

WEST VIRGINIA BUREAU FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
PUBLIC HEALTH SANITATION DIVISION

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIRE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

**RETAIL FOOD STORES, FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS,
FOOD PROCESSING PLANTS, AND FOOD WAREHOUSES**

During a fire in a structure that contains foodstuffs, the likelihood of those food items suffering contamination is great and may render those items unfit for human consumption. Based on the size, nature and characteristics of the fire, the sanitarian shall initiate the following procedures to the degree required to eliminate a threat to the public health.

Such items exposed to a fire shall not be sold or disposed of in any manner unless prior approval has been given in writing by the sanitarian.

No fire damaged foodstuff, household products, medicines or cosmetics shall be sold to any commercial salvage concerns or any other persons coming into the establishment for the purpose of buying such items. Such concerns or persons shall be reported to the sanitarian.

The following information should be useful as a guide in determining the disposition of foodstuffs, household products, medicine and cosmetics:

1. All raw fruits and vegetables involved in a fire shall be destroyed in a manner approved by the sanitarian.
2. All meats and dairy products shall be destroyed in a manner approved by the sanitarian.
3. All items, including food and beverages packed in screw cap or crimp cap containers, shall, if exposed to smoke, heat or material used to fight the fire, be destroyed in a manner approved by the sanitarian.
4. All perishable foodstuffs (requiring refrigeration) which have been without refrigeration more than four (4) hours shall be destroyed in a manner approved by the sanitarian.
5. Products not in hermetically sealed containers such as cereals, bakery products, condiments, dried fruits, or similar foodstuffs shall be destroyed in a manner approved by the sanitarian.

6. Foods in hermetically sealed containers that have been subject to heat or ash deposit or have come into contact with any material (whether water or chemical) used to fight the fire, cannot be used. In the event of unusual extenuating circumstances, hermetically sealed containers that have not been subjected to heat or materials (whether water or chemical) used to fight the fires, can be used if they are cleaned on-site using the following procedures. The containers are not to be removed from the site or adjoining site for cleaning.
 - a. Remove label from product.
 - b. Wash container in hot soapy water.
 - c. Rinse container in clean water.
 - d. Sanitize outside of container with one hundred (100) parts per million (ppm) available chlorine solution.
 - e. Dry.
 - f. Relabel container and store in a clean, dry, protected place.
7. Other products, such as tobacco in any form, household products, or medicine or products which come into contact with the hand or mouth of the consumer public, shall be destroyed in a manner approved by the sanitarian.

All retail food service establishments, food service establishments, food processing plants, and food warehouses shall be effectively structurally repaired, thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, before reopening for business, and shall not engage in such business activity until inspected and issued approval for reopening by the sanitarian.