

WESTCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

FACILITY AND MATERIAL DISASTER RESPONSE AND SALVAGE PLAN

(January 16, 2003)

PRIORITY LEVELS FOR SALVAGE AND RECOVERY

Level 1	Salvage at all costs
Level 2	Salvage if time permits
Level 3	Salvage as part of general clean-up if financially feasible

Administrative Office (files and records) - 1
Director's Office (files and records) - 1
Technology Room (server equipment) - 1
Adult Reference (books and materials) - 1
Indiana Collection (books and materials) - 1
Museum (materials and artifacts) - 1
Archives (books, materials and photographs) - 1

Computer Workstations - 2
Children's Library - 2
Adult Fiction - 2
Adult Nonfiction - 2

Audio-Visual Collections - 3
Periodicals - 3

DISASTER RECOVERY TEAM

Director
Assistant Director
Administrative Assistant
Children's Supervisor
Circulation Supervisor
Automation/Serials Supervisor
Technical Services Supervisor
Branch Supervisor
Maintenance Supervisor

GENERAL RESPONSE TO WATER DAMAGE

1. Do not enter the building until it has been designated as safe. Confer with fire and police departments.
2. Disaster Recovery Team, accompanied by a photographer, will assess the scene of the disaster.
3. The team will decide whether the building will stay open or be closed so that staff can participate in salvage operations.
4. The Director will arrange for emergency facilities and salvage supplies.
5. The Director will coordinate with maintenance personnel to
 - a. Reduce the temperature to less than 65 degrees F.
 - b. Lower the relative humidity by adjusting the humidification system or installing dehumidifiers.
 - c. Circulate air with fans. Open doors if security is available.
 - d. Obtain generators if electricity is off. Use safely grounded, waterproof cords.
6. The Director will delegate salvage teams from among staff members. Team members will be assigned to:
 - a. Prepare packing materials (cutting freezer paper, assembling cardboard boxes).
 - b. Pack the damaged collections, starting with Priority 1 materials. Remove materials first from floor, then from top shelf down. (See Guidelines for Packing.)
 - c. Move crates and boxes by hand trucks and pallet movers if possible.
7. The Bookkeeper will number the crates and record their contents (by catalog number if available, or by location). Record condition as wet, partially wet, or damp.
8. If the damage is substantial and salvage will take more than 10 hours, loosen tightly packed document boxes, books, and pamphlets so that do not jam into the shelves.
9. Do not separate the remaining dry books and documents when the relative humidity is high. If it remains high during cleaning and repairing of storage areas, remove to air-conditioned room if possible.
10. Hold meetings at beginning and end of each day to review strategy and keep up morale.
11. Repair and clean shelves after books and documents have been removed.

GUIDELINES FOR RECOVERY

For recovery, items must be frozen or dried within 48 hours.

For clay-coated paper (magazines, children's books), freezing is only choice of salvage.

Leather that gets wet is permanently damaged.

May want to remove wettest materials first to reduce humidity.

May have to remove undamaged materials to keep them safe.

The longer the materials sit, the more water they absorb.

If wet pages dry without being controlled, pages will stick together in a block.

For videotapes, freezing is untested. Pack vertically in foam-padded plastic crates, and air dry.

When in doubt about proper method, freeze ASAP.

For small amount of materials that don't require freezing, you can air dry. Spread materials out on tables, or fan out, standing up book and letting fans blow air above book. Put wettest part at the bottom; let gravity help pull water out. When pages are almost dry, you can lay them down and put weight on to flatten.

GUIDELINES FOR PACKING (FOR FREEZING OR AIR DRYING)

Be extremely careful when handling wet materials. Fill cartons and crates three-quarters full. Keep identification labels with objects.

A. PAPER

- Single sheets of paper: Do not try to separate, but interleave the folders every 2 inches with freezer paper, and pack vertically.
- Coated papers: Keep wet by packing in boxes lined with garbage bags; then freeze.
- Framed prints and drawings: If time and space permit, unframed and pack as for single sheets.
- Maps, plans, oversize prints, and manuscripts: Sponge standing water out of map drawers. Remove drawers from cabinet, ship and freeze them stacked with 1"x 2" strips of wood between drawers. Pack loose, flat maps in flat boxes or plywood sheets covered in polyethylene.

B. BOOKS

Do not open or close wet books or remove wet book covers. If the water is dirty, wash the books before freezing. Do not wash open books and those with water-soluble media. Wash closed books in tubs of cold running water and dab away (do not rub) mud with a sponge. Time and facilities may limit this treatment.

Lay a sheet of freezer paper (shiny side in) around the cover, and pack spine down in milk crate or cardboard carton.

Leather, parchment, and vellum binding are an immediate priority because they distort and disintegrate in water.

Books with coated papers (such as children's books) should be kept wet by packing inside boxes lined with garbage bags, then frozen.

C. PAINTINGS

Drain off excess water and take to work area for immediate drying. Transport horizontally if possible. Order of removal and treatment is (1) most highly valued; (2) least damaged; (3) slightly damaged; and (4) severely damaged.

D. MICROFORMS

Do not remove film from boxes. Hold cardboard boxes (and their labels) together with rubber bands. Fill boxes with water, then wrap 5 cartons of film into a block with plastic wrap. Pack the blocks into heavy cardboard box lined with 3 garbage bags. Label as wet film and ship to microfilm processor.

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH MOLD

Mold is everywhere, and it is a health hazard. It takes about 72 hours to begin growing. Microwaving and freezing do not kill mold.

If you touch it and it smears or your skin feels moist, it is still growing. To stop its growth, get it cool.

If you touch it and it puffs away, you can vacuum it off. Vacuum in well-ventilated area; wear mask.

Mold stains cannot be removed. Even when stained, however, an area is safe and is no longer a health hazard after mold is removed. Spores are still present and can become active again.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information about Disaster Response and Salvage is contained in the volume, Disaster Response and Planning for Libraries by Miriam B. Kahn.