

How to Start a Water Fire Restoration Business

This year, more than 350,000 American homes will suffer fire damage. Another 100,000 homes will fall victim to flood damage. All told, more than half a million homes will require the services of a water fire restoration business.



The decision to start a water fire restoration business makes sense. After all, the restoration industry tops \$210 billion annually and is set for historic growth in the coming years. But starting a home restoration business from scratch can be a daunting task.

It doesn't have to be. Here are just a few of the considerations you should take into account when you begin thinking about how to start a water fire restoration business.

The kinds of knowledge you need to start a water

fire restoration business

When water and fire damage homes, owners rely on experts to begin restoring their property. Starting a water fire restoration business requires specialized skillsets and tools that aren't typically found in the college classroom.

Many entrepreneurs learn the ins and outs of the water fire restoration business on the job, working in the industry before starting their own business. However, there are professional training programs online and in some major cities that provide you with the skills you'll need.

Before choosing a training program, though, there are a couple of questions you need to ask to determine if the training classes are reputable:

- Does the program provide statistics on graduates who pass certification exams?
- Does it provide documented evidence of successful businesses for its students?

Unless a training program is willing to tell potential students how well others have performed, then chances are you should keep looking. Check with professional organizations such as the Indoor Air Quality Association (IAQA) for information about the training program you're looking into.

Becoming a certified water fire damage professional is required

In addition to gaining the knowledge and skills, you also to obtain certifications in various fields, such as water damage mitigation, fire and smoke damage restoration, and mold removal. Exam requirements vary by state, but for the most part there are two certifications you must obtain. IAQA certifies



individuals for air quality. The Inspection, Cleaning, and Restoration Certification provides credentials for mold, water, smoke and other damage mitigation.

Once you've completed a recognized training program, though, you'll be well on your way to completing those certification exams. In fact, many training programs lead directly to certification exams.

You'll need equipment and instruction on how to use it

To start a water fire damage business, you will also need to secure the correct equipment to do the job. In some cases, the tools you'll need can be purchased from a hardware store. In others, you'll have to purchase specialized machinery from specialized dealers.

Generally speaking, the tools and equipment you need fall into three categories:

- **Testing and Assessment Tools:** When water or smoke damages a home, much of the damage may not be visible with the naked eye. Some of the tools restoration professionals find useful include moisture sensors, heat-sensitive cameras, or mold detection kits.
- **Water and Smoke Damage Removal Equipment:** Removing water damage from a home requires specific types of equipment, ranging from hand-held vacuums to truck-mounted systems. The same can be

true of smoke damage, where ozone machines or other tools are necessary to eliminate odors or damaged components.

- **Restoration Tools:** Once damage is mitigated, restoration can begin. Tools required for water and smoke damage restoration include the kinds of items typically used in building. You'll need saws and hammers, as well as industrial floor cleaners. With the right equipment, you'll be ready to help clients get their lives back after disaster strikes. Getting to know the tools you'll be using is a critical step in starting a water fire damage business.

Finding the Right Water Fire Damage Business Insurance

To operate a water fire damage mitigation business, you will be required to obtain proper insurance. This will include workers' compensation insurance as well as general liability insurance. In some states, you may also be required to get an "E&O" policy, or Errors and Omissions. Briefly, here's what each of those policies covers and why they are important:

- **Workers' Compensation Insurance:** When an employee is injured on the job, it's the employer's responsibility to compensate them for medical care, lost wages, and recovery time. Workers' Compensation Insurance, or workman's comp, provides workers with the financial protection they need in the event of a workplace injury.
- **General Liability Insurance:** You work hard to make sure each job is delivered to specifications without issues. However, sometimes things happen. Personal property gets damaged or an individual is injured. General liability insurance covers you and your business, protecting you from lawsuits after unforeseen accidents.
- **Errors and Omissions Insurance:** Because of the nature of mold remediation and water damage mitigation, some states require home restoration companies to carry an E&O policy. This insurance protects your business against mistakes you've made that aren't generally

covered by other insurance, such as not finding a spot of mold in an attic or missing a leaking pipe.

Getting the right policies can mean the difference between smooth sailing and failure. Also, policy prices can vary from company to company, state to state. Contact a knowledgeable insurance professional for the best possible advice when getting ready to open your business.

Branding and Marketing Your Water Fire Damage Business

Once you've completed the training, obtained the tools, and secured the right insurance, you're almost ready to get started. You'll need to effectively market your business to begin attracting clients.



When starting a water fire damage restoration business, you'll need to develop effective marketing that helps keep your community aware of your brand. This includes local phone listings in the business pages and online phone directories. Also, you'll have to build a strong social media and web presence. Most importantly, starting a new restoration business will require you to quickly establish a reputation in the community.

To establish your reputation as a fire and water damage mitigation business, consider joining local professional organizations such as the home builder's association, the Chamber of Commerce, and civic groups. Also, visit with insurance agents in the area to let them know you're new in town.

Finally, you might consider direct-mail pieces to introduce your community to the work you do. A well-run direct mail campaign can be affordable, but be careful, because it's easy to overspend and exhaust your marketing budget.

Start a Water Fire Restoration Business Today

Water fire restoration is a rewarding, potentially lucrative industry. But getting into it can be daunting. That's why many entrepreneurs choose to open a franchise water fire restoration business, such as Restoration 1.

Franchise ownership can reduce [startup costs](#), provide [training and licensing support](#), and gives franchise owners the benefits of an [established, trusted brand](#). Learn more about starting a fire water damage restoration business with Restoration 1 in our [research pages](#). Or, request our [Franchise Information Report](#) today.