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# Disaster Resources on the Web

by Robert James

The Internet provides access to a wealth of information regarding disaster preparedness and the recovery of damaged materials for library collections. The URLs below are a selection of high quality resources from respected preservation organizations. Investing time in disaster planning and training may reduce the expenses of restoration and replacement of valuable library assets. The information on these Web sites is extremely beneficial. Continue your education in preservation with further reading and attendance at workshops, conferences, institutes, internships, and academic programs. For more comprehensive bibliographies of online disaster resources and print titles, visit these Web sites:

## **SOLINET Preservation Services**

*Preservation Resources on the Internet: Disaster Preparedness and Recovery*

<[http://www.solinet.net/presvtn/leaf/disWeb .htm](http://www.solinet.net/presvtn/leaf/disWeb.htm)>

## **Conservation Online**

*Disaster Preparedness and Response*

<<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/bytopic/disasters/>>

## **Heritage Preservation**

*National Task Force on Emergency Response*

<<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PROGRAMS/TFC.HTM>>

## **Tips for Quick and Easy Referral**

- Bookmark and organize these Web pages.
- Print material that meets your institutional needs.
- Store material in a safe place for use when electricity or Internet access is unavailable.
- Keep additional print copies in your car and home.

The resources described in this bibliography have been written by preservation and conservation professionals. Always consult with a professional conservator before attempting to repair or restore damaged items of intrinsic, monetary, or institutional value. Contact the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works for referral to a conservator in your area. The AIC national office phone number is (202) 452-9545 and their Web site is <<http://aic.stanford.edu/>>.

## **Disaster Planning**

*Northeast Document Conservation Center* <<http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf33.htm>>

This online technical leaflet is part of the "Emergency Management" section of *Preservation of Library & Archival Materials: A Manual*. Now in its third edition, it is available on the Internet in English, Spanish and Russian <<http://www.nedcc.org/pubs.htm>>. An order form for the print version is also on the NEDCC Web site. The Northeast Document Conservation Center is the largest nonprofit, regional conservation center in the United States. Their facilities include laboratories for paper and book conservation, reprographic services, a field service office, and administration. The *Disaster Planning* leaflet includes sections on identifying and decreasing risks, cooperative efforts, locating resources, setting priorities, writing the plan, maintaining the plan, and suggested readings.

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## Contents of a Disaster Plan

### *SOLINET Preservation Services*

<<http://www.solinet.net/presvtn/leaf/displan.htm>>

Produced by the Southeastern Library Network, this leaflet covers the crucial elements of a comprehensive disaster preparedness plan. SOLINET Preservation Services recommends that cultural institutions strive for a fully developed plan with sections on disaster prevention, reducing damages, immediate response activities, recovery procedures, and restoration of materials. However, SOLINET also approves of phased approaches to writing disaster plans. Sections for the institution's greatest concerns may be written first, with subsequent sections on other areas to follow. Information on SOLINET's workshops, publications, leaflets, video loan service, microfilm program, and disaster services, which includes free telephone consultations, is available on their main Web page <<http://www.solinet.net/presvtn/preshome.htm>>.

## Sample Disaster Plans

### *Conservation Online*

<<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/bytopic/disasters/plans/>>

A project of the Preservation Department at Stanford University Libraries, *Conservation Online* (CoOL) is a full-text library of conservation and preservation information. Resources include material on copyright, mass deacidification, pest management, environmental conditions, digital imaging, and many other preservation issues. The section on "Sample Disaster Plans" provides links to libraries that have made their manuals available on the Internet. Institutions include the Library of Congress, the University of Florida, the Minnesota Historical Society, and the U.S. Naval War College Library. Select elements in plans that best match your library's priorities. Aspire to achieve higher levels of preparedness with documentation for fund allocators. If you would like to add a link to your library's disaster plan to the CoOL Web site, contact the Conservation Lab at Stanford University Libraries (e-mail [consdist-request@lindy.stanford.edu](mailto:consdist-request@lindy.stanford.edu)).

## Emergency! If You're First

### *American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works*

<<http://aic.stanford.edu/disaster/emrgncy.html>>

Being first on the scene of a collection disaster can be very intimidating. This resource aims to prepare us for strategic disaster-recovery thinking. Sections include initial coordination, priorities, designations, securing the site perimeter, establishing a communications network, informing insurance agencies, protection of artifacts, water salvage, and drying procedures. The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) is a national membership organization of professional conservators. Other information on disaster recovery and selecting a conservator are available on their Web page <<http://aic.stanford.edu/>>. AIC reminds us that safety always comes first. We should not endanger ourselves or our staff in attempts to rescue damaged items.

## Emergency Response Action Steps

### *Federal Emergency Management Agency*

<[http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/ers\\_wl.htm](http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/ers_wl.htm)>

FEMA's *Emergency Response Action Steps* is a script for the first 48 hours of disaster recovery. Contents on the Web site include disaster alerts, safety, off-site services, stabilizing the environment, documentation, retrieval and protection, damage assessment, salvage priorities, and tips for dealing with damage to historic buildings. There is a link to the *Emergency Salvage Wheel* <[http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/ers\\_wl2.htm](http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/ers_wl2.htm)>, with recovery recommendations for framed artworks, photographs, books and paper, electronic records, textiles, furniture, ceramics, stone and metal, organic materials, and natural history specimens. This resource was designed for archives, libraries, and museums by the National Task Force on Emergency Response, a public-private partnership sponsored by FEMA, Heritage Preservation, and the Getty Conservation Institute. Order forms for print copies of *Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel* are available on the Heritage Preservation Web site <<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PUBS/WHEEL.HTM>>.

## Emergency Drying Procedures for Water Damaged Collections

### *Library of Congress Preservation Directorate*

<<http://lcweb.loc.gov/preserv/emerg/dry.html>>

The Library of Congress Preservation Directorate's *Emergency Drying Procedures for Water Damaged Collections* includes safety precautions for disaster response; air drying for books, maps, documents, posters and photographic material; and recovery recommendations for water damaged items with mold. LC also has an *Emergency Preparedness* Web page <<http://lcweb.loc.gov/preserv/prepare.html>> which outlines their disaster plan to protect our nation's

premier library collections. The *Frequently Asked Questions* Web page is also very informative <<http://lcweb.loc.gov/preserv/presfaq.html>>. LC answers such questions as "Can I save wet books?"; "What if my books are moldy?"; and "How can I get rid of the smell of mildew in my books?". This year's annual Preservation Awareness Workshop, sponsored by the Preservation Directorate, is scheduled for October 19, 2000. Information about the workshop is available online <<http://lcweb.loc.gov/preserv/aware.html>>.

### **Emergency Salvage of Wet Books and Records**

*Northeast Document Conservation Center*

<<http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf37.htm>>

The NEDCC stresses that time is not on our side when books and records have been exposed to water. Rapid initial response, a detailed disaster plan, educated and well trained staff, support from management, effective communication, and fast, informed decisions are crucial. This technical leaflet covers air drying, dehumidification, freezer drying, thermaline or cryogenic drying, vacuum freeze drying, vacuum thermal drying, and air drying wet books and records. Field Service staff at NEDCC are available 24 hours a day for telephone disaster assistance. This free service is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The NEDCC disaster assistance phone number is (978) 470-1010.

### **Flood Recovery Booklet**

*Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium*

<[http://www.neirls.org/flood\\_recovery/flood\\_cover.html](http://www.neirls.org/flood_recovery/flood_cover.html)>

The ICPC *Flood Recovery Booklet* was written for the citizens of Iowa following the devastating flood of 1993. It offers advice on the recovery of personal collections damaged by flood waters and mold. Although intended for the general public, the information is equally applicable to library collections. Sections in the booklet discuss flood recovery for books, papers, records, blueprints, paintings, ceramics, glass, metal, wood, stone, textiles, microfilm, motion picture film, and computer disks.

### **Managing a Mold Invasion: Guidelines for Disaster Response**

*Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts*

<<http://www.ccaha.org/technic.html>>

This resource, available in English and Spanish and funded by the Claneil and William Penn Foundations, addresses health concerns, minor outbreaks and major blooms, first response steps, inactivation procedures, fungicides, cleaning and disinfecting methods, and prevention planning. CCAHA notes that keeping collection storage areas below 70% relative humidity will slow mold growth on material.

### **Invasion of the Giant Mold Spore**

*SOLINET Preservation Services*

<<http://www.solinet.net/presvtn/leaf/moldnew.htm>>

Another excellent resource about combating mold in libraries, this preservation leaflet is an updated version of Sandra Nyberg's 1987 work. At the time of writing, Ms. Nyberg was a Preservation Field Service Officer with SOLINET. The leaflet covers the nature of mold; what mold does to books, paper, and people; and preventing and removing mold growths. It also contains a comprehensive bibliography.

### **Emergency Salvage of Moldy Books and Paper**

*Northeast Document Conservation Center*

<<http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf39.htm>>

This technical leaflet, written by Beth Lindblom Patkus, offers step-by-step instructions for cleaning minor and major mold outbreaks. The NEDCC recommends consulting with a mycologist and outsourcing the removal of active (wet and fuzzy) mold due to the potential health risks. This site includes a list of vendors for purchasing supplies and contracting services.

### **North Carolina Preservation Consortium**

<<http://www.slis.nccu.edu/ncpc/>>

The North Carolina Preservation Consortium is a cooperative, nonprofit organization founded to provide leadership and coordination in preserving our state's educational, historical, and cultural collections. Its membership includes public libraries, private and state academic libraries, government, corporate and cultural archives, and other collection institutions. NCPC provides affordable disaster preparedness and recovery presentations and workshops. Visit the NCPC Web site for contact information.