

CONTENTS SOLUTIONS

THE GO-TO-GUIDE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY RESTORATION

Vol. 9, Issue 8

Why Are Insurance Companies Looking So Hard for Contents Restoration Pros?

Insider Secrets That Can Really Make A Difference!

Replacing Damaged Money

Provided by your Contents Restoration partner



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Why Are the Insured and Insurers So Happy When They Find a Contents Specialist?

During the past few years insurance adjusters, agents, property managers, hospital administrators, heads of universities, government agencies and many more have come to rely on the restoration super-professionals called, "Contents Processing Specialists."

When a house is flooded or permeated with smoke and ash, those in authority most often call a traditional restoration company for assistance. But when the building or home has massive amounts of contents, or fragile, sensitive and unique items, they call for Contents Pros.

Picture this, an insurance adjuster has a job from a university library that has been drenched by a malfunctioning sprinkler system - he (she) looks down at his desk and there is an article (in a previous edition of *Contents Solutions*) that tells how Yale got its documents restored after a flood, by a contents company. A moment ago, the adjuster thought it was a total loss, now, with only a telephone call he knows help is on the way.

Imagine a property manager with a dozen computers clogged with soot and water from fire hoses. His (her) corporate boss doesn't want the computers replaced, he wants the *data* on them. The savvy manager picks up the telephone and calls the one company that he knows can get wet hard drives restored. Many regular restoration companies won't even attempt to restore wet electronics - contents restoration professionals do.

A homeowner with a collection of rare art, watches as the smoke and heat damaged masterpieces are stacked carelessly against a wall, then a contents specialist shows her stunning before and after pictures of severely damaged art from other collections - completely restored by the art conservancy with which he associates. Her family treasures will be saved by some of the leading professionals in the country, and she is thinking that her insurance premiums were the best investment she ever made.

And, you have probably been watching the television news and newspaper headlines about the new "unstoppable" diseases that are plaguing the world. The interesting thing is that for Swine Flu, MRSA, and Tuberculosis clean-up they aren't calling some sort of disease control SWAT team. They are calling contents processing companies with advanced cleaning technologies, anti-microbials, ozone, ultraviolet light, etc. They even called in a contents company when the governor of New York had an anthrax scare in his office!

Contents Processing Professionals are trained to move materials without damage. They know how to pack, ship and clean everything from fine wine to a water-logged big screen TV. Traditional restoration companies rarely invest in the education, materials and technology necessary for advanced cleaning and "pack out."

One contents processing group recently pointed out that it had saved the insurance industry over \$3,000,000 by restoring claims that would have normally been replaced. And soft contents cleaning divisions are consistently claiming 84% and higher savings over replacement costs.

Contents Processing Professionals are the most sought after specialists in the restoration industry - once they are found, managers, insurance agents and adjusters never let them go!



Can Wood Furniture Be Restored From Soot and Smoke Damage?

Wood furniture that is caked with soot and water may look like a total loss, but Contents Specialists have a system of restoration that is just short of miraculous.

First the furniture is thoroughly dried in special chambers - sometimes on site, but more often in the area constructed for such work at headquarters.

Second, each piece is deep cleaned with specially formulated fabric and wood cleaners to get the soot and debris completely removed.

Third, the furniture is placed in deodorization chambers. Sometimes ozone is used, sometimes special mists, foggers and deodorizing crystals -

whatever the job calls for, the contents specialists have it. Smoke has a capacity to "burrow" deep into wood and cloth fibers, and it can't be "forced out," it has to be "pulled" from the furniture slowly, methodically and meticulously.

Fourth, the wood is carefully and painstakingly restored using special oils, polishes and waxes so that it is faithfully restored to pre-loss condition.

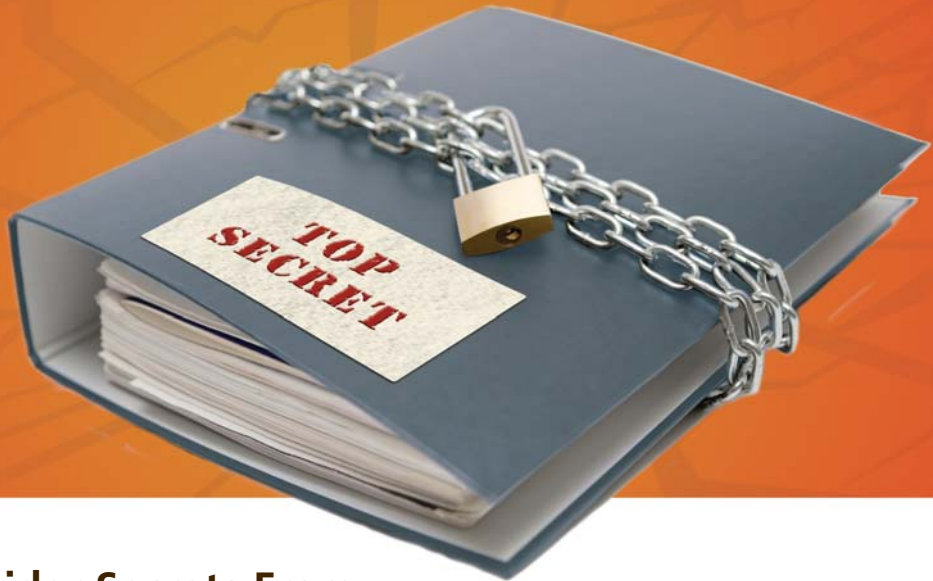
And if it is appropriate, the individual pieces are warehoused, completely encased in soft storage blankets or paper pads held in place by stretch wrap so that it is preserved until the home or office is ready to receive it again.



Quick Tip For Handling Damaged Money

Contents Processing Specialists see damaged money quite often, and through careful experimentation they have discovered the best ways of getting the owner reimbursed.

Sometimes it is burned, sometimes it is damaged by chemicals, caked with sewage back-up or buried under a mudslide. In a future issue of Contents Solutions we will even tell you about the contents pros who were asked to dry out an entire bank vault of flooded bills. But today's "quick tip," is that to replace damaged bills, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (in the U.S.) and the Bank of Canada wants to see that at least half of the bill is still identifiable as to its denomination and authenticity. So, if you have a metal box full of charred bills, or even a purse with burned currency inside, a contents pro will immobilize the bills, still inside the container. For example, in a box, they would gently lay in cotton balls and pads. In a convoluted purse they might pour in Styrofoam pellets. The whole idea is to see to it that what is left of the bills stays intact long enough for the examiners to identify and replace it. They don't pay for confetti.



Insider Secrets From Contents Processing Pros

While traditional restoration companies focus on just getting the water damage of a home or office dried out and repaired, or repairing fire and smoke damage to the structure, contents restoration specialists see all sorts of "smaller" things that can make a big difference!

For example, if you have just had a fire in your home or office and you have a safe, filled with valuable papers, your first instinct might be to open it as soon as possible – "bad idea," say the contents professionals. The sealed environment inside a safe can hold remarkably high temperatures for a long time, and as soon as you open it, everything in the safe could burn up when the hot air meets the cooler oxygenated air outside! Your better bet is to let things cool down for a few hours before getting inside.

And, don't be surprised if your contents specialist advises you to discard any food, drink (even in sealed cans) or medicines that have been exposed to high heat. Fire can chemically change the contents and make them

toxic. Check with your doctor before taking any "heated" medicines and let the contents team throw away all the food and drink that might have been altered by the flames.

It is not uncommon for you to see a contents specialist coating chrome and other metal surfaces with a gel spray, axle grease or Vaseline during the clean up – moisture, mixed with ash can actually tarnish and pit soft metal surfaces.

And it may come as no surprise to see them busily unplugging anything electronic – even if the items are in rooms where no fire or flood occurred. Wet circuitry anywhere in the house can cause a power surge everywhere in the house if they are turned on accidentally. So, if your first instinct is to turn on your computer to see if your data is safe, and a contents pro is standing by, let him (her) have a look first – a mere flick of a switch can finish off what might have been a salvageable item.

The trained contents professionals know these sorts of things as part of their every day work – now you do too!

It's All In The Process

"It all depends on how long you leave it on the surface of what you are trying to disinfect," that is what a national expert recently said on a talk show about disinfectants, including sprays, liquids and gels. Contents pros know that for a disinfectant to work it has to remain wet and in contact with the surface for at least ten minutes, then cleaned off. That is why, when using anti-microbials, they always use a system, moving from one area to then next – disinfecting first, then returning for cleanup ten or more minutes later.





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Specializing in Contents Restoration! Professional pack out and inventory service. With restorative cleaning for all types of contents: Antiques, electronics, art work, fine fabrics, rugs, wood furniture, documents, books, photos, and more!

Coming Up In the Next Issues of Contents Solutions



Picture Courtesy of The Chicago Conservation Center

SAVING DAMAGED ART

The Top Experts Show Before and After Results



PUSHING PAPER

New Techniques For Restoring Documents



ANTIQUe MATTERS

Transporting and Restoring Historic Treasures

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