



## JASPER WILDFIRE RECOVERY: STRATEGIC COMMERCIAL RESTORATION IN A REMOTE NATIONAL PARK SETTING

### A HISTORIC WILDFIRE SHUTS DOWN A TOURISM HUB

In 2024, Jasper, Alberta experienced a wildfire unlike any in its recent history. The fire tore through over 32,000 hectares, earning its place as one of the most destructive the region had faced in a century. While flames were eventually contained, the damage left behind was immense. Much of Jasper's commercial core - including hotels, lodges, and tourism-dependent businesses - was heavily impacted by pervasive smoke damage. Power outages across the area lasted for over two weeks, leading to widespread spoilage of food supplies and further compounding the contamination.

The town's location within a national park introduced additional layers of complexity. Access was strictly regulated in the weeks following the fire, both due to ongoing firefighting activity and environmental safety restrictions. First Onsite was brought in as a strategic restoration partner tasked with getting Jasper's core businesses operational again - despite remote conditions, limited access, and urgent timelines.

### NAVIGATING LIMITED ACCESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

While First Onsite was ready to act immediately, access to Jasper was delayed due to safety concerns and permit requirements. Once clearance was granted, teams encountered a host of operational and environmental challenges. Restoration was taking place in the heart of a protected parkland, where wildlife including elk and grizzly bears was an active concern. In fact, wildlife interactions had a direct impact on daily work, with one documented incident involving an elk attacking a rental vehicle as crews departed from the site.

Given these conditions, every aspect of the response had to be executed with environmental sensitivity and strict safety oversight. Waste disposal, freezer clear-outs, and equipment transport were all managed in compliance with wildlife interaction protocols. Despite these constraints, First Onsite began deploying resources rapidly to stabilize and restore the affected infrastructure.



### DEPLOYING A MULTI-TIERED RESTORATION WORKFORCE

Restoring Jasper's commercial core required a workforce of unprecedented scale. At the height of the operation, between 600 and 1,000 personnel were deployed each day. This included 18 Project Managers from across Canada and the United States, 20 Site Supervisors, multiple Operations Managers, and dozens of subcontractors and trade professionals. The depth of the response team reflected both the immediacy of the situation and the scale of the damage.

The response was not limited to surface-level cleaning. A wide range of disciplines were involved, each requiring specialized training and certifications. This included workers trained in confined space entry, those with working-at-heights certification, and trades such as scaffolders, electricians, and HVAC specialists. Every individual on site contributed to the execution of a tightly coordinated, full-scope remediation.



# JASPER WILDFIRE RECOVERY: STRATEGIC COMMERCIAL RESTORATION IN A REMOTE NATIONAL PARK SETTING

## REMIEDIATING SMOKE AND BIOHAZARD CONTAMINATION

The core of the restoration involved comprehensive smoke remediation across a wide portfolio of buildings, many of which were large-scale hospitality and lodging facilities. The presence of soot—often invisible to the eye - required precision cleaning of every surface, system, and space. In addition, food spoilage due to prolonged refrigeration failure had rendered many commercial kitchens hazardous. These environments needed to be completely sanitized and cleared of contamination before operations could safely resume.

In one case, crews were responsible for decontaminating a three-storey commercial kitchen. In others, ductwork and vehicles had to be fully cleaned to ensure public safety. The scope of services extended to interior and exterior deep cleaning, equipment sanitization, and the coordination of multiple specialty subcontractors.

## OPERATIONAL CONTROL AND TACTICAL INNOVATION

As part of its strategic approach, First Onsite worked closely with clients to streamline logistics. In one example, the team took over operations of a hotel mid-cleanup, converting cleaned rooms into temporary accommodation for the response team to help speed up turnaround. This allowed the workforce to remain close to the worksite without relying on unavailable regional

infrastructure. By integrating housing logistics directly into the remediation plan, First Onsite reduced travel delays and gained better control of the timeline.

Throughout the project, the team faced dynamic conditions that required continuous adjustments. Despite constraints on supply chains, fuel, and equipment movement, First Onsite maintained progress on every front. This ability to adapt while upholding safety, speed, and quality proved instrumental to the project's success.



## RAPID RECOVERY WITH LONG-TERM IMPACT

In just three months, First Onsite brought the majority of Jasper's impacted commercial properties back to a safe and operational state. Major hotels and businesses were able to reopen their doors and resume serving residents and visitors alike. Although many structures destroyed by the fire would require years of rebuilding by general contractors, First Onsite's role was clear: stabilize the surviving infrastructure, decontaminate critical environments, and enable a swift return to business operations.

The successful recovery of Jasper's commercial sector reaffirmed First Onsite's ability to manage large-scale disaster restoration in remote and high-pressure settings. From scale and speed to technical proficiency and logistical innovation, the Jasper wildfire response became a defining example of how the company mobilizes at its best - restoring not just buildings, but the livelihoods they support.



## THE ONLY PARTNER YOU'LL EVER NEED

From everyday challenges to unexpected catastrophic events, we have the team, equipment and experience to power you through whatever comes your way.

**877.778.6731 | FIRSTONSITE.CA**