

## Universal Recommendations for Disaster Preparedness

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### I. Facility Considerations

- A. New construction
  1. If possible, do not build within 100/500 Year Flood Plain.
  2. In Storm Surge Zones, build off the ground (on pilings).
  3. Include seismic bracing in buildings and shelving constructed in earthquake zones.
  4. Don't route water pipes (heating, cooling, labs, waste water) above collection storage.
  5. Provide auxiliary ventilation routes.
- B. Existing structure
  1. Do not store valuable or unique collections below grade (in basements).
  2. Do not store collections beneath riser or drain water pipes.
  3. Add earthquake bracing to storage shelving in earthquake zones.

### II. Collection Storage

- A. Preferentially protect rare/valuable materials.
  1. Box vellum books and bindings.
  2. Box 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs (Daguerreotypes, glass plate negatives).
  3. Box or store architectural records in map cases.
  4. Box priority collections (standard boxes and folders; museum steel cabinets).
- B. Housing considerations
  1. Avoid Tyvek envelopes for item-level storage (can promote mold).
  2. Pad and box fragile 3-dimensional objects in earthquake zones.
  3. Secure and fix item marking.

### III. Institutional Policies

- A. Pre-select disaster-experienced conservators to serve as consultants.
- B. Pre-approve commercial disaster response company.
- C. Prioritize and map locations of unique or high priority collections for recovery.
- D. Pre-determine the records vital to operations; mark boxes "priority for salvage" (think payroll records, business licenses, etc.).
- E. Become familiar with institutional insurance policies and their limits.

### IV. Institutional Preparedness

- A. Create institutional "telephone tree," with backups, for contacting willing staff.
- B. Identify and give authority to recovery leaders; identify their backups.
- C. Create disaster plan and familiarize staff; store copies offsite.
- D. Determine material-specific drying protocols (including air drying).
- E. Locate local and regional freezers, transport boxes, and rental trucks.

### V. Recovery Priorities

- A. Put no one's life or health at risk.
- B. With water damage, create *fantastic* air flow to prevent mold growth.
- C. As possible, freeze wet materials — sort for replacement / discard later.