



The Homestar Group Outlines Critical Steps After Kitchen Fires

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The Homestar Group, an IICRC-certified restoration firm serving the Atlanta metropolitan area, has published detailed guidance on the steps homeowners should take within the first 24 hours following a kitchen fire to limit secondary damage from soot, smoke, and water.

Kitchen fires remain the leading cause of residential structure fires in the United States. According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking-related incidents account for an estimated 158,400 home fires annually, resulting in approximately \$1.15 billion in direct property damage each year. Many homeowners who experience a kitchen fire are unaware that the damage continues to escalate after the flames are extinguished. Soot residue becomes increasingly corrosive within hours, smoke particles penetrate porous surfaces throughout a home, and moisture left behind by firefighting efforts can trigger mold development if not addressed quickly.

The company's new resource on kitchen fire emergency response details the sequence of actions that can reduce the scope of long-term damage. Among the most critical early steps, according to the guidance, are ventilating the property to reduce airborne particulate concentration, documenting all visible damage

thoroughly for insurance purposes before any cleanup begins, and avoiding direct contact with soot-covered surfaces, which can drive residue deeper into affected materials. The resource also explains how homeowners can coordinate with their insurance carrier to ensure proper documentation from the outset, a step that often determines how smoothly the claims process unfolds.

"Most homeowners don't realize that secondary damage from smoke and water can sometimes exceed the harm caused by the fire itself," said Jeremy York, Owner of The Homestar Group. "Getting the right steps started in that first day is what separates a manageable restoration from a much larger project."

One often-overlooked consequence of kitchen fires is the water damage that follows suppression efforts. Fire crews typically apply significant volumes of water to contain and extinguish residential fires, and that moisture saturates drywall, insulation, cabinetry, and subflooring. Without prompt extraction and structural drying, standing water and elevated humidity levels create conditions favorable to microbial growth. The IICRC S700 Standard for Professional Fire and Smoke Damage Restoration establishes protocols for addressing both primary fire damage and the secondary water intrusion that accompanies suppression. Adherence to these industry standards helps ensure that restoration work addresses the full scope of damage rather than only the most visible effects.

Soot presents its own timeline of urgency. Acidic residues from burned cooking oils and synthetic materials begin etching metal fixtures, discoloring painted surfaces, and degrading fabrics within hours of a fire. Smoke particulates also migrate into areas that may not be immediately visible, including HVAC ductwork, interior wall cavities, and spaces above drop ceilings. Early professional assessment is critical for identifying these hidden deposits before permanent staining or structural degradation occurs. Kitchen fires involving grease or cooking oils produce a particularly aggressive type of soot that bonds to surfaces differently than residue from other fire sources, requiring specialized cleaning techniques and solutions.

The Homestar Group's fire damage restoration services address the full cycle of post-fire recovery, from emergency board-up and smoke remediation through complete reconstruction. The company has maintained 24-hour emergency response capabilities since its founding in 2010, employing 30 IICRC-certified restoration technicians who work directly with insurance carriers throughout the claims and restoration process. The publication of this kitchen fire guidance reflects the firm's ongoing effort to provide Atlanta-area homeowners with practical, time-sensitive information when it matters most.

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The Homestar Group

The Homestar Group offers water damage restoration, mold remediation, and fire damage cleanup services to the Conyers, Georgia area. We are IIRC certified and hire only the most trustworthy and dedicated team members.

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