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News Release

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Fire Damage: The Critical Importance of Immediate Response

Santa Fe, NM – June 27, 2011 - Experienced insurance adjusters and restoration contractors, like [Paul Davis Restoration of Northern New Mexico](#), know immediate response is critically important to controlling the severity of a fire loss due to several factors:

Psychological Damage

Property owners expect immediate response in their time of need, but few insurance companies are able to have an adjuster on site in one to two hours from the time the loss is reported. Often, several days elapse. During this delay, the property owner is highly vulnerable to bad advice from uninformed neighbors, public adjusters, unscrupulous contractors, and others with their own agendas. Ethical restoration specialists allay unreasonable fears and help the insured property owner adjust quickly to the reality of the situation.

Decreased Safety Hazards through Risk Management

According to Sam Garcia, owner of the local Paul Davis office, after a fire loss, structures can be highly hazardous locations, especially since most people are unaware of the types of risks and how to mitigate them. Restoration specialists can quickly reduce the level of risk.

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Odor Penetration

Odor sources, such as charred materials in the structure continue to “offgas” (i.e., emit odors) until they have been dealt with properly. The longer porous materials are exposed to odor, the more the odor is absorbed and the more difficult and costly it becomes to remove it.

Ongoing Effect of Contamination

Smoke residue contains large amounts of sulfur and nitrogen oxides. When mixed with humidity in the air, they form sulfuric and nitric acids. Along with the large amounts of soot also in smoke residue, over time these acids will yellow, etch, stain, or degrade almost all surfaces in the structure. The hotter, “wetter,” and longer the fire burns, the more quickly these effects will appear. Shiny and light-colored surfaces show damage more quickly.

Damage that occurs within minutes:

- Plastics discolor (e.g., Tupperware®, small appliances, switch plates).
- Paper discolors (e.g., books, documents).
- Limestone, marble, and alabaster stain.

Damage that occurs within hours:

- Grout stains.
- Furniture and cabinet finishes begin to turn yellow.
- Appliances discolor permanently (especially where they extend above the heat line).
- Fiberglass plumbing fixtures yellow.
- Metal begins to tarnish or rust (silver, chrome, steel).
- Counter tops and appliances discolor, especially where contrasted with areas protected during the fire.

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Damage that occurs within days:

- Most metals develop severe rust, corrosion, or pitting (even aluminum window frames).
- Wallpaper discolors, requiring replacement.
- Soot permanently stains clothing, especially synthetic fibers.
- Vinyl and wood flooring requires refinishing or replacement.
- Paints yellow or discolor permanently.
- Carpet, upholstery, and drapery fibers become permanently soot-stained or yellowed.

Damage that occurs within weeks:

- Glass, china, and crystal require replacement due to etching and pitting.
- Window glass and mirrors etch and pit.

“With proper emergency services procedures, further damage can be stopped in its tracks. Waiting until all decisions are finalized before authorizing any work to begin usually results in drastically increasing the cost and complexity of the fire loss,” said Garcia.

The Paul Davis office will be supplying water to local shelters and providing information to homeowners to assist with insurance claims. For more information about minimizing fire losses, call James Mendoza, Associate with Paul Davis Restoration, at 505-471-1357.

Paul Davis Restoration has been serving Santa Fe with loss mitigation and emergency restoration services for 15 years. Specializing in fire and water damage mitigation and restoration services, Paul Davis Restoration is located at 12 Bisbee Court, Santa Fe, NM. Visit the website at www.pauldavisrestorationsantafe.com.

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