



**FIRE +  
RESCUE**



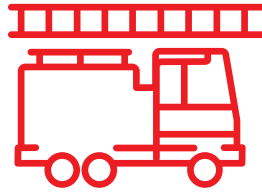
**AFTER  
THE FIRE  
WHAT  
TO DO  
NEXT**



**NSW  
GOVERNMENT**



# AFTER THE FIRE



## Your Incident Details

**Attending Fire Station** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact officer** \_\_\_\_\_

**Platoon** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Phone No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time of Call** \_\_\_\_\_

**Incident Number** \_\_\_\_\_

When calling the local fire station (listed above) for further information, please quote this incident reference number.

## What to do in the hours and days after a fire occurs

**This brochure contains important advice from Fire and Rescue NSW to help you through this difficult time.**

Understanding and accepting what has happened will be difficult, but you can begin by taking the first steps towards rebuilding your life and home.

There are organisations and people who will help you through the process. Your starting point is to make sure you and the people you live with are safe, then to secure and protect your property.



# YOUR REACTION IS NORMAL

**It is normal to feel unsettled and disrupted for a while. You may be able to overcome problems yourself but don't be afraid to ask for help.**

After a crisis you may be exposed to sights and situations that are distressing. Consider leaving children and pets with family or friends until access is safer and it is less distressing for them to return.

After a crisis it is often easier to talk to someone who is not directly involved and is trained to listen.

If you need counselling or professional advice, your local GP can put you in contact with a mental health professional.

The following services may also be of assistance:

**Lifeline** - Online, phone and face-to-face crisis support and suicide prevention services. **13 11 14** - [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

**Beyond Blue** - Support and advice for depression and anxiety. **1300 224 636** - [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

**Counselling Online** - Online and phone support for those with drug or alcohol concerns. **1800 422 599** - [www.counsellingonline.org.au](http://www.counsellingonline.org.au)

**Phoenix Australia** - Centre for Post Traumatic Mental Health. **03 9035 5599** - [www.phoenixaustralia.org](http://www.phoenixaustralia.org)

**Head to Health** - Provides a list of publicly funded, Australian mental health resources. [www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au)

Fire and Rescue NSW has the services of full-time Chaplains, who can also provide support. This service is free **02 9265 2746**.



# THINGS TO COLLECT

You may need to contact your insurance company before removing any items.



**If you need to enter your home, check with the fire officer in charge of the scene and also the Police, if they are present.**

They will advise you if it is safe to enter. Ensure you follow all the instructions they give you. You may need to get advice from a structural engineer.

There will be many things that you will want to retrieve. Focus, however, on finding the priority items above.

# WHAT TO DO NOW



## Protect

### You need to protect your home from weather, theft or vandalism

- Lock and secure all entry points. Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters may be able to help you with this.
- Contact your insurance company.



## Connect

### If you are a tenant

Contact your real estate agent or landlord as soon as possible.

If you are a Family and Community Services tenant call the 24 hour helpline on **1800 422 322**.

### If you are going to leave your home

1. Contact your local Police Station and let them know that the property will be left vacant.
2. Check with your insurance company to see if they will advance you money for essentials and accommodation.



## Take care

### Before reoccupying your home:

- Wiring should be checked by a licensed electrician.
- Roofs and floors may be weakened by structural damage.
- Unsafe hazardous materials may be present, such as asbestos.
- Food, drink and medicines exposed to heat and smoke should be discarded.
- Always follow specialist advice provided through your insurer, local council or building associations.

# IF YOU ARE INSURED



## **Call your insurance company, agent or broker as soon as possible.**

- Contact your insurance company as soon as possible to discuss your policy, file your claim and find out what actions you need to take and information you need to provide.
- Keep a record of any damage – take photos and/or video where possible.
- Do not discard damaged items in case they need to be assessed.
- Talk to your insurance company before doing any cleaning or arranging any repairs. Most insurers have a range of specialists who will need to do these tasks.
- It is not uncommon for an insurance company to investigate a claim. Try to remember events leading up to the fire. Make a note of them and be prepared to answer questions.

If you have a query relating to insurance you can contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 734 621 or visit [www.insurancecouncil.com.au](http://www.insurancecouncil.com.au)

## Important notes to remember for my claim purposes

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# WHO TO CONTACT



You should contact the following people and let them know what happened. They may be able to help you through some of the steps you need to take after a fire.

**Family and friends**



**Your insurance company**



**Your bank or mortgage company**



**Your employer**



**Your child's school**



**Post office**



**Electricity supplier**



**Local council**



**Gas supplier**





# RESTORING YOUR PROPERTY AFTER A FIRE



**If you are insured, your home insurer may organise and pay for cleaning up, securing your home and removing debris – contact them before cleaning or arranging any repairs. If you are not insured, depending on the extent of damage, you may need to hire professional fire and water damage restorers. Search for carpet and/or furniture cleaning and protection.**

## Kitchen

- Discard food, drinks and medicines exposed to the fire, smoke or water.
- Wash tins and jars in detergent and water. Do not eat tinned food if the tin has bulged or rusted.
- Do not refreeze thawed food.
- Wash cooking pots and pans with detergent and water, then rinse and polish with a fine-powdered cleaner.
- Have all electrical appliances checked by a qualified service person before you use them.

## Walls, floors and ceilings

- Clean soot and smoke from walls with a mild soap or detergent.

## Leather and books

- Wipe leather goods with a damp cloth, then a dry cloth. Stuff purses and shoes with newspaper to retain shape. Leather should be left to dry away from heat and sun.
- Books must be taken care of as soon as possible. The best method to save wet books is to freeze them in a vacuum freezer. You may put them in a household freezer to stop pages sticking while you locate a vacuum freezer. Your local library or book restorer may be able to give special advice.

## Furniture and furnishings

- Rugs and carpets should be dried as fast as possible because they will begin to rot.
- Scrub furniture with cleaner and a brush and dry thoroughly in the shade where there is good ventilation.
- Remove drawers to dry and to stop them from warping.

# SMOKE ALARMS HELP SAVE LIVES



**After experiencing the devastating effects of a fire first hand, you will want to prevent it from ever happening again to your family and property.**

Smoke alarms save lives and are required by law!

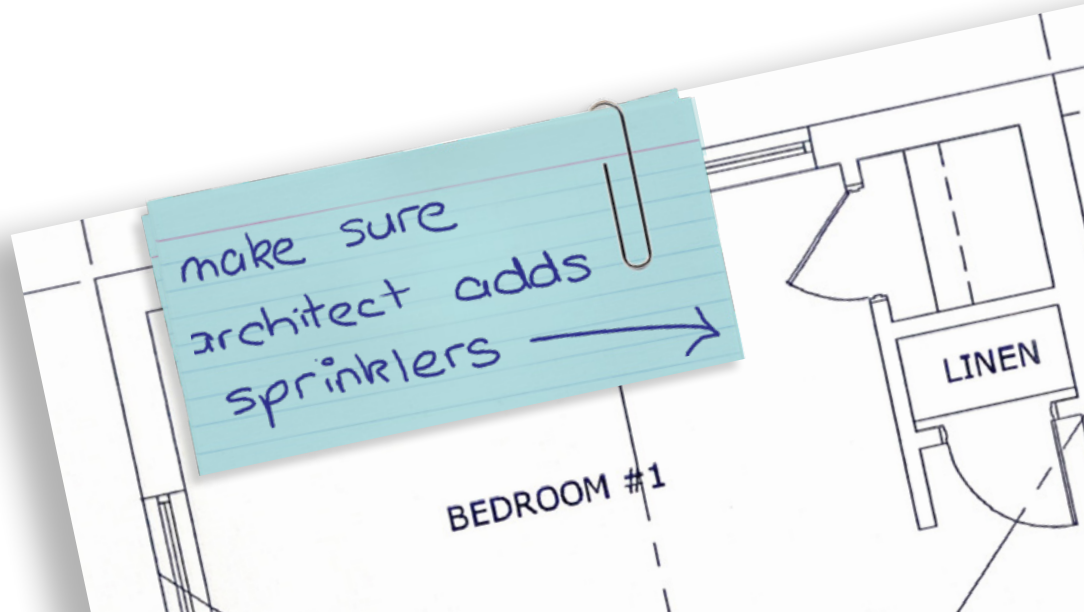
Working smoke alarms provide early warning, giving you the best chance of escape.

Smoke alarms are inexpensive and can be bought from supermarkets, hardware stores, electrical retailers and most department stores.

For maximum protection, Fire and Rescue NSW recommends smoke alarms are installed in all bedrooms, living areas and hallways, and that they are hard-wired or long-life battery-powered, and interconnected.

## What to do now

If the damage caused by a fire in your home will mean a full or partial rebuild, discuss the installation of residential sprinklers with your insurance company, architect, builder or visit the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition at [www.homefiresprinkler.org](http://www.homefiresprinkler.org) for more information.



# KEY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION



## SOME PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

### PHOENIX AUSTRALIA

03 9035 5599  
phoenixaustralia.org

### HEAD TO HEALTH

headtohealth.gov.au

### BEYOND BLUE

1300 224 636  
beyondblue.org.au

### CONSELLING ONLINE

1800 422 599  
counsellingonline.org.au

### KIDS HELPLINE

1800 55 1800  
kidshelpline.com.au

### LIFELINE

13 11 14  
lifeline.org.au

### AUSTRALIAN COUNSELLING ASSOCIATION

1300 784 333  
theaca.net.au

### ROAD TRAUMA NETWORK NSW

02 9542 4029  
enoughisenough.org.au

### FRNSW CHAPLAIN

02 9265 2746



## INSURANCE MATTERS

### INSURANCE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

1800 734 621  
insurancecouncil.com.au

### INSURANCE LAW SERVICE

1300 663 464  
insurancelaw.org.au



## SOME ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS IN NSW

### AUSGRID

13 13 88  
ausgrid.com.au

### ENDEAVOUR ENERGY

131 003  
endeavourenergy.com.au

### ESSENTIAL ENERGY

13 20 80  
essentialenergy.com.au



## FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit [fire.nsw.gov.au](https://fire.nsw.gov.au) or contact your local fire station.

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