

Fire Support Pack



**BRITISH RED CROSS NATIONAL
SUPPORT LINE: 0808 196 3651**

Please call for one off emotional and practical support



If you would like to comment
on the support we are
providing please scan the QR
code on the left.

INTRODUCTION

This pack is intended as a guide only. It should enable you to help you manage the immediate effects of a fire and identify where you might be able to obtain assistance.

The British Red Cross is a humanitarian organisation that provides disaster relief to people in crisis. This pack contains the contact information of services that can offer practical support, to help you recover from the property damage to your home, as-well-as emotional support to help you and your family recover if needed. This pack also contains wider information that you may find useful.

Please note, it is not our policy to recommend, but simply make you aware of other sources of help to you during what is a difficult experience.

Your details	Your insurance company's details
Address	Insurance company:
Your contact number:	Insurance company contact number:
Your policy number (if known):	Insurance company correspondence address:

PROPERTY PROTECTION

WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR HOME

Do not enter your home unless the Fire Brigade have said it is safe to do so.

ELECTRICAL: Check all your electrical appliances are in working order and are not damaged. A damaged electrical appliance poses a fire risk and may give a harmful electrical shock. In the event of an electric shock, always call 999 for advice.



GAS: Do not use until given clearance by a Gas Safe Engineer or your local gas supplier. **Follow advice given by Fire Brigade.**

Call: National Gas Emergency Line 0800 111 999, and report a domestic fire at your address.

WATER: Remember that prior to turning your water system back on, soldered joints may have been affected by the extremes of temperature (both heat from a fire and cold from weather). This may result in leaks; if in any doubt, get the system fully checked by a plumber before turning back on. You should call your water provider, details of London providers can be found in the utilities section.

CLEANING UP

You can search for local cleaning companies or individuals in your local area you can hire to help you clean up your property, always get approval first from your insurance agent/company before committing to any expenditure.

FOOD STUFFS

FREEZERS & FROZEN FOODS

- If your property loses power, you should be mindful of food thawing, check the packet to see if the food is safe to eat and dispose of if necessary.
- If moving the food, use insulated cooler bags or boxes if available and check the food has not thawed during transit.
- If you are unsure whether frozen food has thawed it is better to dispose of it and restock then take the risk of eating it.

THAWED & FRESH FOODS

- Any foodstuffs exposed to intense heat, open flame and/or smoke should be thrown away immediately.

CANNED GOODS

- Should not be used if they have been exposed to intense heat, or open flame during a fire. This raises the temperature inside the tin and can cause harmful bacteria to develop.

COOKING UTENSILS

- Unless destroyed, or beyond economical repair then wash thoroughly with soapy water and scouring pads/powder.
- Copper and brass implements should be cleaned with their appropriate specialist cleaners.

CLOTHES

SMOKE DAMAGE

- Wash smoke and soot from clothes at the first opportunity. Make sure you follow the garments washing instructions, this will also prevent mildew. If any



soot or mildew remains after washing consult a professional laundry service. Hard surfaces may have a chemical smell removing agent applied after cleaning and prior to re-decoration.

DRY CLEANING

- For any clothing that is labelled dry cleaning only, and there will be a delay in getting the items to a cleaner.
- Remove any shoulder pads or trimmings that may bleed their colour, soak items for a short time only in cold water with a small amount of synthetic detergent.
- Rinse in cold water gently squeezing the water from the clothes, place on a hanger to avoid wrinkling.
- Dry cleaners can deal with soot, water damage and smoke odours.

LEATHER

- Remove any surface dirt by wiping off with cold water and then wipe dry. Stuff shoes with paper, which should be changed regularly to absorb any excess water, dry them away from direct heat or sun.

SOFT FURNISHINGS

PILLOWS

- Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to remove odours from feather or foam pillows, so replacement maybe your only option.

WOOL BLANKETS

If wool blankets have been affected, then the following should help:

- Shake and brush surface dirt from blankets
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning if possible. If not, then soak in lukewarm detergent for 15 minutes turning two or three times by hand. Repeat this action if needed.
- Rinse in lukewarm clear water.
- Either dry the item in a preheated dryer with some hot bath towels or hang them over two parallel lines.
- If you use a dryer remove while still damp and finish the drying using the two-line method. Gently stretch the blanket into shape and finish by brushing it. Finally iron any trim that may be present.

UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

If upholstered furniture has been affected the following actions may help:

- Dry upholstered furniture as quickly as possible to prevent mildew and rotting.
- Brush off loose dirt then if required shampoo the item. This should be done by applying "suds" only with a damp cloth or sponge not water, then removing the same by using a blotting action with dry cloths.



- Brush pile fabrics one way only. When completely dry, brush or vacuum to remove residue.

CLEANING RUGS & CARPETS

If rugs and carpets have been affected the following action will help:

- If they have been soaked and soiled, allow them to dry thoroughly.
- By beating, sweeping or vacuuming, remove any remaining dirt.
- If necessary, then shampoo, using a soft brush in a circular motion. Wipe area with a soft cloth dampened in lukewarm water, using as little water as possible.

BOOKS

- To dry books place them on end with the pages separated. After a time press them to prevent mildew, continue with this alternate drying and pressing until completely dry. If books are very damp, sprinkle with talcum powder between the pages and leave for several hours before brushing off.

STRUCTURAL

CLEANING WALLS

If walls have soot damage:

- Wash a small area at a time with a detergent solution, starting from the floor up. *Your local industrial cleaning supplies agent/shop will be able to advise you of suitable solutions.*
- For water-damaged walls, if possible, wash while still wet. If damage is substantial, it will be necessary to apply a primer sealer coat first before re-decoration.
- Plaster walls can be repaired while still damp. *Consult a decorator but do not paint until thoroughly dry.*

LOCKS & HINGES

- Where possible they should be taken apart and wiped clean, if they cannot be removed then apply a coating of thin spray oil through the keyhole.

VINYL FLOORS

- If water has seeped under the linoleum, it can cause bad odours within a very short time. If this does happen remove the entire sheet(s) until floor is completely dry, then relay the sheet(s).

WOODEN FLOORS

- Wood left underwater for any time expands. If the floor has buckled badly, then remove the trim boards, followed by one board along the edge of each door. The wood will shrink back to normal when dry.

WOODEN FURNITURE

If wooden furniture has been affected:

- Clean any dirt from the furniture.
- Remove drawers until dry enough to return to unit without them sticking.
- Scrub with a stiff brush and cleaning solution, dry thoroughly as wet wood can decay and go mouldy. Ensure windows and doors are open for ventilation.
- Do not dry in the sun, wooden furniture can warp out of shape.

REPLACING DOCUMENTS

Should the following documents be destroyed, they will have to be replaced.

<u>Birth/Marriage/Death Certificates</u>	
General Register Office https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/login.asp	0300 123 1837
Child Support Agency https://www.gov.uk/topic/benefits-credits/child-benefit	0800 1712 033
Replacement Driving Licence https://www.gov.uk/topic/benefits-credits/child-benefit	
Vehicle Registration Documents https://www.gov.uk/vehicle-log-book	
UK Immigration services https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration	
Income Tax Records (HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Inland Revenue	0300 200 3310 https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs
Insurance Policies	Contact the agents, brokers or company
Medical Cards – Contact your GP or the local health authority that covers your area.	

National Insurance https://www.gov.uk/national-insurance	
Passports (Identity and Passport Service IPS) 0300 222 0000 https://www.gov.uk/report-a-lost-or-stolen-passport	
Department for Work and Pensions 0800 055 6688 https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions Universal credit https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit – 0800 328 5644 Benefit enquiry line - 08001690310 State Pensions https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension - 0800 731 7898	
Wills	Obtain copy or arrange a new one
Warrantees	Contact supplier or manufacturer of items

NATIONAL HELPLINES/CONTACT NUMBERS

Age UK Advice (Combining Age Concern and Help the Aged)	0800 169 6565
Budgeting Loans https://www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans	
The Pension Advisory Service National Helpline	0800 011 3797

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) http://ceop.police.uk	
CEOP Centre's online safety site, where you will find advice and tips for children, adults and professionals of all ages.	www.Thinkuknow.co.uk
Child line	0800 1111

Silver Line – Confidential helpline for older people	0800 4 70 80 90
Citizen's Advice Bureau	03444 111 444
Directgov – Official UK government website providing information on benefits, pensions, loans and health Service, and advice on looking after yourself in Winter	http://www.direct.gov.uk
Electricity Network UK Power Networks (Network)	0800 029 4285
Gas Network National Gas Emergency Service – smell gas? Call:	0800 111 999
FirstStop – Information and advice on care housing and financial options for people in later life and their carers	www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk
Gas Safe Register – Check if an engineer is on the register	0800 408 5500 www.gassaferegister.co.uk
Free Asylum Helpline – providing relief for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants who are in distress.	0808 8010 503
National Debtline	0808 808 4000
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
NHS Choices – Information about NHS services	www.nhs.uk
NHS 111 – NHS 24-hour helpline for health advice	111
NSPCC - help for adults concerned about a child	0808 800 5000
Pets RSPCA Blue Cross Pet Bereavement Support Service	https://www.rspca.org.uk/ 8.30am - 8.30pm 0800 096 6606
Samaritans	116 123

Shelter - Free housing advice Helpline 8am till midnight 7 days a week	http://england.shelter.org.uk/ 0808 800 4444
Victim Support	0808 16 89 111
Winter Fuels Helpline	Winter Fuel Payment helpline on 0800 731 0160 www.direct.gov.uk/winterfuel

Utility providers:

Gas SGN Gas 0800 912 1700 British Gas 0800 048 0202	Electricity UKPN: 0800 783 8866 Lines open: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Water Thames Water 0800 316 9800 Affinity Water 0345 357 2402 Non-metered Accounts 0345 357 2401 Metered Accounts Opening hours: Mon-Fri 8am-6pm, Sat 8am-2pm, Sun closed.	Phone / Internet Virgin Media 0345 454 1111 TalkTalk 0345 172 0088 0203 441 5550 Sky 0333 7591 018 BT Internet 0800 800 150 EE 0800 956 6000 Plusnet 0800 432 0200 Three 0333 338 1003 O2 0344 809 0202 Vodafone 0808 040 8408

Would you like to tell your story?

If you have found support from the British Red Cross helpful, we would love to hear from you. Your testimonial can help us talk to different audiences about our work, so that we can attract more support and help more people in crisis in the future. If you feel comfortable talking about your experiences and would be happy to tell somebody from the Red Cross, please contact ERLondon@redcross.org.uk

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