



## COIT Restoration Saves Burned Apartment Complex Millions in Rebuild Costs

### Key Success Factors

- A five-story, 368-unit apartment project experienced a devastating fire and needed to be restored to pre-loss conditions
- COIT's lead project manager formed a strategic floor-by-floor, unit-by-unit schedule followed by all parties
- Daily Field Reports (DFRs) were created to capture goals, equipment used, personnel, and progress images
- The 350,000-square-foot restoration job took COIT only 120 days and a team of 136 workers—saving the complex millions of dollars in rebuild costs



### The Challenge—Navigating a Trifecta of Fire, Smoke, and Water Damage

In November of 2023, a fire caused by an industrial diesel-fueled heater wreaked havoc on a Reno apartment complex that was still under construction. The fire initially started on the fourth floor but quickly blazed its way to the third and fifth floors, burning through the roof. Because there was no way to shield the inside from the elements, 93 units experienced severe water damage, contributing to a litany of restoration challenges.

To view the full extent of the damage, follow along with this [3D walk-through](#) of the building.

## SOURCING SPECIALIZED TEAMS

The five-story fire devastation halted all ongoing construction and would require the help of multiple specialized teams to return it to its pre-loss conditions. In addition to an industrial hygienist, who would need to test and clear areas for harmful particulates so the construction team could continue the rebuilding process, the operation would also require restoration services with the resources and technicians equipped to take on a project of this size.



### CONTAINING AND REMOVING HARMFUL PARTICULATES

*Although most burn damage was observed on the top floors, extensive smoke damage, soot deposits, char, and carcinogens were also detected on the third, second, and first floors.*

*Particulates such as these are toxic, so to ensure the units and hallways would be safe for future residents—and to keep workers out of harm's way during the rebuilding process—these particulates would need to be contained and removed before anyone could proceed.*

## COORDINATING WITH MULTIPLE TEAMS

While the damage done to the building was a challenge in itself, it was another challenge altogether for three separate teams—a hygienist, contractors, and restoration experts—to be working under the same roof, which in this case also needed repairing. Not to mention, given harmful particulates tend to stick to uniforms and are easily carried between rooms, each worker would have to be mindful of re-inviting contaminants after a section had been cleared. For a project with this many moving parts, strategic collaboration and thorough planning would be critical.

To establish a sound plan and efficiently restore the complex to its pre-damage condition, the owner sought the help of COIT Restoration Services to get the job done.





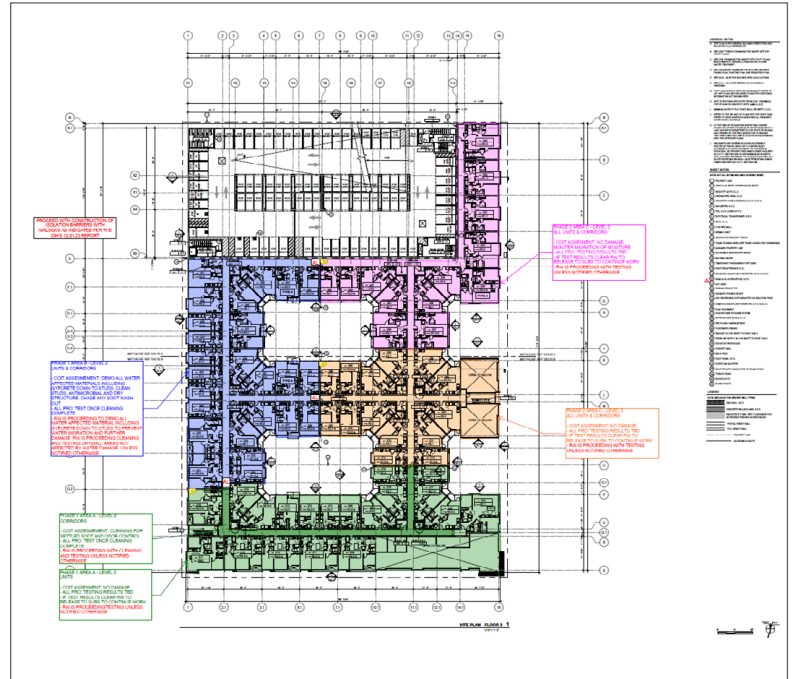
# The Solution—Strategic Planning, Experienced Technicians, and Thorough Documentation

A fire damage restoration job of this size needed to be tackled strategically. There was much to be restored and given there were multiple teams on-site, the plan needed to be considerate of all timelines and workflows.

## ESTABLISHING INFORMED PROJECT GOALS

Leveraging years of extensive restoration experience, COIT's project lead developed a strategy divided into four phases according to the degree of damage present on each floor and in each unit. In phases one and two, the restoration technicians would begin with the less-damaged first three floors, working their way toward the more severely burned areas in phases three and four so they could release the cleared sections back to the contract workers who could then begin rebuilding.

The four-phase plan was transferred to the building's blueprint and served as a clear guide for the industrial hygienist and contractors to follow, ultimately establishing synchronized workflows and allowing for seamless hand-off between teams.



## EXECUTING A NEGATIVE PRESSURE PLAN

With a clear plan set in place, it was time to begin.

To ensure none of the existing particulates or odors would end up back in the cleared, non-burned side of the building, they created a negative pressure plan which consisted of over 296 air scrubbers and air movers, directing all airflow toward the fire-damaged areas and out the windows.



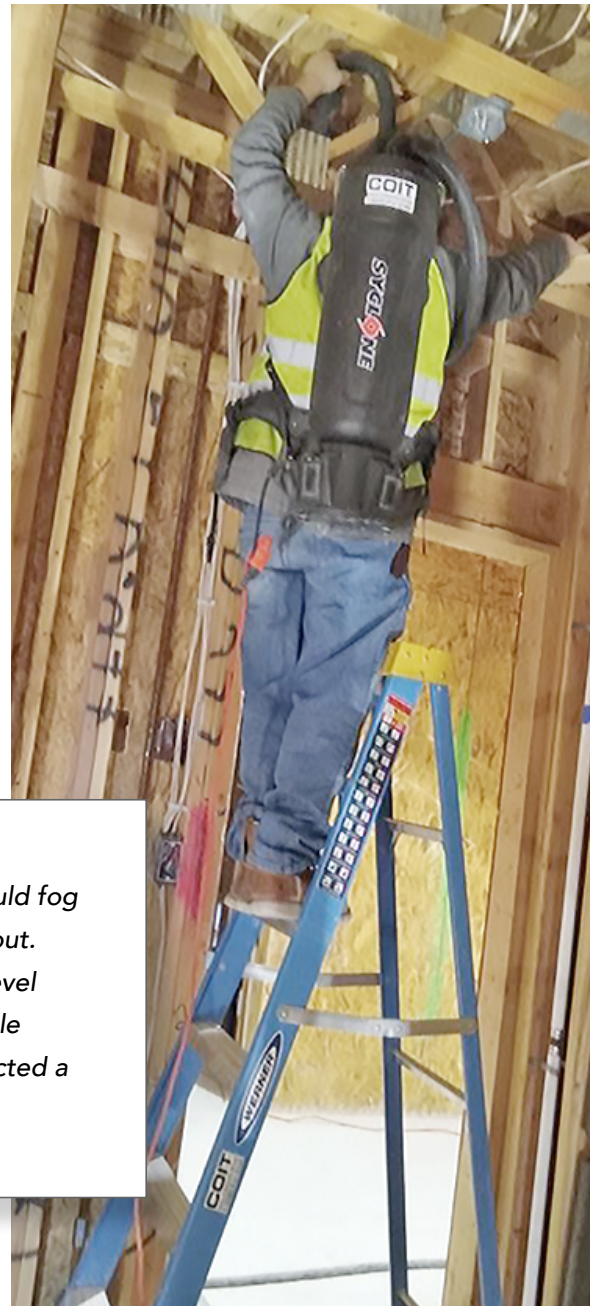
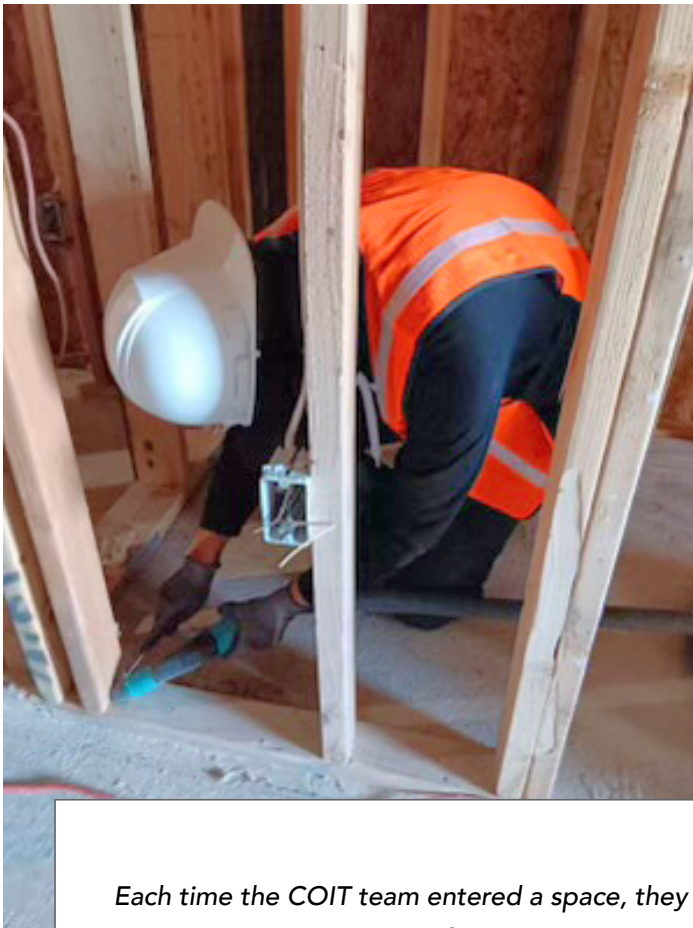
*By doing a simple calculation, the team could determine the amount of air scrubbing and negative pressure needed to have four air changes per hour. From there, the restoration team could make their way through the building, determining whether the area required full demolition and clean-up services or only needed to be cleaned.*

## PERFORMING DEMOLITION AND CLEAN-UP OF HALLWAYS AND UNITS

In total, 188 units required full demolition of porous materials to studs, 4,000 linear feet of hallway needed a full demolition of porous materials to studs, and 188 shower tub combo units were removed. For every square inch of the studs, walls, ceilings, and floors, the cleaning process consisted of a HEPA-filtered vacuuming and wet wipe with smoke odor counteractant until each zone was cleared by the industrial hygienist.

In areas where there was no sign of char and the wood was deemed salvageable, technicians dry ice blasted and smoke-sealed it, completely removing any soot and restoring the wood, which was then signed off by structural engineers.

Over 950 pieces of equipment were deployed to achieve all work.



*Each time the COIT team entered a space, they would fog the area, clean it, and then fog it again on the way out. To remove harmful surface contaminants with low-level Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), the COIT team conducted a thermal heat clean on air shafts and elevator shafts.*



## DOCUMENTING DAILY PROGRESS REPORTS

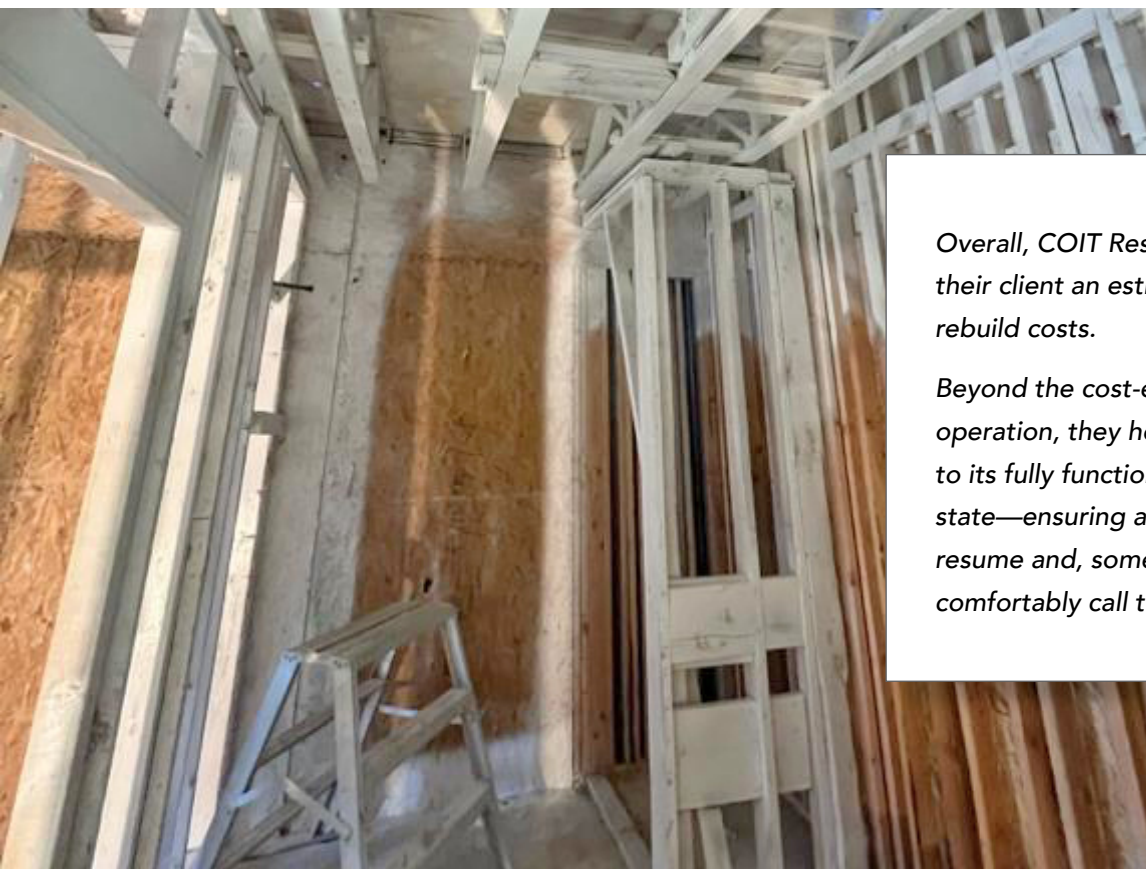
After each day of work, Daily Field Reports (DFRs) were filled out which detailed the scope of the work, goals achieved, actions required, personnel on site, bulk equipment used, and even included multiple progress pictures of that day's work. The four project managers assigned to this operation were responsible for monitoring the crews and making sure they adhered to the predetermined "focus of the day."

Through a combination of extensive documentation and a skilled workforce, the entire operation became a well-oiled machine through project completion.

## The Results—Millions of Dollars Saved After Successful Restoration

A project of this size is expected to take anywhere between one to two years, but the entire project took the COIT restoration team only 120 days and 136 skilled workers. Because such a thorough plan was put in place, teams were able to cut back on time spent filling out paperwork and maximize time spent on restoration efforts.

Through dry ice blasting and smoke-sealing, COIT managed to restore such a significant amount of wood they wound up saving the complex owners over one million in rebuild costs. Because COIT teams were able to analyze the industrial hygienists' reports and ask for additional testing when needed, they were able to clean up 34 units which would no longer require full demolitions and clean-ups, ultimately saving the owners \$60K - \$100K per unit. Additionally, as a result of completing a 350,000-square-foot job in just 120 days, COIT helped save the building owner and insurance companies expenses that would have otherwise been required had the project taken longer to complete.



*Overall, COIT Restoration Services saved their client an estimated \$2 - \$3 million in rebuild costs.*

*Beyond the cost-effectiveness of the entire operation, they helped restore a building to its fully functioning, pre-damaged state—ensuring all construction work could resume and, someday, residents could comfortably call the complex their home.*



*This restoration project was completed by COIT's Reno location with expert direction from Lonnie Fixel. As the franchise owner and project lead for COIT operations, Lonnie played an instrumental role in outlining the project scope, coordinating with outside teams, ensuring the job got done on time, and saving a significant amount of costs.*



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