4-24-2014

Soot, Mud, and Mold: Beyond the Basics of Salvaging Archives Collections

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Recommended Citation
Tedone, Melissa; Baker, Whitney; and Seo, Hilary T., "Soot, Mud, and Mold: Beyond the Basics of Salvaging Archives Collections" (2014). Preservation Outreach and Workshops. 5.
http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/pres_workshops/5
SOOT, MUD, AND MOLD: BEYOND THE BASICS OF SALVAGING ARCHIVES COLLECTIONS

Melissa Tedone, Iowa State University Library
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Hilary Seo, Iowa State University Library
INTRODUCTIONS

- Name
- Institution/Role
- Does your institution have a formal disaster plan?
- Have you ever been involved in responding to a disaster, large or small?
DISASTER PLANS: THE IDEAL & THE REAL

dPlan™: The Online Disaster-Planning Tool

A FREE TEMPLATE FOR WRITING DISASTER PLANS

Funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, NEDCC and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) partnered to create dPlan, a free online program to help institutions write comprehensive disaster plans. dPlan™ provides an easy-to-use template that allows museums, libraries, archives, and other cultural institutions of all sizes to develop a customized plan that includes:

- disaster response procedures
- salvage priorities
- preventive maintenance schedules
- current contact information for staff and emergency personnel
- sources of emergency supplies and services
- insurance checklists
- electronic data backup and restoration procedure

http://www.statearchivists.org/prepare/framework/prep.htm
**DISASTER PLAN IN A NUTSHELL**

### Contact Information:
- First Responders
- Institutional Leadership
- Collection Managers
- Disaster Team
- Facilities Managers
- Insurance Provider
- Emergency Response Vendors
- Regional Preservation Support

### Disaster Team
- Team Leader
- Recovery Specialist
- Photographer/Recorder
- PR Liaison
- Logistics and Facilities Coordinator
- Collections Representative
- Pack-Out/Relocation Supervisor(s)
- Systems Recovery Specialist
- Volunteers
INITIAL STEPS IN DISASTER RESPONSE

1. Define the disaster
2. Notify authorities and first responders
3. Ensure safety of staff and visitors
4. Notify insurance provider
5. **Activate Disaster Team**
6. Establish “Command Center”
7. Assess and document damage (ongoing)
8. Determine best course of action
9. Verify financial resources
10. Contact service provider(s)
11. Establish recovery location(s)
12. Brief volunteers (ongoing)
13. Arrange transportation of materials
14. **Begin salvage**
QUICK REFERENCE ON SITE

- CoSA Pocket Plan
- Heritage Preservation
  - Salvage Wheel
  - ERS Mobile App
Who shuts down operations, if necessary? What services will halt?

Who speaks to the public? What are they allowed to say? Who will keep them in the loop throughout salvage operations? How?

Do you have a phone tree? How has it been distributed? Who initiates it?

Who has the camera? Who will take the photos (for insurance purposes)?

How will you contact and rally volunteers? Do you have waiver forms accessible? What are the liability issues?

What other logistical concerns might be particular to your institution?
DISASTER SCENARIO: FIRE
DISASTER SCENARIO: FLOOD
Three criteria:

- Collection priorities
- Sensitivity of materials
- Severity of damage
ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

- Collections that most directly support the institution’s mission
- Items on loan to the institution
- Collections needed for continuity of operations—vital records, administrative records, reference collections, information not available electronically
- Unique or difficult-to-replace collections or items
- Collections or items with intrinsic value
- Monetarily valuable items
- Research collections
- Other criteria?
# Priority Lists and Floor Plans

## Special Collections Stacks

### Salvage Priority (4-2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Level</th>
<th>Collection Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Volume (linear ft or volume)</th>
<th>Formats</th>
<th>Sensitivity of Material</th>
<th>Level of Damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 High priority 1=high</td>
<td>University Archives: Records</td>
<td>EAST Faces 11E-34E</td>
<td>Paper, photos, media, glass plates 12E</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td>L=low</td>
<td>H=high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Medium priority 2=medium</td>
<td>Rare books</td>
<td>WEST Faces 11W-24W</td>
<td>Books: paper, leather, vellum</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Low priority 3=low</td>
<td>Drawings and blueprints</td>
<td>Flat files</td>
<td>Drawings and blueprints</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 High priority 1=high</td>
<td>Manuscripts</td>
<td>EAST Faces 35E-44E</td>
<td>Paper, photos, media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Medium priority 2=medium</td>
<td>University Archives: Books</td>
<td>WEST Faces 31W-33W</td>
<td>Published books</td>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Low priority 3=low</td>
<td>ISU Theses dupes in GEN &amp; DR</td>
<td>WEST Faces 25W-30W</td>
<td>Bound paper, photos, drawings</td>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Special Collections Salvage Priorities Floor Plan

(4-2014)

- **High priority**
- **Moderate sensitivity**
- **Low priority**

- **High priority**
- **Medium priority**
- **Low priority**

- **High sensitivity**
- **Moderate sensitivity**
- **Low sensitivity**

- **Dry pipe sprinklers in stacks**
- **Sapphire system in vault**
Special Collections Salvage Priorities Floor Plan
(According to Curators)

- **High priority**
- **Medium priority**
- **Low priority**

- **High sensitivity**
- **Moderate sensitivity**
- **Low sensitivity**

Dry pipe sprinklers in stacks
Sapphire system in vault
Sensitivity of materials

- Fragility—damage due to shock or crushing
- Heat—melting, expansion, scorching, soot
- Water—solubility, deformation, oxidation, discoloration, mud
- Humidity—mold, solubility, oxidation, distortion, flaking
- Fluctuations in environment—distortions, physical stresses

Value vs. Sensitivity of materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Remove immediately</td>
<td>I’m next!</td>
<td>Then me!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’m next!</td>
<td>Then me!</td>
<td>I can wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Then me!</td>
<td>I can wait</td>
<td>Chill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High Value

Mid Value

Low Value
**SENSITIVITY OF MATERIALS / RECOVERY RATE / SEVERITY OF DAMAGE**

- **Time based sensitivity**
  - few hours--half day--one day--days/weeks
  - Chances of recovering with immediate response
- **Type of damage**
  - minor aesthetic/physical damage--stable needs migration--loss of intellectual content or functionality
  - sooty/dirty--physical damage--wet--moldy/charred/crushed/flaking
  - Extent of damage
  - dirty & dry--damp & muddy--soaked & caked in mud
  - dented--warped & failing--in pieces
MATRIX FOR ESTABLISHING SALVAGE TRIAGE

Value & Sensitivity vs. Extent of Damage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Damage</th>
<th>Value &amp; Sensitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>Remove immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>High V &amp; Low S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>Mid V &amp; High S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid V &amp; Low S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low V &amp; High S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low V&amp;S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Value and Sensitivity

- High V&S
- High V & Low S
- Mid V & High S
- Mid V & Low S
- Low V & High S
- Low V&S

- Leave it
AS TIME PASSES:

Other variables that will influence salvage triage:

- How much time has passed?
- How much help do you have?
- What’s the recovery rate of materials that are affected?
- What salvage resources and expertise are available?

Value & Sensitivity vs. Extent of Damage
Disaster Response & Recovery

AIC-CERT

The American Institute for Conservation - Collections Emergency Response Team (AIC-CERT) responds to the needs of cultural institutions during emergencies and disasters through coordinated efforts with first responders, state agencies, vendors and the public. Volunteers can provide advice and referrals by phone at the number above.

Requests for onsite assistance will be forwarded by the volunteer to the AIC-CERT Coordinator and Project Director for response. Less urgent questions can also be answered by emailing info@conservation-us.org.

For 24-hour assistance, call (202) 661-8068

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WHERE TO PUT RETURNED MATERIALS?
LESSONS LEARNED
START PLANNING NOW
USE EARLY TIME TO DISCUSS STRATEGY
KEEP TRACK OF VOLUNTEER / STAFF TIME
CLEARLY IDENTIFY EMERGENCY TEAM MEMBERS
PLAN FOR BUILDING SECURITY
CONTROL PUBLIC MESSAGE

Photo: Lawrence Journal-World, Richard Gwin, photographer
RESPONSE
DEBRIEF VOLUNTEERS IN 2-HOUR SHIFTS
USE HUMAN CHAINS FOR REMOVAL
PREPARE DRY PLACE FOR BOXES
REMEMBER MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH
MOLD RISK MAY RESULT IN SHELF AND WALL REMOVAL
LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN MIDST OF DISASTER
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