



*Inside the sheetmetal factory.*



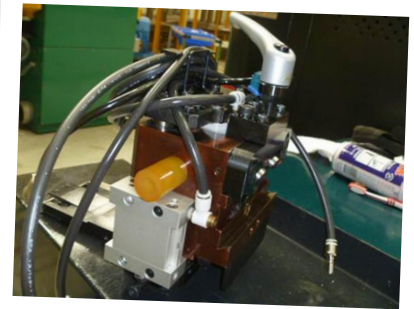
*The laser-cutting machine after cleaning.*



*The fire scene.*



*Equipment before cleaning.*



*Equipment after cleaning.*

## 'No-fuss, can-do' approach wins kudos with client

**Steamatic Victoria has restored more than \$4 million of machinery damaged in a factory fire.**

And the company won high praise from its client. Form 2000 Sheetmetal Pty Ltd CEO Steve Rattray said: "I am completely impressed with what Steamatic has done for us. Not just the end result, but the whole experience, from start to finish.

"From the way Steamatic took charge of the situation, the no-fuss, can-do approach and the interaction with dual insurers behind the scenes, Steamatic really does epitomise the term 'easy to do business with'."

Steamatic's Victorian project manager Daniel Threlfall said the April 7 fire at Form 2000's Melbourne factory was caused by a technical fault in a laser-cutting machine, itself worth about \$1.3 million.

Steamatic assessed the damage the day after the blaze and began mitigation work two days later.

The team found fire damage was isolated to the laser-cutting machine and its surrounding concrete slab but smoke had filled the 2,200sq m factory.

Daniel said damage was visible only at the fire source but Steamatic conducted a chemical analysis and swab tested other equipment and identified all machinery, contents and the building needed decontaminating to prevent potential corrosion, degradation or recontamination.

Visible soot fallout was minor but, because of the fire source's metallic elements and PVC coatings, chemical and chloride contamination occurred and spread throughout the factory, affecting machinery, stock and the building's superstructure.

The team performed a wet clean decontamination using Steamatic Exxpert 828 Degreaser solution, followed by neutralisation.

They repaired significant thermal damage to the laser-cutting machine

using dry-ice blasting, a process that blasts frozen pellets of dry ice onto a surface, eliminating contaminants without damaging sensitive equipment.

The team then systematically disassembled all the factory's equipment, decontaminating and cleaning each part then reassembling it.

Access equipment, such as scissor lifts and specialised booms, were used throughout the restoration process to provide unhindered access to the building and maximise production rates.

The job took just three weeks to complete with a team of 20 electronic restoration technicians.

Daniel said Steamatic was able to restore the machinery while the factory kept running, so there was no loss of production.

"In all regards, the job went really well," he told *Restore & More*. "The client was extraordinarily happy and the insurer was pleased there was no business interruption. It was almost a perfect job." ■

## Prepare for the worst

Disasters come in endless varieties – sewage backflows, lightning strikes, earthquakes, wind damage, fires, cyclones and burst pipes.

Whatever the cause, everything stops – abruptly.

This is an edited version of tips compiled by the US-based Restoration Industry Association listing things to consider in preparing your home or business premises for emergencies.

If you had to leave your home or business for three weeks, what would you wish you had done?

- Inspect every area and assess its vulnerability to water. Water is a factor in most disasters - from fire suppression, roof damage, plumbing failures, chemical spills or earth tremors. Store only furniture and durable equipment directly on floors. Paper records are instant casualties. Desk tops are vulnerable to water from sprinklers or runoff from higher floors and to smoke and heat damage. File important papers in drawers or filing cabinets.
- Take photos of rooms in your home or business premises to provide an inventory of major contents. Store the photos off site.
- Back up your computers and keep the backup where it's easily accessible in an evacuation and/or at an offsite location.
- Businesses should maintain a moderate stock of emergency supplies. Some plastic tarps, a few floor squeegees and absorbent wipes can be useful.
- Rapid response is the key to damage control. The ability to swiftly deploy tarps over computers, production equipment, filing cabinets and other critical components can dramatically curtail the extent of damage.
- If you have advance warning of a peril, charge mobile phones, laptops and the like, in case you're without electricity for a few days.

For other good tips, contact your local Steamatic office. Go to: <http://www.steamatic.com.au/locations> ■



Dan Clifton on the job

## New assessment manager winning contracts

Only three months into his employment with Steamatic, Dan Clifton is already winning contracts as Queensland's new assessment manager.

He said the team aimed to enter into regular service markets as well as insurance-based markets and he was responsible for cold calling prospective clients to gain contracts.

"It can be challenging matching products and services to applications, but it's all good fun," he said.

Dan and his wife, Jenny, moved from Sydney to Brisbane just before Dan started at Steamatic. Dan is originally from Cambridge, in the United Kingdom, while Jenny hails from Brisbane.

He previously worked in the asset management sales team of a metals and e-waste recycling company.

## Clean up wins high praise

Cleaning what is known in the business as a "sewage intrusion" is never fun. But it's just part of the job for Steamatic technicians.

A team in Bendigo, in regional Victoria, last month had a particularly difficult job with a sewage leak that contaminated parts of a respite centre. One patient who visited the centre daily was severely disabled and unable to cope with the trauma of having strangers and technical equipment in the room.

But that was not a problem for the team – they just worked hard to clean the facility, including carpets, after hours when the patient was not on site.

At Steamatic, he assesses jobs and scopes of work, reports on service needs and liaises with insureds and insurers, ensuring "resources and procedures are in place to mitigate losses quickly and restore effectively".

There have been few major disasters in Queensland since he started, so Dan has been on the road winning new clients and applying Steamatic's services to regular service contracts at places like universities and food manufacturing plants.

Dan admires Steamatic's disaster-mitigation technology, which he finds "fascinating. It's a different industry from the one I came from".

He likes the company's "proactive atmosphere" and the hands-on Brisbane team. "It's nice to feel I'm making a difference to the overall company," he told *Restore & More*.

Dan and Jenny have three children – Millie, 5, and twins Max and Joe, 2. He said family life was "pretty hectic. Sleep doesn't come easily in our household".

But he does find spare time for playing one of his five guitars, including his "pride and joy", a Fender Stratocaster. He also dabbles in home brewing.

Dan loves rugby and wants to join a touch rugby team in Brisbane. Jenny has played touch rugby for Queensland and the couple is keen to play their favourite sport together.

Dan's favourite holiday destination is Australia. He has travelled throughout Europe and north Africa and extensively in Australia, which he is now proud to call home. ■

While the client did not want to be named, to avoid identifying the patient, the facility's manager was generous with his praise.

Once the job was completed he particularly thanked the two technicians who had worked on site for their professionalism and knowledge. "This made dealing with the situation so much easier. They kept me constantly informed of where they were with the process," he said.

"The end result was nothing short of amazing and the company can be very proud of both of them."

The upshot was that Steamatic has already won more work from the client – and the good word is spreading around their region quickly. ■





Fallout on archive documents in storage.



Roof space contamination.



Ash covers roof trusses, beams and insulation.



The Steamatic team on the job at the Box Hill Hospital.

## Soot contamination coats regional town

After a fire raged in Hazelwood power station's open cut coal mine in Morwell, Victoria, for 45 days, Steamatic teams are now cleaning soot and coal ash contamination from the town's residential and commercial properties.

Steamatic Victoria's commercial assessment manager Wayne Spence said the Steamatic team cleaned contamination from two chemist shops in May. Technicians cleaned roof spaces, vacuumed roof trusses, replaced insulation and wiped surfaces and cash registers.

The team also performed heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) cleaning at the properties. The process involves sending an air whip through the ducts towards a negative air machine, which captures dust and contamination.

Gippsland franchisee Elias Kavadias, whose team has also been working on the post-fire clean up, said a deliberately lit bush fire spread to the non-operational coal mine on February 9.

Morwell and its 14,000 residents were inundated with smoke, soot and ash as the coal seam continued to blaze. A Victorian Government inquiry is in progress to find out why the fire took so long to be extinguished.

Elias said the Gippsland team had quoted

on cleaning 75 houses and had so far completed 20 residential jobs and five commercial properties.

The process began with a callout, followed by an assessment to confirm the coal mine fire caused the damage, submitting an estimate and, once approval was gained, sending in technicians.

The jobs involved high-pressure cleaning of roofs and external walls, removing insulation from roof cavities, vacuuming roof spaces, HVAC cleaning, and removing soot and ash from carpets and windows using high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration vacuuming and hot water extraction.

Steamatic's steam cleaning equipment uses hot water soil extraction to clean carpets and furniture without soap or harsh chemicals; super-heated water and an emulsifier to remove dirt and debris at the molecular level; and powerful vacuums to extract dirt and water, leaving carpets clean and decontaminated.

Elias said the team had received wonderful reports for jobs completed so far and been praised for their high level of organisation.

He said the post-fire clean ups presented no major challenges. It was "rewarding work" and great to receive so many thanks from happy customers. ■

## Soot follows TV fire

A malfunctioning television caught fire in a Victorian hospital, creating a soot hazard.

The fire was in the Box Hill Hospital's dialysis facility, coating sensitive medical equipment with light soot.

While specialist technicians were needed to clean the equipment, a Steamatic team was on site quickly to clean floors, walls, ceilings and furniture in the 200sq m dialysis suite and the 80sq m reception area and office.

Steamatic senior assessment manager Felix Spector and a seven-member team had the hospital back to normal after spending two weeks on site.

They then spent another five days cleaning ducting throughout the affected area. ■

## Family heirloom bible restored

A Steamatic restoration has brought joy to a flood-affected Bundaberg family.

Melanie Irvine's family bible has been painstakingly restored by a Steamatic crew and she is "over the moon".

When the floods hit North Bundaberg in January 2013, the historic bible was reduced to a soaked, dirty mess. Melanie and her sisters were horrified and rang the Queensland State Library to seek help.

They were advised to freeze it to stop any further damage. The sisters then contacted Steamatic, which used its vacuum freeze-drying process that enables frozen paper media to dry without water re-entering the liquid phase.

The process turns ice into gas, which Steamatic extracts, releasing water content without the media getting wet.

In 1918, Melanie's great grandmother, Ellen Barker, brought the bible to Bundaberg when she arrived from England. She was a 19-year-old English maid who married an Australian soldier. The bible was her parents' wedding gift. Melanie remembers her first sighting of

the bible and how astounded she was by its unique illustrations. "I had never seen anything like it."

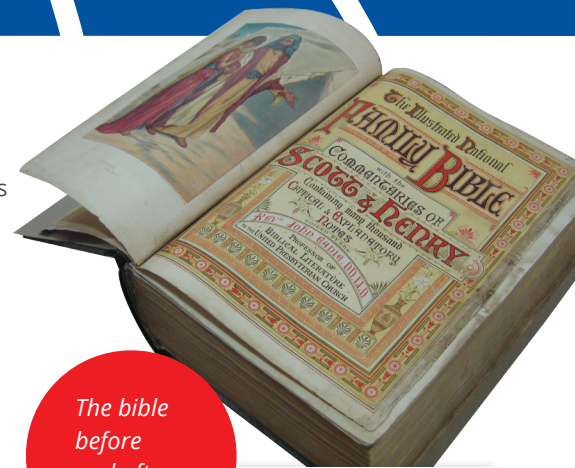
Ellen passed the bible to her son, Melanie's grandfather, and Melanie's grandmother treasured it, storing it in a pillowcase to "keep bugs out of it".

Melanie's grandmother, who was 89 when the flood hit, had to leave her home for months while it was stripped out and rebuilt. Then a cancer diagnosis saw her spend months in hospital for treatment before she died last November.

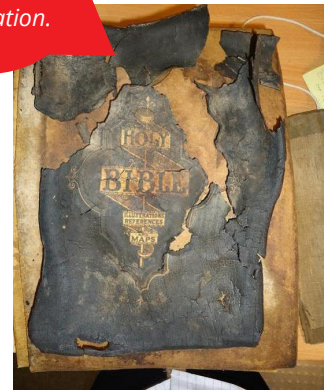
After such a difficult year, Melanie's family was very excited to see their precious heirloom restored and thankful such an important part of their family history was saved.

Melanie said she was "extremely happy and grateful" for the hours of work Steamatic devoted to achieving a great result.

When the restored bible was returned, Melanie surprised her father with it. "He was very teary, which is rare. He said if his gran, Ellen, could see it, she too would be overjoyed. We were rapt Steamatic came to the rescue and amazed at what they could do." ■



The bible before and after restoration.



Helen and Elias Kavadias

## Business pours in before doors open

Although they haven't officially opened their Gippsland franchise yet, Victorian husband-and-wife team Elias and Helen Kavadias have seen business pour in the door.

So far, they have had several heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and duct cleaning jobs arising from coalmine fires in Morwell (see page 3).

Elias said the couple received plenty of support from Steamatic's head office. "I made one call and head office sent experienced contractors to help."

After the office's July 1 official opening, the couple will focus on water and fire damage claims and electronics.

The Kavadiases have vast experience in the industry, having worked for a general cleaning company Helen's parents owned before launching their own business, which later focused solely on carpet cleaning.

When they were hired for a water damage job at a bank in Traralgon, they borrowed the necessary equipment from a nearby restoration business.

Six months later they bought the business and were soon inundated with work when a storm ripped through Gippsland, damaging 180 houses.

They spent 12 years in the restoration industry, but Elias told Restore & More they had reached a stage where they wanted to expand with the support of a major company. The Kavadiases partnered with Steamatic because "we have always liked the brand".

Elias's role with the new franchise is operations, general management, estimations and supervision. Helen, as office manager, handles accounts and administration. There are 12 in their Gippsland team.

Elias says he loves the job's variety. "There is no other industry that does the diverse amount of work our industry does - from a job as simple as removing wine stains from carpet to assisting builders with

remodelling and restoring a building to pre-loss conditions after a major loss."

The couple attended Steamatic's Building for the future national conference at Noosa Heads in May and found all the franchisees and Steamatic staff "really opened their arms", making them feel very welcome.

"I think we will have a great relationship moving forward. There is a wonderful synergy, which starts from the top and travels through the team," Elias said.

Elias's hobby is martial arts - Kyokushin karate and judo - which he practices four to five days a week. He began learning judo as a teenager and returned to the sport at age 32. He says it helps him achieve a good work/life balance, making him feel more balanced and centred.

He plans to compete in the Kyokushin World Cup in South Africa in September.

Helen enjoys spending time with their children - John, 12, and Athena, 10 - who are very active and also into martial arts. Her hobbies are walking and running. ■