

Freemont BV, the place to go for a thorough, impartial soot damage investigation.

WE CAN SEE THINGS THAT OTHERS CAN ONLY SMELL



Soot contamination can have unpleasant consequences. Exposure to soot or sooty fumes can bring about health problems such as irritation to the eyes, nose and throat, respiratory problems, headaches and coughing. They can also leave behind overpowering smells, cause problems with electrical equipment and electronics, and the process of fire-fighting can also lead to the formation of mould. So, in the event of an emergency it is strongly advisable to have both speed and specialist expertise: in order to indicate whether or not soot particles have in fact been spread across residential and commercial spaces, air treatment systems and areas that are hidden from view. Freemont BV has the know-how to be able to do this, as well as years of proven experience. "We can see things that others can only smell."

The Freemont BV company is owned by two professional specialists: Angelique van Paassen and Henny Poulussen. Since 2008, they have been working on a wide range of activities and investigations on behalf of various insurers, assessors, individuals and companies. These varied activities can all be classified under the 'umbrella' of indoor environmental problems resulting from fire or other causes: soot damage investigations, chemical analyses, microbiological measurements (fungi, yeast and bacteria), indoor climate measurements (such as

temperature, relative air humidity, CO₂, workplace inspections) and measurements of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), carbon monoxide (CO) and diesel engine emissions (DEE). "In addition to this, we also provide a handover after reconditioning and other cleaning work has been completed. If you wish, we are also happy to put together action plans in clear language, providing practical advice on the possible cleaning and deodorisation techniques," explained Poulussen.



Contaminated insulation material found inside hidden structural elements.

A strong name

Both of Freemont's specialists have, over the years, built up strong names in the field. "We are often called in to do soot damage investigations and related work," he continues. "It was initially just assessors employed by opposing parties that called our company in, but nowadays insurers and the assessors working for them know come to us too. That proves that we represent added value for them."

His colleague Van Paassen adds: "Our great strength is that we can and will go that extra mile when it comes to providing practical advice about treating soot damage, compared to other investigators working in our field. We are also extremely flexible and can respond to market demands. Of course, for the business community we can also offer speed. The sooner that people involved know what they are dealing with, the better." Then they can carry on with their business. For the same reason, people also want us to come and declare them "clean" as soon as possible. "We know more than anyone else what an emergency is like, and with our commitment to 24/7 service we can serve our clients quickly," added Van Paassen, who also cites Freemont's impartiality as an asset. "In our work we are not bound to any of the parties involved or to their interests."

Working Practices

In a soot contamination investigation we establish whether or not, and if so, to what extent, soot particles have been able to spread around rooms and air treatment systems. Carrying out inspections like this involves taking so-called wipe samples at the location, which are then analysed for soot contamination under a microscope in the laboratory. In addition to analysis under the microscope, an odour inspection ('olfactory investigation') can also be carried out on various kinds of sample material taken from the site, ranging from insulation material to items of clothing. The results obtained from the investigations are always recorded in an extensive report, complete with floorplans and/or photos of locations where samples were taken, as well as images from analysis of samples under the microscope. To provide insights into the levels of soot particles or gasses present in the internal atmosphere, air measurements are also often included as part of soot damage investigations.

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Is there anything else that you would like to say to "the market"? Poulussen and Van Paassen: "Above all, be alert for invisible damage. Soot can contaminate areas that are hidden from sight (such as dividing walls, cavity walls, hollow gaps above lowered ceilings, crawl spaces), and that way can have a negative effect on living and working arrangements. It is also a nuisance for everyone involved if problems continue to occur after the repair work has been carried out. Our years of experience and know-how mean that we can make the invisible visible. Like we said before, we can see things that others can only smell."



The Putten-based team of Freemont BV indoor environmental investigations and advice. Henny Poulussen (right) went in 1998 from a background of technical training into working in the fire damage and reconditioning industry. With his expertise, experience and technical and structural knowledge, he is in charge of carrying out investigations into soot damage and its effects. Angelique van Paassen plays a coordinating role in the partnership, and supervises the progress of investigation requests, quotes, reports and requests for advice. She has worked in the indoor environment industry since 2001, and her experience and various training courses have helped her to become an all-rounder in the field of indoor climates. She is involved in that respect in carrying out a wide range of climate investigations in offices, residential and work settings such as schools, hospitals and ships, as well as microbial measurements (fungi, yeast and bacteria), air humidity and indoor climate measurements (such as temperature, CO₂ and workplace examinations).

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