

Brought to you by:
Munson Township Fire Department
12200 Auburn Road
Munson Township, Ohio 44024
440-286-6797
munson.admin@munsonfire.org



The tragedy and destruction of a fire does not end when the flames are extinguished. We at the Munson Fire Department respond to fires every year where victims are in a state of confusion, shock, and despair. The loss of articles, especially family keepsakes, is very painful. The clean-up process from the smoke damage alone can often seem overwhelming.

This pamphlet was designed assist you in dealing with these issues. If you still have questions or need further assistance, please call us at the Munson Fire Department at 440-286-6797. We have people that are trained and are ready to assist you through the aftermath of a fire.

It is our privilege to serve you.

Michael J. Vatty

Fire Chief

INTRODUCTION

AFTER THE FIRE IS OUT

After the fire department leaves, the building becomes **your responsibility**. Remove all valuables if you cannot live in the house. Should a firefighter or fire investigator be on the scene, they will accompany you. You are responsible for securing doors, windows, and other areas against unauthorized entry, ensuring no further damage occurs to the structure, and the protection of its contents.

If you own, rent, or are purchasing the property, contact your insurance company as soon as possible. The insurance agent will know what parts of the damage are insured. In some cases, they may be able to assist by providing names of fire, smoke, and water damage restoration companies that specialize in securing homes, removal of contents, and twenty-four-hour emergency service contractors.

NOTE: All items should be inventoried and nothing should be thrown away without approval of the insurance company.

IF YOU CANNOT LIVE IN THE HOUSE

Individuals that have experienced a fire and cannot live in their home may receive assistance (food, clothing, lodging, etc.) from the American Red Cross. The Munson Fire Department will work with you to help coordinate relief efforts. To contact the American Red Cross directly, please call 440-942-3400 or 440-352-3171.

REMINDERS:

If you need to relocate from your home or business:

- Notify the post office with respect to where your mail should be forwarded
- Notify bank(s)
- Notify the water department, utilities, & other service providers
- Notify credit card companies
- Check in with your local school district
- Notify the Social Security Administration (1-800-772-1213)
- Notify magazines and newspapers

CONSTRUCTION

If the building is structurally damaged to the point that it is not habitable, a building inspector must be called and permits obtained prior to making repairs. Contact the Geauga County Building Department at 440-279-1780

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Documents are very important to your well being and can be damaged or destroyed because of fire or other disaster. For this reason, the Munson Fire Department has provided the list of documents below that should be located if possible. Locating these documents will speed up the process of recovering from a disaster.

Birth Certificate	Driver's License	Bank Books
Insurance Policies	Military Discharge	Passports
Social Security Card	Marriage Papers	Divorce Decree
Credit Cards	Title to Deeds	Stocks & Bonds
Adult Family Services ID	Wills	Medical Records
Payment Books	Warranties	Income Tax Records
Automobile Registration	Automobile Title(s)	Citizenship Papers
Burial Contract	Registration Papers for Pets	Death Certificates

Job and Family Services Division clients should notify the office in their area if their I.D. card is damaged or destroyed. This will help to eliminate problems if the need arises for check cashing, medical aid or food assistance programs. In Geauga County, please call 440-285-9141.

Copies of birth, death, and marriage records can be obtained in the county of birth, death, or marriage. See the reference directory below for Geauga County contact information.

NOTE: It is wise to store all important documents in an approved container that is specifically designed for such purposes.

CARE OF BOOKS AND IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS:

Books: Can be dried by placing them on end, separating the pages and letting them air dry, or separating the pages and placing an unmarked dry paper between the pages and pressing to prevent crinkling or distorting. If the books are very wet, air dry until only damp, sprinkle cornstarch between the pages, wipe with dry cloth and press together.

DAMAGED MONIES OR SECURITIES:

To Reclaim Paper Money and Coins: Check with any commercial bank or contact the Cleveland Federal Reserve Bank at (216) 579-2000.

PAPER MONEY: Contact the Department of the Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing department online at BEP.gov.

COINS: Contact the United States Mint (USMint.gov) at 1-800-872-6468 or via email: Inquiries@usmint.treas.gov.

U.S. Savings Bonds: Contact the U.S. Treasury Department online at Treasurydirect.gov

TAXES ON DESTROYED OR DAMAGED PROPERTY, PROPATION, REDUCTION:

If during any tax year any real or personal property is destroyed or damaged by fire or act of God, the owner or purchaser under recorded instrument of sale in case of real property, the person assessed, or the person in possession or owner in the case of personal property, may petition to the tax collector for a proration of the taxes imposed on the property for the tax year in which the property is damaged or destroyed.

Application for the proration of taxes shall be made no later than the end of the tax year or 30 days after the date the property was destroyed or damaged, whichever is later.

For further information or to request an application for proration of property taxes due to property damage/destruction, contact your local county offices.

In addition, you may also be eligible for a federal tax deduction if insurance does not cover all losses. Contact an attorney, tax expert, or the IRS for tax deduction status.

FOOD MANAGEMENT/UTILITIES

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR FREEZER STOPS:

- A full freezer will stay cold many hours longer than a freezer partially full.
- A freezer full of meat will not warm up as quickly as a freezer full of baked goods.
- A well-insulated freezer will keep food frozen much longer than one with little insulation.

TO KEEP FOOD FROM PERISHING:

- Move food to a commercial freezer firm or friend/neighbor's house.
- Place dry ice in freezer as soon as possible after power is shut off. Twenty-five pounds of dry ice should last 2 – 3 days in a 10 cubic ft. cabinet with a half load, or 3 – 4 days with a fully loaded cabinet.

FOOD: "IF IN DOUBT – THROW IT OUT"

Meats: These products are unsafe to eat when they begin to spoil. If color is questionable, dispose of it.

Fruits: Fruits usually ferment as they begin to spoil and generally will absorb smoke or other by-products of fire, leaving the fruit bitter tasting or discolored. It is generally wise to dispose of all such food.

Ice Cream or Ice Milk: Do not use or eat after the product is melted.

It is generally considered a safe practice to re-freeze foods that have partially thawed if the foods still retain visible ice crystals. (This may reduce the food quality in fruits, vegetables, and prepared foods.)

CANNED FOODS

- If you have doubts about contamination of food, discard immediately.
- If the product was subjected to heat, unsealed, or cracked, discard immediately.
- If canned food is bulged, dented, or rusted, do not use.

UTILITIES

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In some cases, the Fire Department will have the utility services shut off or disconnected as a safety precaution and to prevent further damage to the structure and its contents. The procedures for re-establishing utility services are as follows:

ELECTRICITY: An electrical inspector must check the wiring to be sure it is safe before the power can be reconnected. Contact the Geauga County Building Department for an inspection at 440-279-1780.

REMEMBER: Do not operate wet or damaged appliances. Have an electrician check them out first.

WATER: Most likely your water is supplied by your own water well. It can be turned on but use caution. Have all pipes and electrical connections checked first.

NATURAL GAS: DO NOT TURN THE GAS BACK ON. Depending on where you live in Munson Township you will need to call Enbridge at 800-362-7557 or Northeast Gas Company at 800-237-2099. They both have representatives that are available 24 hours-a-day to turn on the gas and relight appliances for you.

TELEPHONE: Contact the telephone company business office. See Reference Directory below for SBC numbers.

CLEANING TIPS

WALLS, WALLPAPER, LINOLEUM FLOORS:

Walls: May be washed down while still wet. Use a mild soap or detergent and rubber gloves. Wash a small area at a time, working top to bottom. Ceilings should be washed first. Rinse with clear water immediately. DO NOT PAINT UNTIL THOROUGHLY DRY.

Wallpaper: (Washable)

- * Heat and ventilate the room for several days to try to dry the plaster as well as the paper.
- * If mildewed paper is washable, wipe it with a dry cloth and thick soap suds. Rinse with clear water.
- * Re-paste edges or loose sections.
- * When washing wallpaper, work quickly so paper does not become scaled. Work from top to bottom to prevent streaking.

Linoleum Floors: When water remains underneath linoleum for a period of time, odors and breakdown of the wood begins. There are a number of ways to remove or lift the linoleum from the floor. A flooring dealer, or a fire & smoke and water restoration company should be consulted.

CAUTION: FOR SAFETY, KEEP ALL CLOTHS SATURATED WITH CLEANING SOLUTIONS OR COMPOUNDS (OTHER THAN WATER) IN A METAL CONTAINER EQUIPPED WITH A TIGHT-FITTING LID.

WOOD FURNITURE & FIXTURES:

1. Remove mud and/or dust.
2. Remove drawers and let dry thoroughly.
3. Scrub with brush and cleaning solution.
4. Wet wood molds easily. Ventilate the room.
5. Moldy furniture should be wiped with and soaked in a mixture of kerosene or borax dissolved in hot water.
6. Never dry furniture in the sun.
7. To remove white spots or film, rub wood surface with a steel polishing wood pad dipped in liquid wax. Wipe off with soft cloth.
8. Always test cleaning procedure on small areas.
9. Cleaning agents should be used as directed. Caution should be used when agents are toxic or flammable.

If unsure how to clean/repair wood furniture or fixtures, contact a furniture dealer or a fire, smoke & water-damage restoration company.

MILDEW: Mildew is a mold growth and will weaken or rot fabrics.

Ways to Remove Mildew: Wash stain with soap and water. Rinse well and dry. If stain remains, use lemon juice and salt, or a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 pint of lukewarm water, or dilute a solution of household chlorine bleach. Test colored garments before using any treatment.

Upholstered articles, mattresses, rugs:

- Remove loose mold from surfaces by brushing with a broom. Do this outdoors to prevent scattering mildew spores throughout the house.
- Vacuum surfaces to draw out more of the mold.
- Thoroughly dry by using an electric heater or fan to carry away moist air.
- If mildew remains, sponge lightly with thick detergent suds using only the foam. Wipe with a damp cloth.
- If mold has grown into the inner part of the article, send it to a reliable cleaner.
- There are many local companies that can assist with water/fire damage clean-up. Many listings can be found under "Water & Fire Damage Restoration" or can be obtained from your insurance agent.

CARPET AND RUGS: Rugs and carpets should be allowed to dry thoroughly. Throw-rugs can be cleaned by beating, sweeping or vacuuming, and then shampooing. Rugs should be air dried as quickly as possible – lay them flat and expose them to a circulation of warm dry air. A fan turned on the rugs will speed drying. Make sure the rugs are thoroughly dry. Even though the surface seems dry, moisture remaining at the base of the tufts can quickly cause the rug to rot. For information on cleaning and preserving carpets, call your carpet dealer or installer or a qualified carpet-cleaning professional.

REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS:

Although odors are difficult to remove due to dampness of the insulation which may absorb odors, below are some suggestions:

- Defrost and wash all surfaces with water and dishwashing detergent. Rinse with two tablespoons baking soda per quart of water, and re-rinse with clear water – or
- Wash with solution of one cup of vinegar to one gallon of water – or
- Wash with solution of one cup household ammonia to one gallon of water.

After following one of the above methods let the appliance air dry.

CAUTION: When cleaning or discarding any refrigerator or freezer, be sure that the doors are removed or secured to prevent young children from becoming trapped inside. It is no longer necessary for the homeowner to remove the refrigerant when disposing of refrigerators or freezers. Your rubbish pick-up company representative can help you with this.

PREPARING CLOTHING FOR CLEANING: Before treating any garments, always read the care label for proper instructions.

CLOTHING WITH SOOT AND SMOKE ODOR:

Clothing that can withstand bleaching, can be cleaned by washing in one of the following mixtures:

- Add 4-7 tablespoons of tri-sodium phosphate (2 Tbsp. sodium hypochlorite can be used as a substitute) and 1 cup of Lysol to 1 gallon of water. Wash with clear water and let dry thoroughly.
- Add ½ cup ammonia to 2 gallons of water. Rinse in vinegar (use rubber gloves).

COMBATING ODORS:

This is generally a very complex problem due to the many varied materials on the market today. For the best results contact a professional cleaner, or a fire, smoke and water-restoration company.

Dishes: Wash in very hot, soapy water. Rinse in hot water. Dishwashers are excellent for cleaning dishes due to the high temperatures of water. (Most dishes can be soaked in a solution of one tablespoon of bleach to 1 gallon of water prior to washing.)

Pots and Pans: Pots and pans can be sterilized by boiling in water for at least 10 minutes. Caution: Some parts (handles and knobs) of pots and pans will not withstand temperatures of boiling water. Remove if needed.

Leathers: Wipe leather goods with a damp cloth, then a dry cloth. Stuff purses and shoes with newspaper to retain shape. Leave suitcases open. Leather goods should be dried away from heat and sun. When leather goods are dry, clean with saddle soap. Rinse leather and suede jackets in cold water and dry away from heat and sun.

OTHER PRECAUTIONS

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials that have been damaged by heat, smoke or contamination should be disposed of per the manufacturer's instructions, and in accordance with all applicable laws. If unsure how to dispose of hazardous materials contact the Munson Fire Department at 440-286-6797, or the Geauga County Sheriff's Department at 440-286-1234, or Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management at 800-707-2673.

Asbestos: Asbestos poses a serious health risk. If asbestos dust hazard signs are posted, we strongly urge contacting the Lake County Health District at (440) 350-2455 for guidance.

HOME CLEANING PRODUCTS:

Bleaches, cleaning and laundry: WARNING- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU MIX AMMONIA WITH ANY OTHER CLEANING PRODUCTS such as chlorine, Lysol, Tri-sodium Phosphate, Spic and Span, etc. These products can be diluted separately with cold water and washed down the drain with plenty of cold water.

Fertilizers: These can be spread on lawns and gardens and watered into the soil in the usual manner.

CAUTION: DO NOT crush or pound lumps of ammonium nitrate to reduce their size. These lumps are best diluted in water and used as a liquid. Water the soil well so as not to burn your plants.

HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS:

When dealing with pesticides, herbicides, soil sterilants, chlorine-based swimming pool disinfectants, poisons, solvents, oil based paint, flammable liquids, industrial chemicals, commercial quantities of any chemicals or doubtful or unknown chemicals, contact the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at 330-963-1200, or the Munson Fire Department at 440-286-7697 or Dial 911.

Industries and businesses may be required to also notify the Local Emergency Planning Operations Center at 440-286-1234.

CHARCOAL:

Charcoal briquets may spontaneously ignite when damp. They should be disposed of or stored in a non-combustible (metal) container with a lid., away from other combustibles (wood, paper, etc.).

MEDICATIONS:

You can drop any partial, unused or unwanted medications free of charge at the Medication Vault in the lobby of the Geauga County Safety Center located at 12450 Merritt Road, Chardon, Ohio.

WHY ARE THERE HOLES IN THE ROOF?

WHY ARE WINDOWS AND DOORS BROKEN?

As a fire burns, it moves upward then progresses outward. Breaking the windows and/or cutting into the roof (called Ventilation) slows the damaging outward movement, helps remove blinding smoke that obscures the actual fire, and enables the firefighters to fight the fire more efficiently. The result of this action is less damaging to the structure in the long run.

WHY ARE HOLES IN THE WALLS AND CEILINGS?

This is done so that the fire department is absolutely sure that the fire is completely out, and that there is no fire inside of the walls or other hidden places.

REFERENCE DIRECTORY:

MUNSON TOWNSHIP

Fire, Police, Medical Emergency	911
Munson Fire Department	440-286-6797
Munson Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau	440-286-6797
Geauga County Sheriff's Department	440-286-1234

UTILITIES

ATT (Home Services & Business Services)	440-975-8394
Enbridge Gas	800-362-7557
North Coast Gas	800-237-2099
First Energy	800-589-3101

COUNTY, STATE, & FEDERAL AGENCIES

Geauga County Health Department	
Birth and Death records	440-285-2222
Environmental Services	440-285-2222
Geauga County Department of Human Services	440-285-9141
Geauga County Treasurer (Real Estate & Personal Tax)	440-279-2000
Internal Revenue Service	800-829-1040
US. Postal Service- Chardon	800-275-8777
US. Postal Service- Chesterland	800-275-8777
Geauga County Marriage License	440-285-2222
U.S. Department of Human Services (Social Security)	800-772-1213
Poison Control Center	800-222-1222
Environmental Protection Agency (Northeast District)	330-963-1200
American Red Cross	216-431-3010
Geauga County Emergency Planning Committee	440-286-1234
Geauga County Health District – General Directory	440-279-1914
Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management	800-707-2673