



**"Disaster brings us together, excellence sets us Apart."**®

*By: Renee' Millis, Editor*

**Advanced Restoration Services, Inc.** understands that nothing is more stressful than when a person faces the loss of property. Founded in 1999, in Yorktown, Va., the contractor offers a full range of disaster restoration and recovery services to residential and commercial property owners whose lives have been devastated by water, fire, and storm or mold damage. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. distinguishes itself by the relationships it establishes with its clients.

"Superior customer service is not a slogan, a goal, or a part of our company's mission; rather it is ingrained in our culture and is the foundation of every decision made at every level of our organization," says Steve Cousins, president and co-founder of Advanced Restoration Services, Inc.

The history of Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. is the epitome of the American

dream. Steve and younger brother, Jason, were only teenagers when the entrepreneur spirit hit them. They started S&J Chem Dry in the garage of their grandparents' house in Yorktown, Virginia. The brothers soon mastered the carpet cleaning industry, as their industrialist determination kept them tracking industry trends and looking for unmet needs in their market. In 1998, S&J Chem Dry began to evolve into Advanced Restoration

Services, Inc. as the brothers (barely in their twenties) embarked on their first major water mitigation project. "Like most of our endeavors, it was baptized by fire. There were 500,000 square feet and \$5 million of equipment affected in this Richmond-area government facility. We pulled from every resource to acquire the vast amount of equipment needed to handle the job. Jason and I quickly learned that we had the natural ability for structure drying."

The brothers' commitment to excellence and their desire to build on their new company's foundation led them to invest countless dollars into equipment, as well as training and development for every staff member. In no less than a year, this training and equipment paid off. In 1999 Hurricane Floyd hit the East Coast, sending floods throughout the Virginia area. "Wachovia Bank was one of our hardest hit customers. We worked

tirelessly into the night. But when the waters receded, and the bank re-opened, the sense of accomplishment was palatable," Steve recalls. It is this disaster that propelled Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. to the next level, proving itself as an industry leader. "We have spent every day since raising the bar in the industry. From maintaining the highest trained staff, to the best equipment, we have made the investment to live up to our name," explains Steve. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. has grown from a two-man business to a "best in class," multi-million dollar operation.

Having designed unique and innovative systems that focus on efficiency and quality Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. is poised to handle any size and type of restoration project. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc.



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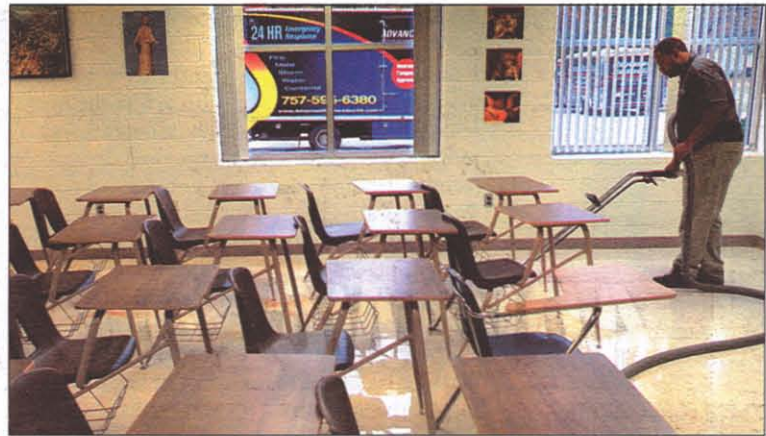
conducts detailed data collection on the initial claim call then passes the caller to the appropriate division's project manager. Crews are dispatched immediately upon the call to the claim center. All vehicles are fully equipped

to handle all sizes and types of losses, cutting down on response time lag and giving Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. one of the fastest average response times the industry has ever documented. The Advanced Restoration Services, Inc process demands very detailed documentation of each loss with digital photographs, thermal imaging, along with several other state-of-the-art

tools. "The information gathered is vital to determining the damage and implementing an immediate plan of action. In addition, we have a "No Surprise" Policy that mandates an estimate is prepared, completed and submitted in 24 hours to each client. This quick turn around and transparency is very rare in our industry and truly sets us apart from our competition," says Steve.

Throughout the entire process, Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. uploads all documentation to a Web-based program called CVAT which is part of the IMACC Network. This program allows the client and insurance company to track the claims progress. "I have heard of an old adage that 'the customer is always right.' However, I find this is rarely implemented in today's market place. Most companies stand by while the meaning of customer service is diluted into a meaningless catch phrase. Jason and I have held a hard line, not only keeping true to the 'customer is always right' philosophy, but also expanding its influence to all areas of our business. Poor quality is systematically eliminated and each process we design and implement is customer-centered."

Advanced Restoration Services, Inc.'s quick response time combined with its superior equipment and scientifically proven interventions can halt and sometimes even reverse the effects of water, sewer, fire and mold. Advanced Restoration does a detailed digital invento-



ry of all personal contents and determines what needs to be cleaned. Their Contents Department assists the customer and the insurance company in developing both a salvageable and non-salvageable list while expertly inventorying, packing, restoring and storing all contents in preparation for the client's return to their restored property. "We have designed a proven systemic approach to developing and maintaining trained and ready staff that work to operate within a predictable desired outcome," Steve says, adding that every job is managed by a staff member with a Master Designation from the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Certification. However, he adds, "We do not rely solely upon current

staff members to determine our success or quality standards but rather rely on a system, complete with checks and balances, to turn out our specified result." Still, Steve knows that the high commitment level of his team is a major factor in their success as a company.

The foundation of Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. is excellence. "Jason and I accept nothing less than perfection every time. While some may see our standards as unachievable, I would challenge them to speak with our customers who can testify to our standard of quality," Steve says. Advanced Restoration Services Inc.'s incredibly high standard is the driving force behind the brothers' investments and dedication to their cus-

tomers in their daily operations. During Tropical Storm Ernesto in September of 2006, hundreds of thousands of people across Hampton Roads lost power. Heavy rains and high winds severely damaged Paula Maria Apartments in Newport News, Va. fifty of the 100 complexes were condemned by city officials. This left many tenants displaced. Within hours Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. was in the middle of a major restoration. And in just five days, even though Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. was responding to a 100 emergencies in Virginia and North Carolina, the site was so clean the Property's Manager stated "it looked like a city park."

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Over the last several years Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. has handled many commercial projects of various size and scope.

Listed below are three examples to briefly highlight their different areas of expertise:

### 1. Commercial Water Loss:

The Chesapeake Retirement Home in Newport News suffered a severe water loss in the attic stemming from a frozen fire suppression system pipe. This resulted in over three floors of the property being affected. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. gathered the information needed and found that the tenants had a bad experience in a similar situation with a competitor. Sensitive to the previous experience, Advanced Restoration Services took every precaution to assure their complete satisfaction. Advanced Restoration Services,

Inc. managed to target the affected units minimizing the displacement of the tenants by using minimally invasive techniques allowing for non-destructive testing of moisture content between the drywall while only needing to remove and replace kick plates. Also by tenting off the attic and drying the structure from top to bottom they were able to target the affected units while again minimizing the displacement of the tenants. By the end of the project Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. had restored nine units, complete with contents restoration in less than thirty days. This performance earned Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. several referrals from the Director of the Chesapeake Retirement Home.

### 2. Commercial Fire Loss:

Winn Residential requested the help of Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. after their Pilot House Apartment Complex sustained heavy fire damage. The three-story

apartment building had a total of 12 units that were affected by the fire. The Contents and Structural departments packed out and inventoried all 12 units. In record time, the Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. team had the entire property under roof in less than three weeks.

**3. Mold:** Beach 219, LLC in Virginia Beach, was in the middle of a project that spanned four 2-story buildings totaling 75 units. During construction it was discovered that pin sized holes were leaking water throughout several areas. This caused serious microbial contamination i.e. mold, in several units. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. quickly and discreetly moved to contain the affected units so that no cross-contamination would affect other homeowners in the area. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. created disposal shoots to safely and efficiently remove the contained contaminants without traveling through non-affected common areas. Advanced

Restoration Services, Inc. scrubbed the air, hepa vacuumed all surfaces and used Ice Blasting to restore the units. Advanced Restoration Services, Inc. passed clearance testing on the first attempt.

Advanced Restoration Services, Inc.'s plans for the future are very exciting. In January 2008,

the company will be breaking ground on a new state-of-the-art facility in Yorktown, Va. The facility is designed with expert technical craftsmanship; no other building in the nation is modeled like it. Steve is adding rooms for his employees to relax with sleep props to take short naps or listen to relaxing music; he is modeling the room after simi-

lar rooms in European airports. Steve says, "We will again raise the bar for ourselves and for our industry as a whole. We are truly happy and blessed with the path we are on. Our plan is to grow, to be a contributing member of our community and to develop the people making the journey with us. I can ask for nothing more."

