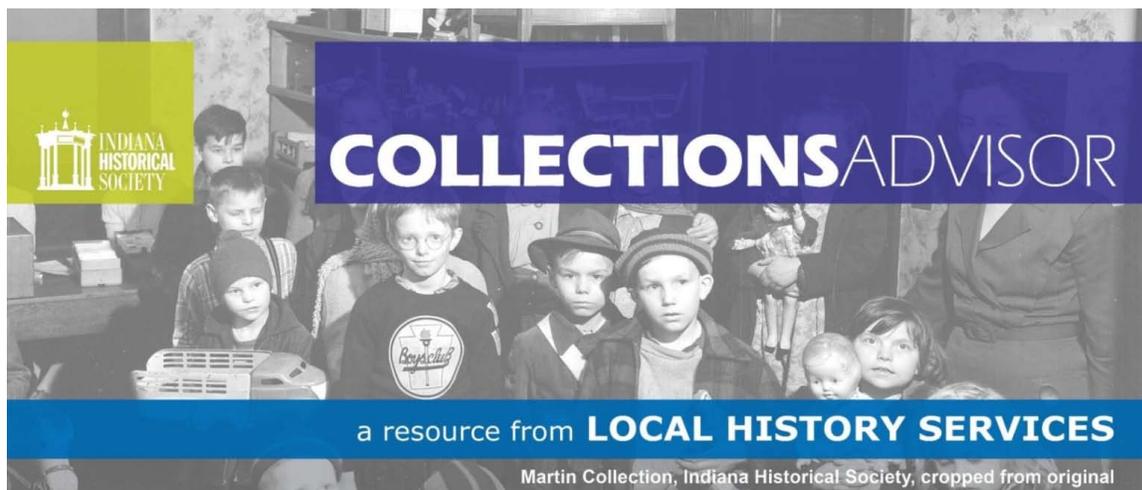




This publication is a service of the [Hoosier Heritage Alliance](#)  
Connecting to Collections project.



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## Disaster Dangers: Eight to Mitigate

[North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources](#)

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines **disaster** as

: something (such as a flood, tornado, fire, plane crash, etc.) that happens suddenly and causes much suffering or loss to many people

: something that has a very bad effect or result

: a complete or terrible failure

A disaster can happen to any museum at any time. A fire, a tornado, a burst water pipe, etc. are all dangers to our collections. The loss or damage to collections can have a devastating effect on the institution and its community. And, recovery is a long, hard and painstaking process.

While board, staff and volunteers of museums can't prevent most disasters, we can prepare for them. We can take measures to protect our collections better and make the recovery process easier.

The North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources came up with eight steps to help in the disaster planning process.

1. **Inventory** your collections. Save a backup copy of all collection records and other essential documents and store them off-site.
2. **Write** a disaster plan for your institution. Form a committee with institutional leaders to revisit and revise plan annually.
3. **Insure** your collections and facilities.
4. **Store** collections in acid-free and/or waterproof containers whenever possible.
5. Fill out a **pocket response plan**. ([Council of State Archivists](#)).



Cultural Resources Emergency  
Response Team, North Carolina

6. **Train** staff by staging disaster response drills regularly.

7. Get to know your community's **first responders** (firefighters and police). Give them tours of your facility annually.

8. **Update** all phone numbers of staff and local emergency response teams each year.

*The North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources' CREST project (Cultural Resources Emergency Response Team) is funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.*

Resources

[American Institute for Conservation](#)

[Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts Resource Guide for Disaster Preparedness](#)

[dPlan™](#)

[Indiana Historical Society Local History Service Lending Resource Center](#)

[North Carolina Connecting to Collections Collections Conversations](#)



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