

Connecting to Collections / Minnesota!

Collections Care Needs Survey Summary of Findings

Please note that the following information was extrapolated from the data produced by the survey. There may be inconsistencies between the percentages given below and the numbers provided in the charts. The survey was not designed to be statistically accurate. The goal was to gain a general understanding of preservation needs, current activities, and resources that would be most useful in cultural institutions in Minnesota.

Who responded?

- 107 institutions responded.
- The vast majority are libraries---approximately 53%. About 18% are museums, 16% are historical societies, and 14% are archives.
- Approximately 37% of respondents describe themselves as part of an academic entity, while 34% describe themselves as a non-profit and non-governmental organization. About 22% are part of a county or municipal government. Less than 6% are state, and none are federal. Almost 2% are tribal.
- Respondents have institutional annual operating budgets that range from less than \$10,000 to more than \$10,000,000. The institutions represented in the survey are spread relatively evenly throughout the range. At the high end, 65.1% of respondents have institutional annual operating budgets of \$200,000 or more; 38.6% of these have budgets of \$1,000,000 or more.
- 34.5% of respondents' institutions have funds allocated for preservation activities in their annual budgets.
- While some, nearly 20%, have full- or part-time paid preservation staff, about 47% say that preservation duties are assigned to various staff as needed. Nearly 30% say no staff person has preservation responsibilities, while 13% obtain preservation services through an external provider.
- In 37.3% of the respondents' institutions, staff with decision-making responsibility remain at the institution for more than 15 years; 30.1% have staff that remain 10 to 15 years.

What preservation activities are respondents carrying out at present? What are they NOT doing? (please see Chart 1)

- Approximately 67% of respondents carry out preventive conservation activities (housekeeping, holdings maintenance, re-housing, environmental monitoring). Roughly 40% of respondents control the temperature, relative humidity and light levels in storage areas.

- 50% do preservation reformatting (preservation photocopying, microfilming).
- 48.4% do some sort of preservation management (administration, planning, assessment).
- 47.2% carry out conservation treatment (repair, mass deacidification, specimen preparation).
- 34.1% preserve digital records materials and electronic records collections (migrate data to current software).
- 30.4% preserve audio-visual media and playback equipment (make preservation copies of media, maintain equipment).
- Over 58% of respondents stated that they do *not* have a long-range preservation plan, and over 41% have *not* had a survey of the general condition of their collection. Over 40% do *not* have an emergency plan.

Which of respondents' collections do they believe to be at high risk? (please see Chart 2)

- Moving image collections---67.1%
- Photographic collections---59.8%
- Unbound sheets---58.5%
- Recorded sound collections---56.3%
- Books and bound volumes---53.7%
- Historic and ethnographic objects---47.6%
- Art objects---46.3%
- Digital material collections---42%
- Natural science specimens---13.6%
- Archaeological collections---7.4%
- Living collections---1.3%

What do respondents see as the cause of damage or loss to these collections? (please see Chart 3)

- Physical or chemical deterioration (related to environment or inherent vice)---81.3%
- Improper storage or enclosures---70%
- Light---63.6%
- Handling---62.9%
- Water or moisture---53.8%
- Technological obsolescence of digital or audio-visual collections---52.8%
- Airborne particulates or pollutants---52.3%
- Prior improper treatments---43.3%
- Vandalism---28.1%
- Pests---27.8%
- Fire---1.1%

What do respondents need in the way of preservation? What do they identify as either a "need" or an "urgent need"? (please see Chart 4)

- Over 77% state that they need a prioritized long-range preservation plan.
- Nearly 75% identify staff training as a need.

- Over 68% see preservation of audio-visual collections as a need.
- 64% need planning surveys or assessments.
- 64% identify conservation treatment, including specimen preparation, as a need.
- Over 55% identify preservation of digital collections as a need.
- Over 55% state that they need an emergency plan, which is in keeping with the finding that over 40% state that they do not have an emergency plan.
- 52% of respondents identify some type of environmental control as a need.
- Respondents see security (38.5%) and integrated pest management (35.2%) as the least pressing needs.

What assistance would respondents find useful? (please see Chart 5)

- Assistance in preparing a prioritized long-range preservation plan---73.4%
- Collections care workshops---71.4%
- Assistance in preservation of audio/visual collections---67%
- Assistance in obtaining a general needs assessment or condition survey---63.8%
- Assistance in preservation of digital collections---61.8%
- Training for staff in emergency response---59.3%
- On-line collections care information---55.7%
- Assistance in preparing an emergency/disaster plan---51.8%

What methods of delivery would be most useful?

- Hands-on workshops
- On-site, person-to-person training
- CD-ROMs and DVDs
- On-line information

What sources of assistance do respondents use now?

- Web information
- Published information
- Cultural institutions and regional centers
- Colleagues
- Professional organizations
- Workshops
- Conferences
- Supplier catalogs

Could respondents provide 4 to 5 days of staff time over the course of two years to participate in a statewide program to help meet their preservation needs?

- 87.7% of respondents said yes.

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