

Your Next Steps After A Fire



A Guide to Help
You Through the
First Few Days

Round Lake Fire Department
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518-899-2511, www.RLFD.org

WHERE TO START

We recognize that a fire can be an emotional and traumatic experience. A fire will change your life in many ways. Knowing where to begin and who can help you is important. The Round Lake Fire Department hopes you find this information useful as you return to normal.

This is only a guide and does not cover all aspects of what you may need to do nor does it cover all resources that may be available to you.

THE FIRST STEPS

Step #1 - Insurance

- **Contact your insurance company** to report the fire and any losses that you may have incurred as well as to discuss temporary housing. Remember to collect/save receipts from temporary housing, food, clothing, etc. You will also want to obtain a copy of the fire incident report from the Round Lake Fire Department.

Step #2 - Housing

- Determine what your **temporary housing options** will be if you are unable to return to your home. If you are unable to obtain temporary housing, a fire department representative can assist you with contacting the American Red Cross

Step #3 - Wellness

- The experience of a fire is traumatic. Everyone experiences trauma in their own way. While some may feel angry, others may withdraw and have difficulty communicating. Some may start the process of rebuilding and others may still be grieving. Remember that whatever you are experiencing is normal. Please **reach out** to your medical provider, clergy, or mental health support if you or your loved ones need assistance getting through this difficult time.

Housing

- Consider temporary housing options: family, friends, hotel, shelters, Red Cross assistance, etc.
- If you have pets, where will they go?
- Items needed immediately: medications, wallets, checkbooks, IDs, valuables, phones, glasses, etc.
- Important documents to locate/ replace - drivers license, passport, birth/death/marriage certificates, insurance policies, deeds, titles, financial records, medical records
- Clothing, if recoverable, should be washed and cleaned immediately due to contaminants.
- Secure your home. If you are unable to secure your home you may require the services of a third-party company. RLFDD does not endorse or recommend any specific company.
- Clean any items removed from the home. If paper money has been damaged, you can find information about replacing it at [www. moneyfactory.gov/submitclaim](http://www.moneyfactory.gov/submitclaim). Additional information is also on the RLFDD website (use the QR code)
- Contact utility companies to disconnect services. (if not already done)

CONTACTS

Emergencies: 911

Round Lake Fire Dept.: rlfd.org

Saratoga County Sheriff: 518-885-6761

New York State Police: 518-583-7000

American Red Cross: 800-RED-CROSS

After the Fire Org.: 518-435-4571

Saratoga Hospital: 518-587-3222

Saratoga County Mental Health Clinic: 518-584-9030 or 518-292-5499

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988

National Grid: 800-642-4272

NYSEG: 800-572-1131

Village of Round Lake Building Dept.: 518-899-2800 or 518-727-5095

Malta Building Dept.: 518-899-2685

Ballston Building Dept.: 518-490-2715

Hotel: _____

Primary Care: _____

Clergy: _____

RETURNING HOME

A fire in your home can cause serious damage. Do not enter or occupy your home or apartment unless the building inspector/fire department says it is safe to do so.

It is likely that your home and your belongings will need to be evaluated and cleaned professionally.

- Is it safe to enter the home?
- Is it safe to occupy the home?
- Contact a cleaning and abatement company who specializes in fire, smoke and water damage.
- Do not use electrical appliances that have been exposed to fire, water or other hazardous conditions without being serviced.
- Clean all furniture to include rugs and carpets.
- Discard any open, exposed, thawed or contaminated food.
- All other types of utensils, appliances and items should be cleaned or replaced.
- Contact your utility companies to restore services when it is safe to do so.

After a Fire - Additional Information

Replacing Money

Handle burnt money as little as possible. Try to place each bill or part of a bill in plastic wrap to help preserve it. If money is only half burned or less (if half or more is still intact), you can take it to your regional Federal Reserve Bank to get it replaced. You can ask your local bank for the one nearest you, or you can mail the burned /torn money by "registered mail, return receipt requested" to:

Bureau of Engraving and Printing
MCD/OFM, Room 344A
14th and C Streets SW
Washington, DC 20228

If U.S. Savings Bonds have been destroyed or damaged, you must obtain the Department of Treasury Form FS1048 - Claim for Lost, Stolen, or Destroyed United States Savings Bonds at www.TreasuryDirect.gov/forms/sav1048.pdf.

Key Documents to Locate/Replace

- Driver's License (Saratoga County DMV - 518-885-2227)
- Birth/Death/Marriage Certificates (County Clerk, State Dept. of Health, US Vital Records)
- Social Security or Medicare Cards
- Passports
- Credit Cards
- Auto Registration
- Titles and Deeds
- Insurance Policies
- Stocks and Bonds
- Income Tax Records
- Military Discharge Papers
- Wills
- Medical Records
- Citizenship Papers

Restoration Services

These companies provide a range of services that may include some or all of the following:

- Securing the site against further damage
- Estimating structural damage
- Repairing structural damage
- Estimating the cost to repair items of personal property
- Securing appropriate cleaning or repair subcontractors

Salvage Tips

- Machine Wash Clothing - Begin by taking garments outdoors to shake and remove loose soot particles. It is best to leave garments outside for at least 24 hours.
- Non-Washable Fabrics - For fabrics that are not machine safe, baking soda is an effective odor remover (sprinkle on the garment, sit for at least a day, vacuum).
- Cookware/Utensils - These items need to be washed with soapy water and rinsed. If needed, a polish can be used after washing.
- Electrical Appliances - Don't use appliances that have been exposed to water or steam until you have a service technician check them.
- Locks and Hinges - May need to be removed, cleaned, and oiled.
- Food - Wash cans/jars with detergent and water. Do not use canned goods if the cans have bulged or rusted., Do not refreeze frozen foods that have thawed. If you are unsure, it is best to throw out the food.
- Rugs and Carpets - They should be dried as quickly and thoroughly as possible. For information on cleaning and preserving carpets, contact a carpet dealer or a qualified carpet cleaning professional.
- Wall, Floors, and Furniture -
 - *Use mild soap or detergent
 - *Wear rubber gloves when cleaning
 - *Rinse with clean water
 - *Dry thoroughly
 - *Work from the floor up, cleaning ceilings last
 - *Do not repaint until walls and ceilings are completely dry
 - *Do not dry wood furniture in the sun
 - *Remove drawers to allow for better drying
 - *Good ventilation (open doors/windows) may help the drying process
 - *After dry, polishes/wax/wood preservatives can be used

"What to do" Recap

- *If you are insured, contact your insurance company for advice on housing, how to keep your home safe until it is repaired, and who to speak with about cleaning and repairing your home.
- *If you are not insured, contact community groups for aid and assistance.
- *Contact local disaster relief services, such as the American Red Cross. They will help you find food, clothing, medicine, and a place to stay.
- *Check with the fire department before entering your home. It may not be safe to do so.
- *Contact your landlord or mortgage company to report the fire.
- *With the help of the fire department, attempt to locate important documents.
- *Begin saving receipts for any money spent related to the fire loss. These receipts may be needed later by the insurance company, and to prove any losses claimed on your income tax.
- *Check with an accountant or the IRS about special benefits for people recovering from fire loss.