

Disaster Strikes:



Supreme Court of the United States Library Materials Disaster Response Plan

This Library Materials Disaster Response Plan (LMDRP) represents an important component of the Supreme Court of the United States Library's continuing effort to preserve and maintain its collections.

This plan is not a detailed emergency operations plan nor is it intended to supersede practices or procedures of the Court in the event of an emergency. At all times and in all emergency situations staff members are to follow the established emergency procedures and evacuation plans put in place by the Court. Only by first ensuring the safety of Court employees and establishing the safety of the building can a materials disaster response plan be put into action.

Ensuring Safety:

The first priority in any emergency is people. In a large-scale emergency that may affect the integrity of the building, staff must follow the directions of Public Safety officials and Staff of the Marshal's Office.

Do not attempt to enter the affected area until Facilities, Environmental Health and Safety, and/or Public Safety Officials have ensured it is safe to do so.

The Disaster Plan is organized to move from first response appropriate to all situations through the steps involved in recovering materials damaged from a minor disaster, usually involving fewer than 500 volumes. The steps are generally scalable so that in the event of a more comprehensive disaster the responses remain applicable.

The last section of the manual contains appendices which help explicate the text and includes a list of contacts, supplies and services available locally and regionally.

Copies of the LMDRP should be kept in the homes and offices of each member of the library disaster response team leadership. Additional copies should be stored with the Court Police Department.

The plan should be reviewed semi-annually and updated as necessary

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Sometime between Monday, April 1 and the afternoon of Wednesday, April 3, 2019 a hot water pipe broke in the basement storage area of the Supreme Court of the United States Library. Over 30 shelves of FDLP documents were waterlogged.

By following our approved disaster response plan and working with library staff and court employees we were able to immediately begin rescue operations.

Although more than a 1,000 government documents were lost we successfully remediated over 2,000 government documents, ensuring the continued availability of these resources.



Utilize all staff: There is a lot to be done and your disaster plan should already have staff assigned to pull material, arrange items for air drying and to track discarded documents.

React quickly: Once discovered wet documents need to be removed as soon as possible to prevent damage to any nearby unaffected document. Paper documents are like sponges and moisture will quickly migrate from wet to dry items on a shelf.



Plan ahead for a disaster: Having an established disaster plan and the necessary supplies at hand will allow your library to respond efficiently. Useful planning resources may be found at the [NEDCC](#) and from [ALA/CORE](#) (ALCTS).

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