

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE AND CHECKLIST FOR COLLECTIONS RECOVERY



IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Notification (as appropriate):

- First Responders
Ensure that all staff and visitors are safe and accounted for. Maintain security of building and collections
- Institutional Contacts
- Building Utilities
- Activate the Disaster Plan's emergency response actions
- Activate the Disaster Team if collection damage
- Follow other Communication steps

Immediate response to water infiltration

- Quick response is essential to prevent mold growth and irreversible damage to materials
- Stop the source, remove standing water

ASSESSMENT

Ensure through proper authorities that all hazards are cleared before entering building

- Health & safety first; protect staff
- Document with photos, videos, notes
- Assess damage to collections, building, information systems
 - What type of an emergency was it (fire, smoke, chemical, clean water, dirty water, heat, humidity)?
 - What areas are affected?
 - How much of the collection is damaged?
 - What types of materials are damaged?
 - Are critical information systems functional / safe?
- Identify materials needing immediate salvage action (coated paper, leather bindings, unstable inks, film, etc.)
- Stabilize the environment (cool, dry, circulating air optimal)
- Cover collections with plastic sheeting
- Remove materials from water path. Move books higher on shelves or carts

COMMUNICATION

Establish and maintain channels of communication

- Establish communication with appropriate local & regional emergency management
- Communicate with staff using the Phone Tree
- Contact risk manager and insurance agent
- Contact the public relations officer
- Contact State Historical Society of Iowa, regional contacts, conservators
- Contact outside Emergency Recovery Services
- Confirm funding sources for emergency services as needed
- Contact regional libraries to ensure continued services to constituents
- Report status to administration and public
- Post emergency information and instructions on the institutional website
- Obtain appropriate permissions to begin salvage (public safety, public health, structural engineer)
- Obtain refrigerated trucks, freezer storage for wet materials

COLLECTION SALVAGE

Salvage collections using pre-established Collection Priorities, taking into account access & extent of damage

- Identify and gather emergency supplies
- Identify secure, dry location for pack-out and air-drying
- Recruit staff / volunteers
- Wear appropriate safety protection
- Start collection salvage guided by Disaster Plan and collection response protocols, including Collection Priorities
- Organize staff / volunteers to load priority materials into freezer based on material type
- Organize staff / volunteers to air-dry materials that should not be frozen



IOWA ARCHIVES MONTH OCTOBER 2009

The checklist is not intended as a comprehensive emergency disaster recovery plan, but rather as a summary of factors to take into account in being prepared to respond to a disaster affecting archival collections. For further planning information, please contact the State Historical Society of Iowa.

Effects of the EXPLOSION at TAMA, IOWA. June 6 1936.

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Text adapted from the Intergovernmental Preparedness for Essential Records Pocket Response Plan for Collections at <http://www.statearchivists.org/iper/promotion.htm>, courtesy of the Council of State Archivists.

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