

FIRST FAMILY FINDS SHELTER AT S.L. HOTEL

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Though they have been flooded with offers of places to stay, Gov. Mike Leavitt and his family have found accommodations at a Salt Lake City hotel.

They will remain there for at least several days into next week, press secretary Vicki Varela said. The hotel is not being identified for security reasons.

The family is hoping eventually to move back into a home they own on Salt Lake's East Bench. It is being rented out to another family, Varela said.

Virtually all the family's clothing was ruined by smoke in Wednesday's fire at the Governor's Mansion. First lady Jackie Leavitt bought replacement basics such as toothbrushes and underwear, shortly after the fire.

Right now, the governor has two suits to his name: one he was wearing Wednesday and another rescued from his smoke-tainted closet. But he may need to go to his tailor's fairly soon, Varela said, because "both suits stink."

"Our personal things are gone," said the first lady at a Thursday news conference, wearing a pink "Baby Your Baby" T-shirt.

The Leavitts managed to salvage some valuable possessions, including their "memory books," a collection of photos and papers featuring their five children. But the governor lost two years of his personal journals in the blaze.

"They just feel very lucky they have the whole family and got out as quickly as they could," Varela said.

The governor is optimistic about restoring the mansion. But he has told staff not to rush reconstruction. "I want it done right," he said. "There's no reason to rush to get us back in."