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Disasters Know No Borders: The Crucial Nature of Disaster Planning

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Introduction

Protection of cultural heritage collections from damage, or even complete destruction by disasters is a concept which is basic to cultural heritage stewardship worldwide, crossing geographic, cultural, and political borders.

In the fall of 2005 and 2006, preservation experts Julie Page, Tom Clareson, and Tom Teper had the opportunity to lead sessions on disaster planning for the Mortensen Center's "Thinking Outside the Borders" Leadership Institute.

In addition to discussing key issues in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, Teper teamed with Page in 2005 and Clareson in 2006 to emphasize the importance of leadership during disasters. Frequently, libraries with established disaster plans and policies to guide their preservation programs are seen as leader or mentor institutions by other organizations in their cities, states, and countries.

Recently, the importance of disaster preparation for librarians and cultural heritage professionals has been highlighted by large-scale weather-related disasters such as hurricanes and tsunamis. Given the wide-spread evidence that climate change may magnify such events, preparation becomes increasingly critical to the survival of our cultural heritage. Developing written disaster plans, practicing those plans, and being able to mitigate disasters (taking steps to make the damage to people, collections, and buildings less severe or intense) is a way to help ensure the continuing operation of your

institution in the event of a disaster, even if there are staff changes or reorganizations between the time the plan was initially created and when it is needed.

While there are a wide variety of sample disaster plans and other planning tools available from organizations such as Heritage Preservation, the Northeast Document Conservation Center, and the Council of State Archivists, a plan which is customized to your building, collections, patrons, and staff is important to the continuing “health” of your institution.

However, having a disaster plan alone is not the complete answer. As the comprehensive “Heritage Health Index” survey of preservation practices pointed out, many institutions may have a disaster plan, but do not have personnel trained to carry out the plan. Regular practice of the plan, continuing training to keep up with the latest advances in disaster mitigation, and updating of the plan at least once a year will improve the chances of a successful response to both the smaller-scale emergencies often typified by leaks, pest infestations, and minor mold outbreaks and the larger community or regional disasters that may be sudden or accompany severe weather events.

Developing and Exercising Your Disaster Plan

In the first moments of an emergency, personal safety is the most important priority. When people and structures are determined to be secure, attention can turn to the overwhelming job of putting the library back in order. Success will depend upon how well the institution prepared. What does the response team do first? Who needs to be involved? How can responders avoid damaging materials while rescuing them? Can an emergency be prevented from happening in the first place?

The driving motivation behind disaster preparedness, including staff training, is that the better prepared the library and the more efficient its response, the more likely the recovery will be successful and the costs controlled. Times of emergency are a true test of leadership skills. Strong communication channels and well developed relationships with the support of a well-trained staff will get you through even the worst disaster. However, failing to have these skills developed and in place ahead of the flood, fire, or earthquake will hobble your response and can erode the position of a leader.

In addition to large scale natural disasters, library administration and staff should also be prepared to respond to the danger to collections from roof leaks, broken pipes, mold and pest infestations, fire, etc. Likewise, manmade threats from arson, terrorism, and electrical or water accidents are very real dangers to our cultural heritage collections. These events are international in nature and know no borders.

Emergency vs. Disaster

An emergency is an unanticipated or threatening event that requires immediate action. A disaster is a large-scale calamity that requires immediate action, but it can also start with an emergency that gets out of control. By preparing for emergencies thoroughly, institutions will be able to prevent most from becoming disasters! Library emergencies have the propensity for becoming disasters; therefore, the two words are often used interchangeably to encompass the broad aspects of planning and preparedness.

Paper-based collections are highly susceptible to damage from water and resulting mold. Especially when organic materials get wet, the clock starts ticking, and the deterioration

and mold will start to take hold in 48-72 hours or possibly even more quickly. Therefore, by focusing most of disaster preparedness, training, and supplies on water-related emergencies in which a prompt and effective response has a major impact on the survivability of the collections, preservation and conservation programs have been able to prevent many significant cultural losses. Additionally, it is important for librarians and archivists to understand that a high percentage of emergencies affecting libraries happen when construction is going on, in or around the library building. This is a time to take extra precautions against water incursion and to protect collections from becoming the victims of accidental fires.

Health & Safety First!

A basic premise that guides all emergency response actions is that the health and safety of people is being monitored – all personnel have been accounted for, injured are being cared for, and workers are protected during response and recovery activities. This includes library staff who may be involved in assessment of damage to collections or recovery of materials. Consider the building/collections guilty until proven innocent! A building that has been through a flood, fire or earthquake is not the same building it was before the disaster. Structural damage, contaminated water, and the release of asbestos from building materials are among the many very real threats following a disaster. It is important that response managers provide protective safety equipment for workers, and that responders never enter an unoccupied building alone. By implementing a buddy system and monitoring where crews are working, many unnecessary injuries can be avoided.

Developing Your Disaster Plan

Where should disaster preparedness activities start? A successful disaster plan and staff training program not only teaches people what to do, but also how to remain calm. When people understand their roles and responsibility during an emergency, things fall into place much faster. Emergency preparedness is not simply having a disaster plan or manual, but rather it is a combination of written documents, training, raising awareness, conducting drills, rewriting or clarifying based on those drills, and ongoing training. This preparation process is conducted within the library, the larger institution, and within the community or region.

Prevention

The efforts put toward preparedness should be as great as the resources allow, but they should include efforts to:

- Assign responsibility [see Appendix A: Responsibilities During a Disaster]
- Coordinate with agencies and institutional personnel
- Assess potential sources of emergencies and identify hazards
- Assess prevention and protection needs
- Evaluate collection assets and set priorities

Prioritizing collections will help responders to evaluate their protection needs as well as to guide a disaster response requiring salvage and treatment of collections. By identifying an

institution's highest priority assets, responders will not lose valuable time and resources saving low value items. [See Appendix B]

Preparation, Response, Recovery & Follow-through

The *preparation* process includes the actions taken for *when* or *just in case* disaster strikes. It provides the framework for response. *Response* is the implementation of the parts of the plan that are needed to meet the institution's needs in the event of a disaster. *Recovery* is what is done to get back to delivering materials and services. *Follow-through* includes distribution of the plan and those parts of the process that are ongoing to assure that disaster preparedness remains a priority for the library. These include staff training activities and establishing collaborative relationships between the institution/city/county and emergency managers and first responders (e.g., fire, police). Specific activities that may be undertaken as part of the preparation process may include:

- Preparing a first response action list
- Compiling up-to-date telephone list of staff and volunteers
- Identifying emergency funds and insurance coverage
- Purchasing and distributing in-house supplies
- Identifying sources of supplies, services and experts
- Writing an adequately specific Disaster Plan

Compiling Your Disaster Plan

A Disaster Plan needs to be tailored to an individual institution's facilities, staff, collections, formats, and available resource base. It needs to be 'adequately specific' to meet the needs of an institution – easy to use and update, as short and concise as possible, and adaptable to meet the response needs for the disasters most likely to strike an institution. It should include responding to both people emergencies (e.g., evacuation, bomb threat, fire) as well as to collections emergencies (e.g., collection priorities, how to salvage different types of materials). There are a number of good templates and online tools to help compile a plan. [See Appendix C: Disaster Plan Resources] By taking a phased approach in compiling the plan, setting realistic goals, and adopting a flexible timeline, the enormity of producing an effective plan becomes less overwhelming. Putting together a team representing staff from building facilities, systems, personnel, and collections ensures that key elements of the preparation and response activity are represented. And, providing a mechanism for keeping the plan up-to-date, especially those frequently changing elements such as names and phone numbers, ensures the ability to contact key members of the response team as well as their regular review of the material.

Exercising the Plan and Training Staff

The best written disaster plan and the most up-to-date phone list will be greatly compromised when disaster strikes *if* an institution's staff have not been trained on how to implement the plan and what steps to take in the immediate aftermath. Emergency response plans need 'exercise' similar to fire or evacuation drills in which everyone practices leaving the building. These drills teach personnel what to do, where to exit, and how to proceed in an orderly

manner. Drills, or 'exercises', of the disaster plan including response for collections damage, are critical for testing procedures, looking for problems, and discussing solutions. These exercises should *teach success*, not failure, and should *build confidence*, not apprehension, among the staff.

Tabletop exercises engage the administration, staff, and volunteers in the disaster preparedness process. The goal of exercising an institution's plan and training staff is to develop a cohesive team and maintain a current and up-to-date disaster preparedness plan. A good leader recognizes that a well-trained staff is an investment of time and resources that will greatly enhance the effectiveness of the library's emergency preparedness. A disaster plan can never be effective if it sits on the shelf and gathers dust! The plan is never really done – it needs to be looked at regularly and used even for minor emergencies.

Exercising the plan and training staff will greatly improve readiness in responding to disaster and provides essential insight to:

- Reveal planning weaknesses
- Identify resource gaps
- Improve coordination
- Clarify roles & responsibilities
- Improve individual performance & confidence
- Develop a cohesive emergency management team
- Provide input to revise & update plan

Two types of training that are especially effective for libraries are the Tabletop (Discussion) Exercise and Functional (Hands-on) Exercise:

Tabletop Exercise (Discussion)

A tabletop exercise helps to identify gaps in a plan. During such an exercise, the emergency management team is presented with a series of question-problems relating to a disaster.

Sample scenarios for Tabletop Exercises:

- *Library is the site of a protest by an angry mob*
- *An earthquake hits while the library is holding a public event*
- *A basement storing collections is filling with water and the electricity is still on*
- *A crazed person is shouting obscenities and begins splashing books with an unknown liquid*

A tabletop exercise provides an opportunity for members of the emergency management team to discuss actions based on a described disaster situation and practice coordinated problem solving for emergency situations. Such an exercise permits messages to be given to individual players that might shape their actions, permits breaks in the action for the team to discuss proper response activities, and encourages ongoing discussion and critique of the appropriateness of actions taken. Most importantly, it provides participants with an opportunity to

practice a coordinated response, provides input to revise and update the plan, and prepares participants for both a functional exercise and a real event. [See Appendix D]

Functional Exercise (Hands-on)

A functional exercise tests institutional response to a disaster scenario and focuses on a particular aspect of the plan, building area, or collection salvage. A fire drill is an example of a functional exercise. Such an exercise involves the emergency management team and relevant personnel; the group is presented with a hands-on training exercise relating to a disaster. A functional exercise breaks the plan up into manageable training opportunities. The intent of such an exercise is to train staff in prevention & safety, teach collection salvage techniques for priority collections, develop an understanding of the plan and its implementation at every level of the institution, and provide input to revise and update the plan.

Keys to a Successful Exercise

Preparing and running a successful exercise depends upon eight key factors.

- *Administrative support.* Administrators must not only support the exercise, they must participate in an administrative exercise as well as a broader exercise that includes staff from throughout the institution.
- *Good design.* In addition to administrative support, the exercise requires good design and facilitation. Public Safety Officers or Training Officers with the skills to facilitate such exercises are often instrumental in their success.
- *Good environment.* The facilitator must focus on creating a positive learning environment with clear objectives.
- *Realistic scenario.* The scenario should not overwhelm the participants. Each exercise can be progressively more difficult, but the first exercise should be manageable.
- *Preparation.* An exercise should not be attempted until after a disaster plan has been distributed, discussed, and revised to include staff feedback. Otherwise it will be too frustrating and too many problems will be brought up.
- *Clear instructions.* Provide all participants with the scenario, prepare them by reminding the participants how long the scenario will last, and outline the format prior to beginning.
- *Critique.* Make sure everyone participates. Watch for non-participation and try to determine why (is the person being thoughtful and taking their time before responding, but the rest of the group is going too fast; someone is dominating the exercise and others can't get a word in; or a person is overwhelmed).
- *Follow-up.* Distribute an Action List after the exercise, with assignments and time frame for completing. Make a list of what went well, such as, collection priorities were clear and up-to-date and there was agreement on what to salvage first.

As you proceed through more advanced exercises, remember three things. First, they should be realistic. Second, they should be challenging. Finally, they should last long enough for

the full response to be evaluated and carefully documented. The drill should be instructive and educational, encouraging confidence in the staff and contributing to the sense of an organized response.

The work really begins in the fine-tuning, revision, and maintenance of the plan. Through observation, it will become apparent that many aspects of the exercise will require improvement. Remember, an exercise should be planned to take a minimum of two hours – one hour for the exercise and one hour for debriefing and discussion. Staff members assigned to observe and evaluate the drill, a recorder charged with writing down everything said or an audio-visual recording of the session will help in reviewing the exercise. In the end, it is most important to remember that drills should teach success, not failure. They should build confidence, not apprehension.

Emergency Event Debriefing

An event debriefing should always take place after a real emergency has been brought under control. Such a debriefing can also be used as a training tool after a Tabletop or Functional Exercise. Every event is an ‘unplanned exercise’, so emergency management teams should not lose the opportunity to learn from each experience. The following objectives and guidelines for a meeting of all participants following a real event can be helpful in making the most of the disaster:

Objectives

- Gather complete and accurate information about the incident
- Objectively assess the emergency response and what aspects to look for areas of improvement
- Recognize the incident stress by allowing participants to share their personal reactions to the event

Information Gathering

- Describe the source or cause of the emergency
- Give the chronology of the event:
 - Discovery
 - Early response
 - Organization
 - Full response
 - Aftermath measures
- Name all the people involved in each phase
- List the actions in each phase
- Describe the outcome of the event

- List the order of activities now required to bring the institution back to normal operations

Assessment of Response

- Were all phases of the event handled in a timely manner?
- Were communications adequate throughout the event?
- Was the response well organized?
- Were staff resources adequate?
- Were emergency supplies adequate?
- Was there any confusion during any phase?
- What problems arose that were not adequately dealt with?
- How can the plan and response be refined to function better?

The Human Factor

- Was anyone injured?
- Did people get adequate rest and necessary refreshments?
- Does everyone understand exactly what happened?
- Was anyone frightened or angry?
- Does anyone feel guilty or anxious?
- Are family members supportive?

Based upon evidence gathered after a disaster, adjustments to an institution's disaster plan and future training activities can make a significant difference in the future. By keeping an 'Emergency Event History' as part of an institution's disaster plan, the emergency management team will better evaluate risks and vulnerabilities. Remember, what has happened before where the cause has not been mitigated, is more likely to happen again.

Short Group Exercises:

On adhesive slips, write down two leadership actions you can take to improve your library's emergency preparedness

Write down events that have occurred in your library, your immediate area, and your region. Make sure your disaster plan and staff training addresses these events.

Leadership in the Face of Disaster

There are a multitude of decision-making and administrative support issues when faced with a disaster. A good leader recognizes that full administrative buy-in for disaster preparedness activities are critical. Preparedness makes good sense, as it:

- Minimizes damage
- Expedites response and recovery
- Saves time, trouble and expense

- Replaces chaos with thoughtful response and recovery
- Allows for prompt resumption of service

A leader must also watch out for ‘stumbling blocks’ that present themselves during response and recovery operations. Recognizing these potential issues and talking about them ahead of time in the administrative group is the first step to avoiding them:

- Poor management
- Poor communication and updates
- Poor stress management
- Lack of clarity in decision-making framework
- Lack of flexibility to the ever changing events
- Working in isolation, failing to use team approach
- Overly ambitious in what you think you can do
- Lack of inventories or priorities
- No practice using exercises and providing staff training
- Failing to harness the goodwill and funding opportunities the event provides

If there is a reluctance to prepare on the part of the staff and administration, focus on what the library has already done to prepare (e.g., fire drills, emergency exit maps, family preparedness). Point out how unacceptable the alternatives are – permanent losses, chaos and accountability. You need to be able to get back into the ‘business’ of serving your public.

Conclusion

The assessment of risks and development and practice of plans to protect an institution’s treasures from disaster remain among the most important activities that can be undertaken in any institution. The importance of protecting cultural resources from damage and loss transcends borders, languages, and time. Many of the treasures held by libraries and other cultural institutions have served students and scholars for decades – even centuries – and their continued benefit to the academic and cultural spheres they serve is dependent upon their effective stewardship by professionals dedicated to their protection. The opportunity for institutions to build leadership activities around the protection of such cultural resources serves the purposes of supporting team building activities, enhancing the leadership capabilities of personnel, and sustaining the richness of our shared cultural heritage.

Before Disaster Strikes: Ten Things You Need to Know*

Overarching priorities: Human life & safety and Protection of library's assets

1. Have a communication plan
2. Prepare a first response action list
3. Organize emergency contact information for all staff & volunteers
4. Prepare a disaster plan that covers people & collections
5. Train staff to respond to the most likely emergencies
6. Understand your insurance coverage
7. Survey your building for risks
8. Establish salvage priorities for collections, files & equipment
9. Disaster supplies and services/supplies list as part of plan
10. Establish collaborative relationships

*Before Disaster Strikes, November 2006 – Produced by Julie Page, CPP, for the Infopeople Project infopeople.org. The Infopeople Project and the California Preservation Program <http://calpreservation.org> are projects of the California State Library, supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. Download handouts and view archived webcast at: http://infopeople.org/training/webcasts/webcast_data/196/index.html

Notes

For additional discussion of disaster preparedness, see: Julie A. Page “When Disaster Strikes: First Steps in Disaster Preparedness.” Co-published simultaneously in *The Serials Librarian*, v. 36, no. 3/4, 1999, pp. 347-361; and in *Head in the Clouds, Feet on the Ground: Serials Vision and Common Sense*, ed. By Jeffrey S. Bullington, Beatrice L Caraway, and Beverly Geer, Haworth Press, 1999, pp. 347-361.

For international discussion of disaster preparedness and planning, see the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) publications available on the IFLA Web site, including: *International Preservation News – A Newsletter of the IFLA Core Activity on Preservation and Conservation*, No. 34, December 2004 including: “Library Experiences with Natural Disasters: Hurricanes and Volcanoes (Montserrat)” by Gracelyn Cassell; “Skills Development and Management for Disaster Mitigation Planning: the Specific Case of Electronic Equipment and Digital Data” by Jo-Ann Georges; “Risks Associated with Hurricanes in the Caribbean” by Steve Pollanais; and “Survey on Disaster Planning in National Libraries” by Marie-Thérèse Variamoff and Marie-France Plassard and *A Blue Shield for the Protection of our Endangered Cultural Heritage: Proceedings of the Open Session* co-organized by PAC (Preservation and Conservation) Core Activity and the Section on National Libraries, translated and edited by Corrine Koch, International Preservation Issues, Number Four.

Appendix A

Responsibilities During a Disaster Response & Recovery

Identify and list at least one person and an alternate for each responsibility. A group or committee may be responsible.

Assessment & Documentation	Name & Contact Information
Assesses and estimates the type and extent of the damage	
Contacts insurance company or risk management and fills out required forms	
Ensures proper documentation of damage (photos, videos, etc.)	
Reviews collections priorities list and confirms or adjusts it based upon damage assessment	
Estimates number of personnel needed to complete the work & how long recovery will take	
Evaluates & recommends if salvage can be done in house with staff, or if a consultant and/or emergency recovery services are needed	
Identifies locations for storing materials out of building if a commercial recovery service is not used	
Formulates logistics for packing out and moving materials from the building if a commercial disaster recovery service is not used	
Records all major decisions and a chronology of events	

Communications	
Handles all public relations & the media	
Interacts with the organization to which the Library reports.	
Collections Salvage	
Deploys work teams	
Supervises work teams in proper packing and personal safety	
Keeps inventory control of items being removed or discarded	
Security	
Secures and protects the building's contents	
Supplies and Equipment	
Responsible for ordering, delivery and dispersal of sufficient quantities of the appropriate materials for packing out	
Responsible for ordering, delivery and dispersal of sufficient quantities of food, water and other comfort items for the workers	
Financial Issues	
Tracks the monetary impact of all decisions	
Arranges for funds necessary to buy supplies, equipment, food, etc.	

Building Issues	
All issues leading up to the eventual restoration of the building to normal	
Identification of locations for response and salvage activities	
Personnel Issues	
Provides communications with staff	
Responsible for union issues	
Handles health, safety and comfort (physical and emotional) concerns	
Coordinates and monitors the use of volunteers	

Appendix B

Guidelines for Establishing Salvage Priorities

The collection priorities list is meant to be a guide. Consider the circumstances and limiting factors (access to materials, extent of damage, time, availability of resources, etc.) that may require deviations from the plan.

Priority for pack-out and salvage should be given to those records and collections that have information needed to establish or continue operations after a disaster; aid the recovery operations; and assist in fulfilling the requirements of the insurance company in order to file a claim. It is important to have some idea ahead of time which collections should be recovered first.

In disasters where only a small amount of material has been affected it is possible to review the material item by item for recovery or discarding. Usually there is not enough time to do this review during a large pack-out. Once the material is frozen it can be reviewed at a more leisurely pace.

Don't try to prioritize item by item; do it by groups of materials. These are decisions that will be highly individual to each institution, but listed below are some guidelines that may aid in making those decisions.

- High priority should be given to the bibliographic records of the collection. For many libraries this is the shelf list, the card catalog, and inventories if not also available electronically. There should be regular backup of computer storage devices (disks, tapes, etc.) with the backup stored off-site.
- Give high priority to staff and personnel records necessary to continue payroll and operations, if not duplicated elsewhere. It is strongly recommended that these records be duplicated and stored off-site to prevent their irretrievable loss.

When prioritizing collections, consider the following questions:

- Can the items be replaced?
- Would the cost of replacement be more or less than the cost of restoring the material? (Replacement cost should include ordering, cataloging, etc. in addition to the purchase price.)
- How difficult is the material to replace? (Special collections, archives, and foreign publications can be irreplaceable. Some items are replaceable but very costly.)
- Does the material have a high or low collection priority? Where is your emphasis in collecting?
- How would loss of the items impact the institution's mission?
- Will the items require immediate attention because of their composition (coated paper, vellum, water-soluble inks)?

Priority 1 items are packed out first unless they are NOT in danger, or if it is impossible/dangerous to access them. Priority 2 items are salvaged next, etc. All other materials are saved if possible, time and conditions permitting.

Make a list of Collection Salvage Priorities and mark them on the floor maps. Make sure high priority collections are known and understood by the salvage teams and local fire department.

Appendix C

Disaster Preparedness and Response Resources

Web Resources

California Preservation Program

Provides preservation related resources for libraries and other cultural institutions in California. The Emergency Planning & Response section includes a Pocket Response Plan (PReP), Template Disaster Plan, Disaster Exercise, and links to resources.

Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA)

Technical bulletins address disaster recovery topics with pdf downloads: Disaster Recovery: Salvaging Books; Salvaging Art on Paper; Salvaging Photograph Collections.

CoOL Conservation OnLine

“A project of the Preservation Dept. of Stanford University Libraries, is a full text library of conservation information ... of interest to those involved with the conservation of library, archives, and museum materials.”

Disaster Preparedness and Response is one of the conservation topics that includes a wealth of information linking to organizations (e.g., Library of Congress, Northeast Document Conservation Center, SOLINET), disaster plans, and a broad spectrum of other disaster/emergency resources. It is the best place to start because it is so comprehensive. Disaster Preparedness and Response runs over 6 printed pages and is continually being added to and updated by Walter Henry. Don't be overwhelmed! Many resources can be linked to or printed directly from CoOL for use in your own disaster plans. Scan the disaster plans of other institutions similar to your own.

Council of State Archivists (CoSA)

CoSA's Emergency Preparedness Initiative, including the Pocket Response Plan™ (PReP™)

Disaster Mitigation Planning Assistance

The database allows you to search by state, multiple states, nationally and by type of service, supply or expert. Results can be downloaded into Excel for easy updating of your institution's disaster plan.

Library of Congress

Emergency Preparedness resources, including Family Treasures – Preserving Treasures After the Disaster and Insurance/Risk Management with its “General Collections Valuation” and insurance companies.

National Park Service

Excellent resource, especially for artifacts. Search “Museum Handbook” for Part I, Chapter 10 on Emergency Planning; “Conserve O Gram” #21 on Disaster Response & Recovery; and “Wet Collection Recovery.”

Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC)

General preservation Web site with a Disaster Assistance section and links to its Emergency Management Technical Leaflets, including “Emergency Salvage of Wet Books and Records”

and “Emergency Salvage of Wet Photographs.” Provides dPlan™: The Online Disaster-Planning Tool, a free disaster plan template.

Western States & Territories Preservation Assistance Service

Participating states and territories: Alaska, American Samoa, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Northern Marianas Islands, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Provides 24/7 disaster assistance number 888-905-7737 for help in the event of a collection disaster.

Appendices and PReP template are available online.

Print And Video Resources

Breighner, Mary. *Risk and Insurance Management Manual for Libraries*. ALA, 2005.

Resource to guide best course in selection for protection of assets for libraries and to gain an essential understanding of risk management in preventing losses. Includes sample policies and checklists.

Building an Emergency Plan: A Guide for Museums and Other Cultural Institutions. Compiled by Valerie Dorge & Sharon L. Jones. Getty Conservation Institute, 1999.

A free download is available at the Getty Web site. Museum focus, but provides excellent planning and implementation information for all cultural institutions. Takes a unique approach by including “Questions to Consider” and “Suggested Exercises” focusing on testing your plan. Gives many examples for tabletops and other exercises.

Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel and Field Guide to Emergency Response

The Wheel is a user friendly slide chart providing quick access to essential information on protecting and salvaging collections. Text of the Wheel is available at the Federal Emergency Management Agency Web site. The Field Guide and its accompanying DVD provide clear, practical advice to help you with initial response and salvage steps. This authoritative, hands-on advice was developed by conservation professionals for staff at museums, libraries, and archives. For order information go to the Heritage Preservation Web site.

Halsted, Deborah D., Richard P. Jasper & Felicia M. Little. *Disaster Planning:*

How-to-do-it Manual for Librarians with Planning Templates on CD-Rom. Neal-Schuman, 2005. Comprehensive resource guide for all types of libraries, including case studies, web resources, quick guides, checklists, forms, and a wide variety of planning tools.

It's Academic: Emergency Preparedness for Schools [videorecording]

Sacramento: Governor's Office of Emergency Services, 1995. VHS, 15 min. sd., col.

Adapted from a longer program entitled “Academic Aftershocks” which covers in greater detail the California State University Northridge 1994 earthquake experiences. Shows damage caused by and institutional response to the earthquake. Search “Videos and Publications” on the Web site.

Kahn, Miriam B. *Disaster Response and Planning for Libraries*. 2nd ed. ALA, 2003.

Comprehensive resource guide for all types of libraries, updated to include terrorist and other case studies. Includes extensive checklists, forms, contracts for vendors and supplies, and a list of resources.

Kahn, Miriam B. *Protecting Your Library's Digital Sources*. ALA, 2004.

An e-preservation resource for librarians, preservationists, archivists and records managers who create and maintain electronic records. Includes extensive checklists and forms.

Thenell, Jan. *The Library's Crisis Communications Planner: A PR Guide to Handling Every Emergency*. ALA, 2004.

Communications basics in this step-by-step guide, for communicating to critical contacts in times of crisis.

Wellheiser, Johanna G. & Jude Scott. *An Ounce of Prevention: Integrated Disaster Planning for Archives, Libraries and Record Centres*. 2nd ed. Scarecrow, 2002.

Canadian publication that presents a broad-based approach to “integrated” disaster planning applicable to U.S. institutions. Detailed appendix of resources and extensive reference and index.

Appendix D

Leadership Institute – Tabletop Exercise

Instructions: The leader of this tabletop exercise assigns team members roles as outlined in the section headed “Thursday Night, 7 p.m.” and begins by presenting the team with the scenario outlined in that section. From that point on, the team is asked to document how they would respond to the situation with a maximum of fifteen minutes before being presented with the next step in the scenario by the team leader. As the exercise wraps up, the leader and response team can discuss the progress made in responding to the disaster.

Section 1: Thursday night, 7 p.m.

It is the last week of September and 75 patrons and a staff of 5 are inside the Mortenson Public Library. In addition, there are 45 people attending the Friends of the Library lecture. A storm with gale-force winds and heavy rainfall has intensified in the last hour. Several staff have been discussing whether or not to close the library early (normally open until 9:00 p.m.), but are worried about sending everyone out into the bad weather. There are reports that a river next to the library is rising, with the possibility that it will overflow its banks.

Please each assume the role of one of the library staff on site, and put on your name tag:

- Library Director – Attending the lecture
- Reference Librarian – Working on the Reference Desk
- Circulation Manager – Night manager for the library
- Library Security Guard – Stationed at the Circulation Desk
- Library Page – Circulation Desk and shelving

The Mortenson Library has two stories and a basement; no fire sprinklers but has fire detection and an elevator. All staff are working on the 1st floor, except the Library Page who is on the 2nd floor. The Friends are in the Meeting Room on the 1st floor.

Discuss the issues around closing the library early and sending people out into the storm.

Section 2: Thursday night, 7:30 p.m.

A patron comes to the desk and says that two windows on the second floor have broken, and wind-driven rain is coming in onto the book stacks and two computer terminals.

Discuss what should be done to secure the building and protect the collections.

Section 3: Thursday night, 8:00 p.m.

The Library Page slips on the water and appears to have broken her ankle. Water has shorted out the alarm system, and the alarm is blaring. In order to turn off the alarm, the detection system will have to be disabled. An elderly member of the Friends group is complaining of chest pains. More people are entering the Library as they abandon their cars. The Emergency Broadcasting System is saying that everyone should stay inside and off the streets.

Discuss what should be done regarding health, safety, and building issues.

Section 4: Thursday night, 8:30 p.m.

The storm is intensifying. Three more windows break on the 2nd floor when a tree falls and branches go through the windows. Wind-driven rain is blowing into the stacks and floor. Water is starting down the stairwells. The power goes out and emergency lighting comes on. Elevators are unusable. There is minimal lighting in the stacks. The Library has ten 100ft. x 20ft. rolls of plastic sheeting. The Library has a telephone tree for staff, but no disaster response team. The Reference Librarian who best knows the collection and lives 45 minutes away wants to go home.

Discuss the people issues. Will the library stay open after 9:00 p.m.? What happens when critical staff want to leave? What should be done about the damaged books and computers between now and Friday morning?

Section 5: Friday morning, 7:00 a.m.

The storm has subsided but the river has overflowed its banks. The building has been secured – windows boarded up, floors dried, electricity restored, but elevators are out due to water in the machinery. The Mortenson Library has a disaster plan but the section on collection priorities and collection salvage has not been written. The Library has 50 flattened cardboard boxes and 10 rolls of tape.

Discuss how you are going to assess water damage to the collection. When you have decided, go to the next card for the number and location of damaged materials.

There are 144 shelves of art and music books damp or wet on the 2nd floor. There are 48 shelves of literature books and 68 shelves of history books damp or wet on the 2nd floor.

Decide what you are going to do with the books. Estimate the number of wet books based on 30 books per shelf. Are you going to pack them out? Air-dry? Throw away? Other?

What staffing and supplies would be needed to pack out the books, and how are you going to get the supplies? You can put 10 books per box, and one person can pack 100 books per hour.

Section 6: Friday morning, 9:00 a.m.

It is time for the library to open and patrons and staff are at the front door. A local TV station has arrived to take pictures of the tree with its branches through the library windows. Someone just discovered ten boxes of new books in the basement receiving area. The boxes were sitting on the floor and are soaked. There are pools of water throughout the processing areas in the basement.

Discuss the issues around opening the library and how to handle the media. What are you going to do about the water in the basement and the wet books?

If time:

Make a list of the issues you feel still need to be addressed.