

Cigarette odour removal & tar removal – Chelmsford

CASE STUDY

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London, United Kingdom

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THE CHALLENGE

It is always an incredibly difficult time when a relative passes away. It can also be an unfortunately stressful time – when your time should be devoted to the mourning process and remembering your loved one, you can often find yourself consumed with lots of ‘admin’ and niggly practical problems. From sorting the death certificate and arranging a funeral, to notifying various government departments and dealing with their property.

It was the last point that a customer of ours needed help with. When his aunt sadly passed away, it was down to him to return the property, in Chelmsford, to a liveable condition. His aunt had lived there for 30 years, and would smoke inside every day.

Unsurprisingly, this had taken its toll on the interior of the property. There was thick tar and discolouration on the walls, as well as the distinctive and overpowering odour that goes with regular smoking. There are also health risks in having a home so badly affected by smoke – third-hand smoke can be as dangerous as second-hand smoke, and the health effects of coming into physical contact with the tar and smoke around the property are very serious.

Major work was required to get the one-bedroom flat back to a condition that people would want for their home. The job was too big for one person, particularly at a difficult time with so many other things to worry about. So he called Ideal Response. Smoke damage and soot can be particularly hazardous long after a fire has been put out, so it is vitally important that this is thoroughly cleaned by professionals. The tiny particles of soot can cause all manner of health problems, from asthma to heart disease and cancer. Smoke damage and soot cleaning can literally save lives.

The Law Society were quick to get contractors in to make a start on the process. Once they had seen the scale of the job, however, they knew that they needed help, so they called us, Ideal Response.

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THE IDEAL RESPONSE

As soon as our team of experts arrived onsite, they knew exactly what needed to be done, so they set to work straight away.

First of all we carried out an alkaline wash down of the walls, in order to remove any tar which was present. In order for this to be effective, all wallpaper needed to be removed, as it would have acted as a vapour barrier.

Next, we manually wiped down all of the walls, windows, ceilings – any surface that had been exposed to smoke over the years. Any areas of particular tar and smoke damage were concentrated on until all were cleared.

Finally, we began the [Biosweep](#) process – a means to rid the property of the odour associated with long-term smoking. This high-intensity, technological process consists of 5 different stages:

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Stage 1: Germicidal UV Radiation

We used high intensity germicidal radiation to attack airborne microorganisms – the radiation would alter their DNA making them incapable of reproducing.

Stage 2: Powerful Singlet Oxygen and Oxyradical Plasma

We sprayed a cloud of molecular oxidisers throughout the property to combat bio-particles and break down the carbon bonds that make up the cellular matter.

Stage 3: Concentrated O³ and H²O

Stage 3: Concentrated O³ and H²O²

Ozone and Hydrogen Peroxide gas was then produced, culminating in oxyradicals, which worked for 30-40 minutes before decaying harmlessly away from the flat.

Stage 4: Photocatalytic Production of Hydroxyl Radicals

We then used UV lighting to combine with water vapour in the air – this helped to break up smell-producing organic matter in the air – like smoke, ash and fumes.

Stage 5: HEPA filtration

Finally, we used a HEPA filter to catch and remove any fungal hyphae and mould spores from the air.

The entire process was low-temperature and residue free, so safe for use on all materials. It was all conducted from one, portable unit which minimised the disruption to other work going on in the flat.

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**THE RESULT**

Once we had finished our work on the property, there was no trace of smoke or tar anywhere to be found. The Biosweep treatment came with a guarantee to remove the odour – this means that if the odour ever returns, our customer can just call us and we will return to the property to re-treat the affected areas.

More importantly, though, hopefully the result of our work was that an incredibly difficult period of our customers' lives was made slightly easier. One less worry at a particularly stressful time.

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Ideal Response
Disaster Recovery & Hygiene Experts

Phone: [01622 735 071](tel:01622735071)
Email: info@idealresponse.co.uk
Website: www.idealresponse.co.uk