment, and scope are needed and provide a neutralization onsite of fire residues. The **EIRP** is directed exclusively to the emergency work; inspections for permanent repairs/replacement may follow. **EIRP** may include the evaluation of health & safety hazards that may be present. Depending on the demands of the situation, the **EIRP** may employ a variety of techniques, in addition to accurate and knowledgably observations coupled with appropriate field experience.

The **EIRP** should employ test procedures to confirm the presence of fire residues and acids are necessary. Fire residues are not always detectable by casual observation, and will require field-testing to reveal their presence. Test procedures are included below in detail. However, they may not be effective in detecting small quantities of residue on critical surfaces. On critical surfaces, magnification up to 400X can be performed onsite and will reveal otherwise invisible quantities of fine residues. The presence of acid residues (chloride concentrations) can also be detected onsite by field-testing with indicator fluids and pH meters. *The corrosion potential of fire residues can be determined onsite by measuring the pH or/and Chloride ion concentration on vulnerable interior surfaces of machinery, electronic equipment, and electrical panels. The possibility of successful restoration falls off rapidly if these fire residues are left untreated for more than two weeks.*

### **EIRP techniques include:**

#### **Samples.**

- Wipe Samples
- VOCs Field sampling
- Chloride, Nitrates, Sulfide field sampling
- pH Sampling
- Paint Samples
- Cementitious Samples
- Asbestos/Lead Samples
- Biological Testing
- Soil Samples
- Material fragments

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**Test Cleaning.** The responses of materials are often in doubt, which can be resolved at the time of the **EIRP**. At other times materials may have to be clean tested off site to determine their restorability.

**Moisture Testing.** The concentration of moisture in the atmosphere and any hygroscopic materials will often determine any emergency procedures required. A variety of devices and techniques may be used to collect the data.

**Video and/or Boroscope.** Determining the condition of duct interiors, chases, waste lines, chimney flues, and other hidden areas may require the use of specialized instruments specifically designed for such.

**Pre-Existing Conditions.** During the **EIRP** it should be determined, identified, and explain pre-existing conditions, and should characterize them accurately in the scope specifications. If the inspector/s lacks understanding of the effects of normal use and age, virtually any condition can be attributed to fire damage. It follows that the ability to distinguish between pre-existing and accidental damage can be as a basic requirement of an **EIRP**.

**Emergency Restoration of Manufacturing Contents.** Prompt and effective control of corrosion is a primary concern in preserving electronic equipment, machinery, and electrical panels after fire exposure. Drying, removal of acid residues, application of protective coatings & environmental hoods with established a dry, stable environment should take precedence over less time sensitive damage. Neutralizing and the cleaning procedures include fogging, spray, and immersion cleaning with non-ionic detergents and deionized water rinsing.

## **Conclusion.**

The **EIRP** address the evaluation of damage and its remedy. Inseparable from that activity are the policies and procedures of the firm who performs the guidelines of the **EIRP**. The perplexity, comprehension, and severity of a fire cannot be understood in these few pages. It is the intent of developing these guidelines as a direction to establish a "critical path" of action to help the victims in fire/water damage get back to normality with a cost effective approach.