

Cleaning hints

A separate Home Fire and Life Safety Information Sheet called "After the Fire" is available from the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS). This sheet contains additional advice for cleaning after the fire. For a copy of the information sheet phone 1300 737 637 or download it from the MFS website: http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au/site/community_safety/home_fire_safety_information_sheets_domestic.jsp

Change of address

You will need to notify a range of people about your change of address. A comprehensive checklist can be found by searching "change my address" at: <http://www.australia.gov.au>

You should begin by notifying:

- insurance companies
- financial institutions
- employer
- family, friends and neighbours
- local post office - to hold or forward mail
- phone and internet providers
- gas, electricity and water suppliers
- police, if the fire is under investigation
- children's schools
- Australian Electoral Commission
- Centrelink if you receive a government allowance
- Medicare
- pet microchip registry
- Transport SA - drivers licence, motor vehicle registration
- your superannuation provider

Useful numbers

SA Metropolitan Fire Service	
In an emergency	000
Community Safety & Resilience	1300 737 637
South Australia Police	
In an emergency	000
For assistance & attendance	13 14 44
SA Ambulance	
In an emergency	000
General business	1300 136 272
SA Power Networks (electricity)	
Faults and emergencies	13 13 66
Gas	
Australian Gas Networks	1800 427 532
SA Water	
Service problems & faults	1300 883 121
Customer service	1300 650 950
Accommodation	
Emergency Housing	1800 003 308
Housing SA	13 12 88
Legal advice	
Law Society	8229 0200
Legal Services Commission	1300 366 424
Insurance	
Insurance Council of Australia	1800 743 621
Pets	
Contact your local vet	
RSPCA Lonsdale	1300 477 722
Counselling	
Crisis care 4pm-9am Monday to Friday, 24 hours on weekends and Public holidays	13 16 11
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
Lifeline	13 11 14
Hearing or speech impaired	
National Relay Service	TTY 133 677
Other contact options available at www.relayservice.gov.au	

After the fire

Now that the fire is out, there are a few things you need to know!



Your safety

Do not enter the burnt area without clearance from the fire officer in charge or the senior police officer present.

After a fire has been extinguished:

- be aware that part or all of a building may collapse.
- toxic gases may be present in dangerous quantities for some time.
- you may hear noises coming from the burnt area which are caused by the cooling down of construction materials heated by the fire. Brick walls, for example, will stay warm for hours.

Coping emotionally

The stress caused by fires can often trigger existing illnesses and conditions. Adults and children may begin to feel anxious or depressed. If you feel that you or any of your family are having difficulty in coping, contact your Doctor or one of the counselling services listed overleaf as soon as possible.

Securing your home

Protect the building from any further damage by weather, theft or vandalism. Do not leave the building unsecured.

- *If you are the owner:* it is your responsibility to see that openings are covered against rain and unauthorised entry. Make sure that outside doors to the building are locked or secured. Advise your insurance company immediately.
- *If you are renting the house:* contact your letting agent or landlord and inform them of the fire. If you cannot contact them and you need professional assistance in boarding up the premises, refer to the telephone directory for a local building contractor.
- *If you are a Housing SA tenant:* contact the Housing SA 24 hour Maintenance Centre on 13 12 88.

Cautions

- The Fire Service may have disconnected the gas, water and electricity supplies to your site.
- If the gas, water or electricity is disconnected, it is your responsibility to have the services checked and reconnected by a licensed tradesperson. Do not attempt to reconnect the services yourself as they may have been damaged by the fire.

Leaving your home

- Provided that it is safe to enter the building try to locate the following to take with you:
 - identification - passports, birth certificates
 - vital medicines, such as blood pressure regulating drugs or insulin, as long as they are not damaged by the fire
 - eyeglasses, hearing aids, prosthetic devices or personal aids
 - wallets, purses, credit cards, money and jewellery
 - banking details
 - mobile phones, computers, laptops
 - insurance documents
- Check with your insurance company to find out whether you are entitled to stay in temporary accommodation as part of your insurance cover, or how soon you might get an advance on your insurance claim settlement.
- If you are not insured contact either family or friends for assistance, or call Emergency Housing on 1800 003 308. Housing SA customers should call the Maintenance Centre on 13 12 88.

- Consider asbestos contamination. For information go to www.asbestos.sa.gov.au and/or contact your insurance company.
- Food, drink and medicines exposed to heat, smoke or soot should be discarded in an appropriate manner.
- Refrigerators and freezers left unopened will hold their temperature for a short time. However, do not attempt to refreeze thawed items. If in doubt, throw it out!

Insurance claims

- Contact your insurance agent to report the loss and give a forwarding address and telephone number if you have had to relocate.
- The sooner the insurance company is alerted, the quicker the insurance claim can be processed. The insurers will use an assessor to carry out an inspection.
- As soon as possible, make a list of items either inside or outside the buildings which have been damaged by the fire. Do not throw away any damaged goods as the insurance assessor may need to view them.
- Document and keep all receipts for any money you spend. These are important as proof to show the insurance company what money you have spent as a result of the fire.
- If you are unable to remember the name of your insurance company, contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 743 621.