



TIPS FOR CLEANING SMOKE AFFECTED HOMES

Wildfire smoke can affect your home in many ways.



Wildfire smoke can damage homes physically by staining walls and leaving sticky odors. To restore the fresh and safe living conditions of your home, here are some useful tips to follow:

1. Air out the house. Open all doors and windows to ensure good ventilation and allow plenty of fresh air inside.
2. Place electric fans towards doorways and windows and turn on at high speed to blow out smoke smells, out of the house.
3. Aerate the interior of the house by putting a large fan at the entrance door facing inward. Leave one window open for exhaust while closing all other doors and windows. Fresh air will be forced into the room and any lingering smoke and odor will be pushed out through the open window. Repeat the process until all the premises of the house is aired out.
4. Place bowls of activated charcoal in places that cannot be aired out such as windowless room or cupboard space. Overtime, the charcoal soak up the odor.
5. Remove all curtains, rugs, furniture covers, blankets and any other fabric materials from the affected areas and have them washed or dry cleaned.
6. Wash the windows, window screens and window shades. Wash with soap and hot, clean water. Use a solution of white vinegar and hot water to scrub plastic blinds. Rinse with cool water and dry in fresh air.
7. Mop all uncarpeted floors and make sure to rinse the mop after use, under running water.
8. For carpeted floors, use vacuum machine that contains a HEPA filter to prevent smoke particles from blowing back into the room.
9. Replace air filters and air conditioning filters since smoke odors can be trapped by them. Contaminated filters can be cleaned in trisodium phosphate (TSP) solution that can be bought from home improvement stores, and follow the instructions carefully.
10. For cleaning the walls, use cleaning products that contain ammonia or glycol which are effective in neutralizing unpleasant smells. Rinse well and let the walls dry completely.

11. Clean and sanitize surfaces using a solution of 1 cup (8oz/240mL) of unscented household chlorine bleach in 5 gallons of clean water. NEVER mix ammonia with bleach or any other cleaner. They react chemically to form a toxic odor.
12. For wall staining and paint that retains the smoke odor, repaint the walls. Apply a primer that is designed to lock in odors and then use latex paint to finish the job.
13. For more information on the health effects from wildfire smoke, please see:
<https://www.cdc.gov/features/wildfires/>