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INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS ADVISOR

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Basics of a Disaster/Emergency Kit

By Tamara Hemmerlein, director, IHS Local History Services



Martin Collection, Indiana Historical Society.

September is National Preparedness Month. To help you prepare, we are sharing a list of items to have on hand if a disaster or an emergency strikes; because the last thing you want to do is run around trying to find the right materials to respond. Gathering the resources you need and knowing how to use them is an important step in disaster/emergency preparedness.

Personal Protection

- First Aid kit(s) - be sure to check for expired items and replace them
- One box of disposable nitrile gloves
- 3 pairs each of work and heavy-duty rubber gloves
- Hard hats
- Goggles
- Disposable plastic aprons
- Disposable masks

Cleaning Supplies

- Large plastic tub - storing supplies; label the outside of the can or tub indicating that it's supply storage for use in emergencies only.
- 1 roll of barricade tape - blocking off hazardous or work areas



ONLINE RESOURCES

[Protecting Your Collections: Writing a Disaster Response Plan](#)
(Connecting to Collections)

[Emergency Preparedness](#)
(AASLH Blogs)

[Disaster Dangers](#)
(Collections Advisor)

[Disaster and Emergency Preparedness](#)
(Collections Advisor)

FROM OUR LENDING RESOURCE CENTER

[Building an Emergency Plan: A Guide for Museums and Other Cultural Institutions](#)
(Valerie Dorge and Sharon L. Jones, comps)

[Library and Archival Disaster-Preparedness and Recovery Workbook](#)
(Richard F. Young)

[Steal This Handbook: A Template for Creating a Museum's Emergency Preparedness Plan](#)
(Allyn Lord, et al.)

Find the resources above by visiting the Lending Resource Center [website](#).



- Large plastic trash can - disposing of debris; label the outside of the can.
- 1 roll of large, heavy-duty garbage bags - to go into trash can for debris disposal
- 3 five-gallon buckets
- 3 large sponges
- Brooms and dustpans
- Mops
- 3 self-standing flashlights and extra batteries
- 1 all-purpose toolkit
- 3 portable folding tables



Bass Photo Co Collection, Indiana Historical Society.

Record-keeping Materials

- Disaster/emergency response team contact information
- Disaster/emergency response chain-of-command list
- Disaster/emergency response task assignments - who is going to do what?
- Action list - what are the tasks that need to be completed? Create a list for various scenarios: flood, fire, etc.
- 1 dozen sharpened pencils
- 3 black permanent markers
- 3 clipboards
- 1 digital camera

Collections Care Supplies

- 1 roll of 2 mil plastic sheeting - covering the floor or ground or hanging to cover objects
- 1 roll of duct tape - securing plastic sheeting
- 2 rolls of paper towels - absorbing water
- 2 packages of absorbent, cotton towels - absorbing water from objects
- 2 boxes of waxed or freezer paper - interleaving wet photos and documents
- 2 boxes each of quart and gallon size Zip-loc bags - storing objects for further treatment
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- 1 roll of clothesline - hanging the plastic sheeting or air drying objects
- 3 packages of rust-proof clothespins - hanging objects to air dry

These lists are not comprehensive, but are a good start to assembling a disaster preparedness/emergency response kit. Remember, if you are unsure about how to treat particular objects, consult a conservator for advice on how to proceed.

This is a free publication. Anyone may subscribe.

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