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*WHAT TO DO WHEN*

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# **THE POLICE LEAVE**

DO YOU KNOW WHAT STEPS TO TAKE NEXT?

# WHAT TO DO WHEN THE POLICE LEAVE

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As a police officer for 7 years, I was present during some of the most traumatic events in people's lives. I witnessed murder victims, domestic violence situations, animal mutilations, child abuse and neglect and so many more things I wish I could forget. It was a natural progression for me to start a crime scene cleaning company. I had already experienced the grief-stricken families, the identification of their loved ones, autopsies, and the impending grief and emptiness that they felt for many years afterwards.

Why did I decide to clean it up? The simple answer is because no one else was doing it. One night I was working a homicide and the victim's mother asked me when "we" (the police) were coming back to clean it up. I had never been asked that question and I froze. She looked at me, and I said, "we don't clean it up". She asked, "then who does?" That question forever changed my life. I was shocked I had never been asked that question in 7 years working in Kansas City's worst neighborhoods. But I was just asked a question I had no idea what the answer was. Curiosity got the better of me, and I started asking people in CSI, and homicide. They all said the same thing; they didn't know but it wasn't part of our job. I immediately realized there was a gap. A gap that could traumatize these families twice. They had just lost someone, or at least had someone barely hanging on, and now they would have to clean up the blood, skin, teeth, and whatever else was left behind. This couldn't be true, could it? It was that fact finding mission that changed the trajectory of my life. I made the decision to start cleaning up crime scenes. I didn't know how, or what that would look like, but I knew I needed to do it.

My endeavor initially started as a side hustle. I would cleanup crime scenes during my off time and try to help these people move on. Little did I know my side hustle would become an animal of its own.



## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT?

There are so many misconceptions about law enforcement's role when it comes to crime scenes and investigations. When law enforcement is called their sole responsibility is to collect evidence, interview witnesses, and solve a crime. There is no thought whatsoever to the cleanup or restoration to your home.

With your home will appear worse AFTER law enforcement leaves than before. Why? Well because there are many things, they must do to gather evidence. Sometimes they will cut drywall, apply Amido black, apply measuring sticky tape to walls, remove pieces of flooring etc. What they will not do is cleanup. This many years later it still surprises me that law enforcement rarely can provide you with a cleanup option or referral. Not much has changed in 16 years on that end.

Law enforcement can however refer you to a victim advocate who will then guide you to processing an application with the State for compensation. The compensation can help pay for funeral expenses, counseling, missed work, and crime scene cleaning.

Every State has a limit to this and unfortunately, it's not a lot of money. If you are unsure if a victim's advocate is available in your area, you may visit [www.victimsofcrime.org](http://www.victimsofcrime.org) for a referral.

## HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

If a death or crime occurred in your home your insurance should cover the cleanup and restoration of your property. Most people don't realize this until they make a call to a company like Spaulding Decon. The company you hire for the cleanup will assist you in filing the homeowner's insurance claim. This will get the process started. In most cases there is not out of pocket money needed.

Ultimately, you will only be responsible to pay your deductible. Insurance should not only cover the cleanup, but they will cover the restoration of your home, and compensate you for missing or damaged items. Your focus should then move to your support system as the cleanup process will already have begun.

If you do not have homeowner's insurance a great resource is 2-11. This is the national crisis hotline. They can put you in touch with companies who can help and make work on a sliding scale.

## *CHOOSING A CLEANUP COMPANY*

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Choosing a crime scene cleanup company can be daunting because you are dealing with shock and grief due to the tragedy that just occurred. Most people in this position have a friend or family member google for help in their city. This method is by far the most common and will show you all your options in your metro area. How do you choose between them? If you have homeowner's insurance the out-of-pocket expense to you is the same no matter who you choose. So, you should choose a company you feel comfortable with and who has a lot of experience in handling these scenes. How long have they been in business? What kind of training do they have? Are they insured? Licensed? Bonded?

If you do not have insurance, then it is important for your confidant to gather estimates for the cleanup. You should plan to be out of the home and staying elsewhere until the scene has been restored to pre-incident condition. When estimates are being provided have your confidant ask for proof of insurance to include workers comp. Also do a quick google check for reviews. Choose a company who will not only do the cleanup but also the restoration so you can move back into a finished home, and not one with missing drywall and flooring. Many biohazard cleanup companies are simply that, just cleanup. We at Spaulding Decon do the cleanup first, then we provide the build back or restoration to your property. Anything less is unfinished and will leave you with the burden of hiring an additional contractor. Estimates are typically free, and most companies are 24/7.

## *HOW TO MOVE ON FROM A TRAGIC EVENT*

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Everyone handles grief differently. In my experience I have seen stoic reactions, shocked, crying, broken down, disbelief, and utter silence. We train our employees on understanding the stages of grief and not to assume or judge in anyway. Everyone grieves differently. Grief is a complex process that involves every aspect of who you are and how you will cope.

There are many grief counselors that specialize in tragic losses of a loved one. There are groups of people who have experienced what you have and can better emphasize with your situation. You will learn that grief is a process and not an event. If the tragedy occurred in your home, you may not feel safe there again. You may need to move on into a new environment that can provide you with a fresh start. Only you can decide if that is best for you and your family.

Here at Spaulding Decon we offer the purchase of these homes in as-is condition. Why pay for a cleanup if you cannot deal with being inside the home again? There is no other company who can provide this gift of moving on. New scenery can provide new beginnings, and a fresh start. If you are interested in a no obligation cash offer for your home, please contact us and we will gladly provide one.

## *SOME THINGS THAT MAY HELP*

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Over the years I have seen all the way people grieve, and how they move on. I am constantly impressed by their resilience and ability to carry on in life after losing someone very close to them. A few things I have seen over the years include Writing, Arts and Crafts, Relaxing, talking to other, Exercise, Stress Management, and keeping busy.

Ultimately you must decide what helps you. What do you enjoy? What will keep your mind growing. The goal is not to forget, but to survive.

## *SUICIDE*

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We have mostly addressed crimes and victims of crimes. Suicide rates have remained fairly consistent in my almost 2 decades of being in the business. Suicides are some of the hardest things to cleanup. They have also produced a lot of emotional responses and strong opinions about the individual who chooses to end their life. Regardless of the situation, taking one's life is devastating.

Many people want to blame the victim, and call them selfish. Some suicides are impulsive and some are very well planned out. From a cleanup perspective these types of cleanups can be very complex.

We have had suicides by shotgun, handgun, deer rifles, pills, hanging, carbon monoxide, and accidental shootings where the person died. It is always devastating when it is a child.

## W H O A R E W E ?

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Spaulding Decon is a national crime scene cleaning company. We specialize in cleaning biohazards so you don't have to. We work with all insurance companies and are referred by law enforcement nationwide.

To get a free estimate or learn more about our company call 866-99-DECON

*WE CLEAN UP*  
**LIFE'S ACCIDENTS**

