

Preliminaries...

Keeping Your Confidence Up

- Just when you need it the most, your confidence can be shaken by the loss that you have experienced, making it difficult to work on your claim.
- Be patient with yourself! Participate in activities that you enjoy.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Tell yourself that you CAN do this.

Communicating

- To get your point across to anyone, you need the proper mindset.
If we were not in the proper mindset, we waited a day or two until we were ready to call. This happened a lot!
- Listen carefully; there may be hints.
At one point our adjuster said that when depreciating personal property he did not think anything should be depreciated more than 50%. This was a huge hint for our contents list.

Knowing Your Policy

- If you have not read your policy in awhile, read it again.
- Highlight anything that could possibly apply to you.
- Go back frequently; reread and rethink! *Knowing the policy language helped us finally collect code upgrade limits when the insurance company balked.*



Books, CDs, & DVDs Measure Up!

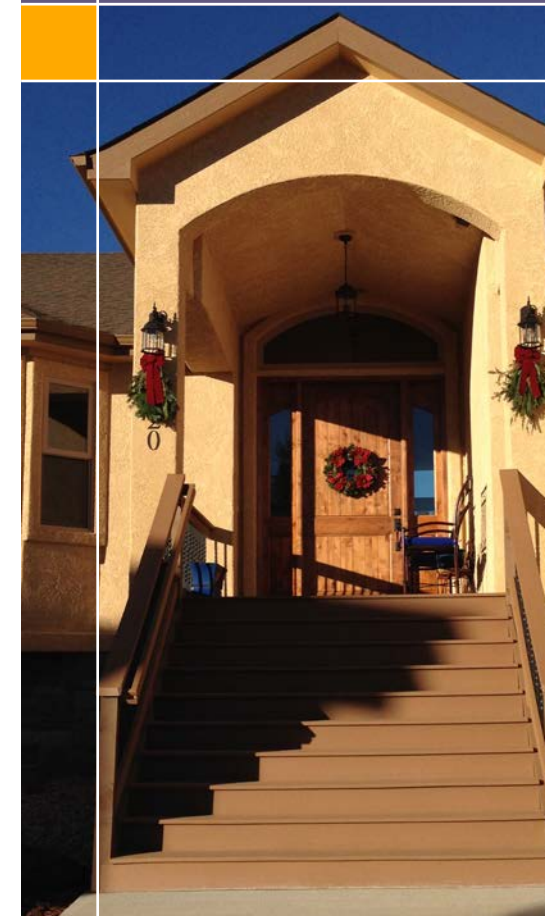
- CDs are generally \$12-15. You store them on shelves or in stacks. Estimate how many linear feet you had and you are on your way. DVDs can be estimated in the same way.
- Book prices vary by type, but are consistent within that type.
- *At Barnes and Noble we measured shelves, noting how many of each type of book fit on a 3-foot shelf and what the typical price was for each type of book. Armed with that information, we created a spreadsheet of over 20 types of books. Using the linear foot method, we estimated how many of each type of book we had and priced from there. This estimate was fully accepted.*
- *You may email me to request an e-copy of the spreadsheet that I used.*

ALL THE BEST TO YOU!

Chris Carlson
Chriswcarlson@aol.com
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Tips from Another Fire Survivor

Get the most out of your Insurance Claim



Code Upgrades – And Persistence!

Insurance companies vary on their willingness to pay for code upgrades. Ours wanted specific citations of every code, old and new, and specific costs from our builder.

- We submitted all information in a spreadsheet (with help from PPRBD & our builder).
- The adjuster then stated that all upgrade costs had been included in the valuation report.
- We asked that they document where every item on our spreadsheet was reflected in the valuation report. They could not.
- We used policy language ... “incurred costs due to code upgrades ... [are] additional insurance.” They decided that they could not argue the point further and paid the \$45K in code upgrades.
- This process took about a year!



Maximize Your Claim...

Coverage A – Dwelling

- Review your valuation report; make sure all information is correct and complete.
- Share every detail about your house with your adjuster. Make sure he understands everything clearly.
- *By creating a detailed spreadsheet about every room in our house, we increased our dwelling value by \$85K.*

Coverage B – Other Structures

- Some “other structures” items are obvious; others are not.
- Include estimates for “hardscaping” (rock, gravel areas, timbers). *Though our adjuster told us that no landscaping would be covered, we argued that the above items were necessary to prevent washout. This added \$11K to our claim.*

Coverage C – Contents or Personal Property

- Be systematic and strategic. Keep working with those RCV values, so that your ACV values will meet your policy limits.
- **Brainstorm by Room** (Visualize every detail.)
- **Price by Category** (This will save you time.)
- **Maximize details** in your item description column. Personal property lists are often sent to teams overseas for determining replacement costs and depreciation. Only essential columns of the spreadsheet are sent. Make sure they have your information. *We included website citations right in the item description cells. In the end our insurance company matched virtually all RCV values.*
- **Reach Your Policy Limits.** Flood the insurance adjuster with data. *We used numerous websites to create mock “shopping lists” which were saved as PDF files on a thumb drive and mailed to our adjuster. Through these lists we communicated the quality of the property we had. In the end, our average depreciation was approximately 18%. We were able to reach our policy limits easily.*

