

Disaster Plans:

Hope for the Best,
Plan for the Worst

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A good disaster response plan will be:

- **Practical.** Include useful information.
Leave out unnecessary information
- **Understandable.** Test instructions before
implementing them
- **Accessible.** Give copies to all concerned
individuals, offices, and service points
- **Current.** Revise pages as needed

Purpose of the Disaster Response Plan

- To outline initial action after a disaster
- To outline long-term recovery steps
- To provide a list of contacts for local emergency officials, consultants, service providers, and contractors

Purpose of the Disaster Response Plan

- You should compile a Disaster Response Plan that gives the first responder the information that he or she needs in the first few critical minutes of a disaster

Human Safety

- The protection and safety of human life must be the **unquestioned first priority** during any emergency or disaster!
- Do not enter, or allow others to enter, a damaged or flooded area until officials declare it safe!
- Books and materials can be replaced. A human life can not!

Suggested Outline for the Disaster Response Plan

- Emergency telephone numbers
- Disaster response team members and duties
- Emergency instructions
- Priorities for recovery
- Recovery techniques
- Inventory of disaster response closet

Writing the Disaster Response Plan

- **Survey the library building and grounds**
- **Identify and assess the risks**
- **Outline the Disaster Response Plan**

Writing the Disaster Response Plan

- **Write the Disaster Response Plan**
- **Teach the Disaster Response Plan**
- **Revise the Disaster Response Plan**

Writing the Disaster Response Plan

- **Survey the library building and grounds**
 - ☞ Survey for potential hazards
 - ☞ Mark sensitive collections
 - ☞ Monitor indoor air quality for temperature, humidity, mold, and mildew
 - ☞ Monitor the collections and buildings for pests

Writing (continued)

- **Identify the risks**

- ☞ FEMA and USGS sources

- ☞ State and local emergency planning office

- ☞ Knowledge of local area

- ☞ Knowledge of library's physical plant and setting

Writing (continued)

- **Natural threats**

- ☰ Internal flooding

- ☰ External flooding

- ☰ Internal fire

- ☰ External fire

- ☰ Seismic activity

- ☰ Tornado and high winds

- ☰ Snow and ice

- ☰ Power failure

- ☰ Mold and mildew

Writing (continued)

- **Technical threats**

- ☞ Loss of basic utilities (electricity, gas, water)

- ☞ Failure of HVAC

- ☞ Malfunction or failure of computer hardware/software

- ☞ Malfunction or failure of telecommunications

Writing (continued)

- **Human threats**

- ☰ Bomb threats

- ☰ Terrorist activity

- ☰ Civil disorder

- ☰ Hostage taking

- ☰ Explosion

- ☰ Chemical spill

Writing (continued)

- **Rate the impact**

📄 0 point = No impact or interruption in operations

📄 1 point = Noticeable impact. Interruption for up to 8 hours

📄 2 points = Damage to equipment or facilities.
Interruption for 8 to 48 hours

📄 3 points = Major damage to equipment or facilities.
Interruption for more than 48 hours

Writing (continued)

- **Rate the probability**

- 📄 High probability = 10 points

- 📄 Medium probability = 5 points

- 📄 Low probability = 1 point

Writing (continued)

- **Obtain the weighted threat rating**
 - Multiply the impact rating by the probability rating to obtain the weighted threat rating (WTR)

Threat Matrix

Hazard	Impact	Probability	WTR
Seismic event	2	10	20

Hurricane	1	1	1

External flooding	2	5	10

Writing (continued)

- Use the weighted risk rating to write the disaster plan

Writing (continued)

- **Outline the Disaster Response Plan**

- ☞ Identify the disaster response team
- ☞ Assign responsibilities
- ☞ Determine priorities for recovery
- ☞ Plan for small, large, or wide-area disasters
- ☞ Plan for damage to computers and communications
- ☞ Establish a communications policy

Writing (continued)

- **Write the Disaster Response Plan**
 - ☰ Compile telephone tree of disaster response team
 - ☰ Compile list of priorities for recovery
 - ☰ Compile list of suppliers and consultants
 - ☰ Outline recovery procedures

Writing (continued)

- **Teach the Disaster Response Plan**

- ☰ Everyone who works in the library

- ☰ Security personnel and others

- ☰ Location of copies of the Disaster Response Plan

- ☰ Location of emergency supplies

Writing (continued)

- **Revise the Disaster Response Plan**

- 📄 Keep it current

- 📄 Keep it accurate

- 📄 Review the Disaster Response Plan at least once each year

- 📄 Rehearse evacuations at least once each year

Format of the Disaster Response Plan

- 3-ring binder
- Red, pink, or yellow - make it visible!
- Plastic page protectors
- Clear index tabs

Format (continued)

- **Master copy**
- **Working copies**

Format (continued)

- **Master copy**

- ☰ Purpose statement

- ☰ Disaster response reports

- ☰ Revision table

- ☰ Held by Keeper of the Disaster Response Plan

Format (continued)

- **Working copies**

- ☞ No introduction or purpose statement

- ☞ No disaster reports

- ☞ No unnecessary material

- ☞ Distributed to key personnel and service points

Format (continued)

- Few prose paragraphs
- Lots of lists, tables, charts, diagrams, and floor plans

The Disaster Response Plan

- **Make it easy to use.** Don't make responders wade through verbiage to find information
- **Make it easy to revise.** Disaster Response Plan has to be current to be useful

The Disaster Response Plan (continued)

- **Date and initial every revision** no matter how minor
- **Review the Disaster Response Plan** at least once a year

The Disaster Response Plan (continued)

- Clear
- Concise
- Consistent

The Disaster Response Plan (continued)

- **Clear**

- ☰ Test the instructions to be certain the reader can understand what you have written

- ☰ Use the active voice

- ☰ Use the imperative mood

- ☰ Avoid acronyms and library jargon

The Disaster Response Plan (continued)

- **Concise**

- 📄 Don't use unnecessary words. There will be few adjectives in the Disaster Response Plan

- 📄 Include all relevant information without floundering in details

The Disaster Response Plan (continued)

- **Consistent**

- ☰ Consistent use of terms

- ☰ Consistent page layout and design

- ☰ Consistent typography. Consider a sans serif face (Arial Bold) for headings and a serif face (Times New Roman) for text

Disaster Response Reports

- Date, time of the disaster
- Area of the library affected by the disaster
- Description of the disaster
- Number of pieces affected
- Immediate response
- Long-term actions taken

Disaster Response Reports (continued)

- Amount of time rescuers spent on recovery (person hours)
- Results or impact of the incident
- Description and number of pieces discarded
- Financial impact of the disaster
- Photographs or videos of impacted area

Copies of Disaster Response Reports

- Library department or unit files
- Appropriate library administrator
- Person in charge of the Disaster Response Plan

Disaster Response Reports

- Review annually. Look for trends. Have the disasters been similar in nature?
- Determine the cost of disasters and response
- Use the Disaster Response Reports to determine maintenance priorities

Resources

- See Selected Resources list in handout

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Slide 1

No comment.

Slide 2

No comment.

Slide 3

A good disaster response plan will be:

- Practical. The plan should include information that will be useful to those individuals responding to a disaster ("the responder"). The plan will tell them what actions to take first and who to contact immediately. The plan will exclude information that they do not need.
- Understandable. The information presented in the plan must be understandable. If the responders cannot understand the instructions, they cannot effectively respond to the disaster.
- Accessible. Copies of the disaster response plan must be easy to find. If the responders cannot find a copy of the plan, they cannot respond effectively.
- Current. The information and instructions in the plan must be current and accurately reflect the situation in the library building at the time of a disaster. If the instructions are not current, the responders cannot be effective.

The library's disaster response plan must pass this four-part test. If the library's current plan does

not pass the test, you need to write a new plan. If the library does not have a disaster response plan, keep these tests in mind as you write a plan.

Slide 4

No comment.

Slide 5

No comment.

Slide 6

The library's disaster response plan will focus on library materials, equipment, and the building. However, the first priority in any emergency or disaster must be the protection and safety of human life and health. Always remember that people are more important than materials and equipment.

Slide 7

Here is a suggested outline for a disaster response plan. You may find that your library's disaster response plan needs additional information beyond that suggested in this outline.

Slides 8 and 9

There are six steps in writing a disaster response plan. We will look at each step in detail.

Slide 10

You know your library building and collections better than anyone else. Use your knowledge and experience as a starting point. Identify potential hazards both inside the building and outside.

Identify and mark those collections that will need special attention in the event of a disaster. Monitor the quality of the air in the library for temperature, humidity, mold, and mildew. Watch for pests in the building and collections.

Slide 11

There are many information sources that you can use to identify the environmental hazards in your region. Two useful web sites are Federal Emergency Management Agency Disaster Map <<http://www.fema.gov/disasters/>> and the U.S. Geological Survey-National Seismic Hazard Mapping Project <<http://geohazrds.cr.usgs.gov/eq/genmap.html>>.

Slides 12, 13, and 14

There are a variety of threats to a library including natural, technical, and human threats. Identify the threats to your library.

Slide 15

After identifying the threats for your library, rate the impact of each threat on the library's operations, collections, operations, and services.

Slide 16

Then rate the probability of each threat.

Slide 17

Then multiply the rating value of the impact by the rating value of the probability to obtain the weighted threat rating.

Slide 18

The resulting matrix will help you establish priorities in writing the disaster response plan.

Slide 19

The higher the weighted threat rating, the greater the impact of the disaster on your library. The library's disaster response plan should address the areas of greatest threat.

Slide 20

Begin the writing process by outlining the disaster response plan. Create a disaster response team and assign responsibilities to each member. Determine the resources and collections in the library that will need priority attention in the event of a disaster. Plan for disasters of varying dimensions: small area (about 1000 books), large area (an entire floor of the library) and wide area (affecting the entire community as in a tornado, flood, or earthquake). During a wide area disaster with the resulting disruption of essential services, where will the library turn for resources?

When writing a disaster response plan for a library, you should involve library administrators, librarians, and support staff. Everyone working at the library needs to feel an investment in the success of the disaster response plan.

Slide 21

Much of the writing process will involve compiling lists. Members of the disaster response team should work with library administrators to compile this information.

Slide 22

Everyone who works in the library, including part-time employees, student assistants, stack pages, and security personnel, should be familiar with the basics of the disaster response plan:

- What a copy of the disaster response plan looks like

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- Where copies are located
- What immediate action to take if a disaster occurs • Where to find emergency supplies.

Review this information with the library staff at least once a year. If the library has a high turnover of employees, a more frequent review may be needed.

Slide 23

To be effective, the library's disaster response plan must be current and accurate. Review the plan at least once each year to see if changes or additions are needed.

Slide 24

To make the copies of the disaster response plan both easy to recognize and easy to revise, use 3-ring binders in a bright color. Plastic page protectors will keep the pages clean. In addition, the page protectors make it easier to keep the plan current; revised pages can be easily slipped into place. Use clear index tabs to mark sections of the plan.

Slide 25

You should develop one master copy of the disaster response plan and as many working copies as needed.

Slide 26

The master copy of the disaster response plan will include editorial apparatus such as a purpose statement and revision table. In addition, the master copy will include the disaster response reports written after each disaster. One person on the disaster response team, the keeper of the disaster response plan, will be in charge of updating and revising the plan.

Slide 27

The working copies of the plan will be distributed to members of the disaster response team and key personnel in the library as well as service points in the building. Working copies are stripped

down versions of the plan without the editorial apparatus of the master copy.

Slide 28

The information in the disaster response plan will be presented in lists (numbered lists for steps in a sequence or items listed in order of importance, bulleted for items of equal value or priority), tables, charts, diagrams, and floor plans.

Slides 29 and 30

If the disaster response plan is hard to use or if information in the plan is poorly organized, the people responding to a disaster cannot use the plan effectively. Make the plan easy to use.

If the disaster response plan is hard to revise because of poor formatting, the keeper of the plan will avoid the chore of revising it. Make the plan easy to revise.

Slide 31

A well-written disaster response plan will be clear, concise, and consistent. Let's look at each of these factors separately.

Slide 32

An effective disaster response plan will be written in a manner that is clearly understood. Use simple, direct language and short sentences written in the active voice. Write the instructions in the imperative mood; do not be shy about telling the responders what to do. Avoid acronyms and library jargon.

Slide 33

An effective disaster response plan will give the reader all the information that the responder needs to initiate action in an emergency without unnecessary or relevant information. Keeping the plan concise is not an easy task.

Slide 34

Finally, an effective disaster response plan will be internally consistent in the use of terms, page layout, and typography. Although many of us were taught in English classes to avoid multiple usage of a term, consistent use of a term is more important than literary merit when writing a disaster response plan. Responders to a disaster must understand immediately the instructions in the plan. A responder should not have to ask "is the government documents department the same as the government information area?"

Along with the consistent use of terms, consistent page design and typography will help the responder understand the information and respond effectively to an emergency situation.

Slide 35, 36, and 37

After each disaster, write a report describing the disaster and the library's response to it. The disaster response report will create institutional memory about the disaster. File copies of the report with the library department or unit and the appropriate library administrator. In addition, put a copy of the report in the master copy of the library disaster response plan.

Slide 38

The disaster response reports can be invaluable when determining the cost of disaster response. In addition, the reports can help administrators determine trends and establish priorities for repair and maintenance of the library's physical plant.

Slide 39

See the Selected Resources list for additional resources on writing a disaster response plan <<http://library.csun.edu/mfinley/fdcread.html>>.