



Open for Business

Factors that Drive Up Costs for Retailers After a Disaster





Table of contents

Introduction	3
Key Fact #1	4
Key Fact #2	5
Key Fact #3	7
Key Fact #4	8
Key Fact #5	9



Tornado, Hurricane, Fire, Water Damage.

Whether a retail business comprises a chain of stores nationwide or a single shop, neither can afford to shut down after a loss. Regardless of the source of the damage, keeping the doors open and customers shopping is crucial.

That's why it's so important to have a reliable, vetted, professional restoration and remediation contractor in place before catastrophe strikes. Don't risk business interruption by not being prepared. Engaging a trusted restoration contractor, in advance of incurring damage, can help a business avoid common pitfalls and reduce mitigation efforts after a loss.

While the decision on what merchandise can be saved rests with you, the retailer, let an expert in restoration work to return your site to pre-loss condition.

A quality restoration contractor will be able to address a variety of losses quickly and will work with the retailer directly, or with its facility management company, to avoid having to close the business to customers. A qualified restoration expert will evaluate the equipment and the manpower necessary to complete the job once a loss has been reported.

KEY FACTS TO CONSIDER:

- ✓ Avoid Costly Delays
- ✓ Damaging Water Losses
- ✓ Smoke Can Be Worse Than Fire
- ✓ Factors That Drive Up Costs
- ✓ Partner with Qualified Professionals

KEY FACT #1

Avoid Costly Delays

A retail facility shut down for an extended period must deal with not only the cost of the damage related to the loss, but also lost revenue.

A qualified restoration contractor will analyze the situation and determine the best way to complete the remediation needed to mitigate any damage quickly to keep costs down and retail revenue flowing.



RETAIL INDUSTRY

Examples of retailers ATI works with:

- Shopping malls
- Strip malls
- Large chain store retailers
- Big-box retailers
- Boutique standalone stores



KEY FACT #2

Damaging Water Losses

Retailers' most common loss involves water. Water can be very damaging, not just to contents but also to a building's structure.

The type of water category will largely determine the restoration and repair process:

Category 1	Water, such as the kind leaking from a broken sprinkler line, is typically clean and unlikely to be harmful.
Category 2	Gray water, the kind released from a broken toilet or sump pump, is a mix of water and potentially harmful substances.
Category 3	Black water, the kind that results from a flooded river, a storm surge or even sewage, is considered very unsanitary and contaminated.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Equipment used for water damage mitigation:

- Air movers
- Dehumidifiers
- Fogger and/or ozone generators (for deodorization)
- HEPA vacuums
- Negative air machines
- Thermal imaging cameras
- Thermohygrometers (moisture meter)
- Water extractors

KEY FACT #2 (CONTINUED)

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Mold can begin to form within as little as 24 hours after a water loss has occurred.

Extraction is the most important aspect of mitigating a loss caused by water. Regardless of the cause, understanding the extraction process upfront, how much water is involved, the source and the extent of damage will help minimize delays and keep costs under control.

Fans, dehumidifiers and negative air machines may all be used to accelerate the drying process.

Before the extraction process begins, a moisture meter will be used on a dry section of the building that has not been damaged or infiltrated by water to set the dry standard of the building material. Readings are taken throughout the extraction process to ensure the



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Equipment used for mold remediation:

- Air scrubbers
- Airless sprayers
- Containments
- HEPA filters/vacuums
- Manometers (measures negative pressure of the containment)
- Respirator filters
- Tyvek suits

KEY FACT #3

Smoke Can Be Worse Than Fire

Fires fueled by a variety of textiles and products at retail locations, coupled with water used to contain a blaze, pose unique issues. Smoke is the most damaging aspect of a fire, given its potential to reach much farther than the fire itself. Any type of air circulation in use will draw smoke into the ceiling, air ducts and other parts of a building that may be unaffected by actual fire. Walls, floors, ceiling tiles, rafters, fans and all duct work will require thorough cleaning.

The 2018 eruption of Hawaii's Kilauea volcano demonstrated the effect of soot and ash that lingered in the air. Retailers required air scrubbers for months to maintain air quality within stores for the comfort of both employees and customers.



The lingering scent of smoke may require drywall removal and extensive cleaning.

Mitigating a fire loss typically begins with debris removal. As in a water damage loss, extraction and drying will be necessary. Once the area affected has been dried, the next step is to clean soot off surfaces and equipment, heating and cooling units. Deodorization removes any lingering scent of smoke.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Equipment used for fire damage mitigation:

- Air movers
- Boom or scissor lifts
- Catastrophe trailers
- Chemical sponges
- Dehumidifiers
- Fogger, hydroxyl, and/or ozone generators (for deodorization)
- HEPA vacuums
- Negative air machines
- Respirators
- Thermal imaging cameras
- Thermohygrometers (moisture meter)
- Tyvek suits
- Ultraviolet mobile sanitizers
- Water extractors

KEY FACT #4

Factors That Drive Up Costs

Circumstances surrounding fire and water damage can be complex, leading to costly restoration delays and business interruption. When property damage isn't addressed quickly, secondary damage can occur. For example, any type of delay in drying a waterlogged structure or its contents will result in mold forming within as little as 24 hours. Once mold is discovered, the work required becomes more complex because of the likelihood of demolition and mold abatement.

Qualified restoration experts can assist in evaluating and remediating suspected mold growth through containment and the deployment of air scrubbers and air quality testing.

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Beware of asbestos concerns.

The discovery of asbestos can hinder the remediation process. Trained restoration experts can work alongside retailers to develop a plan to handle a variety of difficult scenarios to help maintain normal business operating hours.

Consider, for example, an ATI project involving a large two-story retailer that sustained heavy water damage just one week before Black Friday. The building contained several asbestos-filled columns. Disturbing the columns would have shaken loose asbestos dust, requiring a long and expensive asbestos removal process. To avert the asbestos problem, the columns were securely wrapped tight. A large desiccant dehumidifier was brought in via semitruck. ATI then vented the dehumidifier through the top of the building down the pillars. In this way, the columns were successfully dried from the top down, inside out, and did not require any abatement to be performed.



KEY FACT #5

Partner with Qualified Professionals

You can mitigate business interruption and prevent further issues from escalating when you partner with a proven restoration contractor with deep resources. Avoid questionable business practices by ensuring that all contracts, rates and protocols are firmly in place before sustaining a loss event.

Prepare in advance:

- Have a contract with a qualified restoration contractor in place prior to a loss occurring.
- Establish rates and procedures ahead of time.
- Ensure a vendor has the appropriate education and experience to handle a variety of losses.





About American Technologies, Inc.

Established in 1989 by Gary Moore, American Technologies, Inc., is the nation's largest family-owned and operated restoration contractor. Headquartered in Anaheim, Calif., the company specializes in restoration, environmental and reconstruction services following natural and man-made disasters with an unwavering commitment to customer service. To learn more, visit ATIrestoration.com or call (833) 400-0056.



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