DON’T PANIC!
RESPONDING TO YOUR EMERGENCY

ON TODAY’S AGENDA
▶ The First Steps
▶ Salvage Supplies
▶ Salvage Techniques
FIRST RESPONDERS

- The first responders are in charge.
- Provide any information they request.
- Respect their orders.
- Remember: Human life is more important than collections!
- Invite responders to your debriefing meeting.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER AN EMERGENCY

- Call your first responders.
- Activate your disaster team.
- Ensure that staff and visitors are safe and accounted for.
- Cut off building utilities if needed.
- Maintain security of building and collections.
- Call your institutional contacts.
TIPS FOR RE-ENTRY

▸ Safety first.
▸ How's your tetanus shot?
▸ Appropriate safety gear
▸ Do not work alone.
▸ Do not enter without permission from first responders.
▸ Be aware of your surroundings.
▸ Look for and report hazards.

ASSESSMENT

▸ Notify your insurance agent.
▸ Go in with two or three people.
▸ Do not touch anything.
▸ Important things to bring with you:
  ▸ Clipboard
  ▸ Pencils
  ▸ Floor plans
  ▸ Assessment form
  ▸ Camera

QUESTIONS TO ASK

How much material has been affected?
What kind of damage has occurred?
What kind of material has been affected?
**STABILIZE THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Identify and repair structural hazards.
- Reduce temperature and relative humidity to prevent mold growth.
  - Ideal is less than 70°F and 45% rH. This may not be attainable.
  - Check frequently to make sure your humidity doesn’t drift up.
- If you can’t reduce humidity, consider options like moving the collection.

**SUPPLIES**

**WHAT DO YOU NEED IN AN EMERGENCY?**

**SUPPLIES BASICS**

- Stockpile supplies before you need them.
- Do not allow supplies to become depleted.
- Keep supplies close to your collections.
YOUR PERSONAL SUPPLIES

- Clipboard with paper and floor plans
- Pencils
- Gloves
- Protective clothing and footwear
- Snacks/water
- Small hand tools
- Flashlight and batteries
- Cell phone charging brick

BASIC PROTECTIVE GEAR

- Nitrile gloves
- Rubber gloves
- Safety glasses
- Disposable Tyvek clothing
- Disposable shower caps
- Respirators or N95 dust masks
- Hard hats
- Aprons and smocks

BASICS: ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Pencils
- Clipboards with paper and floor plans
- Tape
- Scissors
- Utility knives
- Stickers and tags
- Salvage wheel/ERS app
- Camera
- First aid kit
BUILDING STABILIZATION

- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Caution tape
- Brooms
- Plastic buckets and trashcans
- Shop-Vac
- Absorbent snakes

SALVAGE BASICS

- White or kraft paper towels
- Freezer paper
- Plastic trash bags
- Blotter paper/blank newsprint
- Nylon fishing line and clothespins
- Plastic milk crates
- Mylar sheets

FINALLY!

SALVAGE
SALVAGE

▸ Air dry or freeze within 48 hours.
▸ Use your disaster wheel or the ERS app for quick advice.
▸ Keep the Salvage at a Glance chart handy.
▸ Practice beforehand.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

▸ How much help can you get?
▸ Who will do the work?
  ▸ Staff?
  ▸ Volunteers?
  ▸ External services?

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

▸ You have 48 hours before mold begins to grow.
▸ Freeze objects quickly (unless otherwise indicated).
▸ Work on highest priority collections first.
▸ Use fans to keep air circulating.
▸ Call your conservators.
FREEZING WET MATERIALS

- Put the problem on hold
- Can be done in a home freezer
- Useful for
  - Books
  - Paper
  - Photos
  - Textiles

AIR DRYING

- Inexpensive in terms of materials
- Requires lots of time and space
- Most suitable for small quantities of paper materials
- Used for almost all artifact types

ART ON PAPER/FRAMED DOCUMENTS

- Remove from frames unless art is stuck to glass
- Dry flat, image side up
- If art is stuck to glass, leave in the frame and dry glass side down
- Do not freeze glass
- Talk to a conservator before you freeze photographs
PHOTOGRAPHS

- Consult a conservator about historic photographs
- For non-historic photographs
  - Keep wet up to 48 hours
  - Air dry flat or hung with clothespins
  - Do not touch image
  - Consult with a conservator to flatten dried photos
  - Interleave with wax or freezer paper before freezing

BOOKS AND PAPER

- Keep coated paper wet until it can be vacuum freeze dried
- Interleave books with paper towels
- Dry individual sheets flat
- Wrap books in freezer paper before freezing
- Interleave stacks of flat paper before freezing

TEXTILES

- Provide physical support when moving wet textiles
- Rinse, drain, and blot with clean towels or cotton sheets
- Block to original form
- Air dry flat
- Separate with freezer paper or wax paper before freezing
- Do not freeze embellished textiles
WOODEN FURNITURE
- Rinse, blot, and air dry
- If paint is blistered or flaking, do not rinse or blot
- Rinse mud off upholstered furniture
- Remove cushions and other separate pieces
- Wrap upholstered materials in cloth to air dry
- Blot wood and air dry
- Consult a conservator before freezing

CERAMICS AND STONE
- Consult with a conservator to determine specific procedures for each type of ceramic
- Seal broken or cracked ceramics in plastic bags until they can be treated
- Blot smooth-surfaced stone gently and air dry
- Air dry rough-surfaced stone
- Consult a conservator before freezing

METAL
- Use gloves to handle
- Work on iron objects first
- Rinse, blot and air dry
- If applied finish is present, air dry only
- Do not freeze
NATURAL HISTORY SPECIMENS

› Use a respirator and protective clothing
› Consult a conservator for advice
› Do not handle animal skins and taxidermy mounts without protective gear

Air dry or freeze
› Skins and taxidermy
› Botanical specimens

WANT MORE INFO?

RESOURCES

THC Museum Services website has the links to the following resources:

› Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel and app
› Field Guide to Emergency Response (Heritage Preservation)
› Exercising Your Disaster Response Plan Webinar
› National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Sheet “Working with Contractors and Architects”
› American Institute for Conservation - National Heritage Responders (NHR)
› Tips For the Care for Water-Damaged Family Heirlooms and Other Valuables
› Salvaging Water-Damaged Textiles
› Saving Photographs After the Flood
› Emergency! If You’re First (a four-page guide to disaster response and recovery)
› National Park Service Conserve O Grams
› Texas Division of Emergency Management Disaster Recovery Resources
THANK YOU!

- Let's stay in touch!
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