

**Connecting to Collections New York**  
**June 18, 2013**  
***Disaster Preparedness and Prevention***

**[SLIDE 1: TITLE PANEL]**

**[SLIDE 2: Table Top Exercise]**

To begin this morning we are going to start with a short table top exercise that will get all of you thinking about disaster preparedness and response. I am going to present a disaster scenario and you will have five minutes to consider how you would respond. I will then share more information with you about the event and give you another 5 minutes to discuss. In all, you will have three opportunities to consider how you would respond to the situation. If you are participating in a group viewing please verbalize the actions you would take in response to the scenario. If you are viewing this webinar independently from your computer, please write down your response.

Please note that although our scenario is set in a library, the event could as easily happen in a museum or historical society.

**[SLIDE 3: Scenario]**

It's Wednesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Town Library will be closing in 15 minutes. It's been a busy day, and now, just before closing, adult patrons and families are checking out DVDs and books for the holiday. The library director is away on vacation and the only staff remaining is the children's librarian, the reference librarian and two high school volunteers, whose parents are waiting outside.

Leaving the reference librarian to finish checking out patrons, the children's librarian begins to check the building to make sure everything is ready for closing, when she discovers that water is coming through the drop-panel ceiling in the local history room, pouring over the book stacks and archival collection, and collecting in the fluorescent light fixtures.

What do you do?

You will have five minutes to consider what actions you would take.

**[SLIDE 4: Scenario, part 2]**

It's now thirty minutes after the event was discovered.

The source of the water in the basement has been located. A sprinkler head in a public bathroom on the main level of the library has been vandalized. The entire rest room is drenched in water and the floor is flooded. Water is pouring out of the rest room and

has seeped into the carpet outside the rest rooms where the computer terminals are located. The carpet is saturated and there are outlets in the floor.

What do you do now?

Again, you will have five minutes to consider what actions you would take.

#### **[SLIDE 4: Scenario, part 3]**

It is now two hours after the event was discovered.

The power is off. It's evening and even with emergency lights, the library is too dark and not safe for staff to enter the building to aid in recovery efforts. Tomorrow is a holiday. There are stacks of wet books, water logged historic papers from the archives and a large quilt hanging on the wall has water running down the front. You notice that some of the shelves are bowing, and these units are not braced. Carpeting in the computer area and the main lobby is saturated with water. The library is scheduled to open at 9am on July 5<sup>th</sup> and there is a full schedule of family and adult programs.

What do you do?

Again, you will have five minutes to consider what actions you would take, but this is the final part of our table top exercise.

So, I hope that after this exercise you are now thinking about your institution and what you would do if this event happened there?

#### **[SLIDE 5: Scenario, One Response]**

There is rarely one way to respond to any disaster, but let's take a few minutes to consider the best case scenario.

**[click]** Protect Patrons:

Make sure people have been safely evacuated from the area and the building.

**[click]** Alert Staff:

Make them aware of the event and precautions to protect them and others.

**[click]** Turn off utilities:

If possible to do safely, turn off water and electricity

**[click]** Get help.

Call 911. The vandalism necessitates police presence and the fire department can provide assistance in turning off the sprinkler system and using professional wet-vacs.

Call electrician or power company if help is needed to turn off the power.  
Call in available staff.  
Call a disaster response company to begin recovery efforts, with no electricity they will need to bring generators.

**[click]** Initiate Disaster Response Team and Recovery Efforts:

- **[click]** Disaster Response Team Leader - coordinates efforts and works with all team members
- **[click]** Administrator – oversees people/contractors working response & recovery, fiscal management
- **[click]** Collections Recovery – manages collection recovery procedures, prioritizing collections based on disaster plan, supervises response and recovery of collection items
- **[click]** Work Crew Coordinator – oversees day-to-day needs of staff and volunteers, oversee food/drink, rest periods, etc.
- **[click]** Technology/Building/Security Coordinators – responsible for making sure each of these areas is monitored for swift recovery and temporary replacement strategies as needed.
- **[click]** Public Relations Coordinator – coordinates all publicity and media releases with press and public.
- **[click]** Documentation Coordinator – insures that every aspect of the disaster – the event, response and recovery is written down and photographed, both for insurance purposes and to capture decisions and priorities

**[SLIDES 2-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]**

This scenario is just one of many instances of events that could happen at your institution. Whether its **[click]** fire, **[click]** hurricanes, **[click]** tornados, **[click]** nor'easters, **[click]** earthquakes, **[click]** or blizzards, I think we can all agree that in the last three years New York has experienced some extreme weather events and that some have been hard hit by natural and man-made events.

My message to you today is to plan. It's not if a disaster will happen at your site, but when.

**[SLIDE 3 – 1, 2, 3]**

This morning I would like to talk to you about planning for disasters, **[click]** why a disaster plan is so important to have, **[click]** what a good disaster plan should include and **[click]** how to make this a working document that everyone at your institution understands and is ready to carry out. Some of you may be thinking that creating a disaster plan is something that can be left to the staff at your institution, but the support of the members of your board of trustees is critical to seeing that your institution is prepared.

I also want to be clear that the type of disaster plan I will be speaking about today is for library and museum collections. Your disaster plan does not include emergencies involving people, such as illness, injury or problem patrons, these are issues that should be addressed in your Staff Manual. Also, in any emergency the first priority is protecting human life. Only when collections can be safely retrieved or salvaged should steps be taken to do so.

#### **[SLIDE 7 – 2 TYPES OF DISASTERS]**

First, let's begin by looking at disasters. There are two types, natural disasters and man-made events. Natural disasters are events caused by extreme weather or environmental factors, such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, etc. Man-made events would include deferred maintenance, negligence, arson, damage caused by carelessness or intentional damage, issues with the infrastructure, and industrial accidents that can lead to chemical and hazardous material emergencies. The image you see on the right is the after effects of a molotov cocktail being dumped into an interior book drop at a local library. If your library still does not have an exterior book drop for patrons, this is a good argument for why you need one.

#### **[SLIDE 8 – FIRST RESPONDERS, CL&P OUTAGE MAP]**

In the event of an emergency your institution may need to survive on its own for a few days or a week or more. Local officials and emergency workers will be on the ground after a disaster, but as we have seen recently, it can take time before they can reach everyone. Basic services such as electricity, water, gas, sewage, telephone and cell phone service may be disrupted or cut-off for days or even a week or longer. Also, the more widespread the disaster the greater the impact on staff members who may have issues at their residences to contend with, or may be prevented from making it to work.

#### **[SLIDE 9 – 3 IMAGES OF LIBRARIES]**

In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene and Hurricane Sandy, local libraries and museums have played a pivotal role in their communities recovery. Those libraries that were able to reopen quickly, provided a place for those hardest hit by these storms to escape cold homes, have something warm to drink and to charge their electronic devices. These recent examples have been great opportunities for libraries to raise their profile and their public worth in the eyes of their communities. Yet, how prepared is your library for this influx of patrons? Library boards and staffs need to have a plan on how they will accommodate additional users. Does the library have enough outlets? Do they need additional power strips? Is their sufficient seating and parking? Do they have generators to get up and running if power restoration is delayed?

And the same holds true for museums and historical societies. Many of these institutions opened their doors, providing free activities to keep the youngest members of our communities entertained while schools were closed and power was out.

To remain a valuable asset in an emergency libraries and museums must look ahead and define the role they will play when an emergency impacts their community, but

also how they will respond if a disaster strikes their own institution. The key to being prepared is a well-thought out disaster preparedness and response plan.

Disaster planning is an essential component for preserving your institution's collections and providing the services your community relies on regularly. A written disaster plan can reduce the risk of disaster at your institution, and help minimize losses. A good plan will allow your institution to:

#### **[SLIDE 12 – DISASTER PLAN POINTS]**

- [click] Prevent or mitigate disasters
- [click] Prepare for the most likely emergencies
- [click] Respond quickly to minimize damage if a disaster happens
- [click] And recover effectively from a disaster while continuing to provide services to your community.

#### **[SLIDE 13 – DISASTER PLAN COMPONENTS]**

A good disaster plan includes several components. It should include

- the goal of your disaster plan
- information on your institution
- information on your building and its facilities
- a response and recovery plan
- and a list of emergency services and supplies.

Now I mentioned that your disaster plan should have a written goal. This may seem a bit odd, because the goal of any disaster plan is to protect and preserve the institution and its collection. The reality is that when an emergency occurs you will have very little time to make decisions that will have a permanent impact on the institution and its collections. If there is a flash flood, and you have an hour to retrieve a few items for safe keeping – what would they be and why? Typically when I pose this question to staff members they respond, “All of it!” Which is a natural response, although completely impractical. In a disaster you need to think and act fast, which is why you need to think about these issues before one occurs.

#### **[SLIDE – IDENTIFYING RISKS]**

By going through the process of writing your disaster plan, you will identify what are the main threats to your collections, what can be done to mitigate those threats, and what are the collections that are most critical to your institution and its mission and would be irreplaceable after an emergency.

The best starting point for any disaster plan is to collect information regarding your institution.

#### **[SLIDE INSTITUTIONAL INFO]**

- This includes names and contact information for staff members and key personnel
- The names and contact information of your disaster response team,, which may or may not be the same as your staff members

- And a written summary or checklist that indicates all the types of collections housed in your institution. For example, a historical society may have paintings, furniture, textiles, decorative arts, tools, books and other archival materials, but also educational collections including hands-on materials. You probably wouldn't want people mistakenly rescuing your reproduction kitchen wares and leaving an original Gilbert Stuart painting in harm's way. The staff needs to know what your collections include if they are going to be able to help protect and preserve them when disaster strikes.

As part of documenting your institutional information, your disaster plan must address your facilities, and here I am referring to not only the building itself, but what threats are near your institution.

#### **[SLIDE - FACILITY INFO]**

- This includes documenting the location of all your emergency shut-offs, water, gas, oil, electric, sprinkler systems
- Knowing the location of your fire alarm boxes
- Knowing the location and type of fire extinguishers in your institution
- Knowing the location of smoke and heat detectors
- Knowing the location of the alarm system – motion sensors and window break alarms

#### **[SLIDE - IMAGES OF THREATS NEARBY]**

You also need to address if there are any nearby threats to your collection

- Are you in a flood plain or near a river
- Do you have frequent power outages
- Are you located near hazardous materials or industries
- Are you located in an area prone to civic disturbances.

For example, if we consider the public buildings in Boston that were near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, they may have been accustomed to the crowds and the potential for additional patrons on Marathon Day, but I wonder how many had planned for a terrorist attack? And as we have learned recently, no community, whether large or small, is immune anymore.

By addressing these natural and environmental threats you can craft a disaster plan that addresses the specific needs of your institution.

A good disaster plan should also address risks that are directly associated with your building. Whether your institution is based in a historic structure or new construction, no building is without its problems, but it's important to identify these issues and how they can impact your collections.

#### **[SLIDE – BUILDING RISKS]**

- Are your collections at risk of water damage due to leaky roofs or basements that flood,
- Are your collections flammable – for libraries and museums, the answer is definitely yes

- Do you have an HVAC system and does it work properly – if it doesn't failures can lead to mold outbreaks,
- security – do you have policies to protect your collection from theft or vandalism, is their sufficient supervision of patrons,
- Do you have issues with pest and rodents, and if so do you have a remediation plan
- how well are your collections stored – are your shelves anchored or braced to prevent tipping, are collections stored on the floor, are valuable items near windows?

### **[SLIDE – EMERGENCY UTILITIES FLOOR PLAN]**

Once you have identified the risks to your building and collections you can prioritize them and develop a mitigation plan so they will not be a threat to your collection. For example, most collections in your institution are flammable, that can't be changed, but what steps have you taken to mitigate this threat? Do you have a sufficient number of smoke and heat detectors? Do you have a fire suppression system, such as sprinklers or hand-held fire extinguishers, and are they inspected regularly to make sure they are in working order? Do you have cigarette disposal cans outside your building to make sure they are extinguished appropriately so as not to start fires near the building? As conservators like to say, they can salvage items that get wet, they cannot save items that are burned

### **[SLIDE – CLOSING PROCESURES W/ALARM]**

Another item to look at regarding your building is opening and closing procedures. It's easy to forget a step or two when rushing to close for the evening, but providing staff with daily checklists to follow will help make sure all areas of your building are secure. A checklist insures that anyone responsible for opening or closing your facility has looked at the same areas on a daily basis. The benefit to having a checklist is that if there is a change, if the coffee pot was left on, if a window was left open, you would be able to identify when it occurred and address the problem accordingly.

### **Question**

We've covered a lot of points regarding documenting your facility. Let's look at some of the questions that are coming in.

Once you have documented your institution and facility information, the next step in your disaster plan is to begin to develop your response and recovery plan. This part of the plan will include

### **[SLIDE – RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PARTS]**

- information on your disaster response team
- salvaging your information technology tools (your computer catalogue, internet access, etc.)

- determining how to relocate your institution and its services if your building is not usable
- determining the salvage priorities for your collections and institutional records
- creating evacuation and emergency procedures
- designating a command center or temporary work space
- and of course in any disaster you need to have copies of your insurance policy and know what your insurance policy will cover – and this is for your building and your collections.

### **[SLIDE – DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM]**

Every emergency requires a disaster response team, this should include staff members that can think clearly in a crisis, they need to be able to respond and get to the site quickly (think about the blocked roads last week due to fallen trees), each team member needs to have a specific responsibility and know what it is and be ready to do it when an emergency occurs. It's important to note that the members of your disaster team may not follow your organization's hierarchy. I'm sure all of us can think of people who are great with day-to-day operations, but are not the best person in a crisis. Your disaster team should also include any non-staff members, such as personnel from town departments and board members who will be essential in recovering from a disaster.

### **[SLIDE – COMPUTER BACK UP]**

So many institutions store critical data and information electronically, with the result that in a disaster institutions need to have a plan on how to protect their electronic data. These files can include institutional, staff, and financial records, catalogue records, scanned collections and “born-digital” collections.

### **[SLIDE – Electronics]**

Your disaster plan should include information on

- how and when your electronic files are backed up and where they are kept. It is strongly advised to keep one up-to-date back-up of all electronic files off-site, so that it is safe in the event of an emergency and accessible for recovering lost information.
- You should have a list of your equipment, both hardware and software so that if anything is damaged or lost it can be replaced.
- You should also prioritize your salvage issues – if there are any items for which there is no back-up (and you should work towards rectifying that if it is an issue), than they should be salvaged first.
- This is also where you should address what your contingency plans are to relocate your facilities so that the institution can continue to operate while salvage efforts are happening with the building and collections.

While we typically consider collections as the most critically important items in a disaster salvage, the information and records that are crucial to the institution's daily operations are also a high priority. Here you would document what administrative records are critical to getting your institution back up and running as soon as possible, but remember your collection files – your accession records, deed of gifts, etc. are also critical to your institutions recovery.

### **[SLIDE – SETTING COLLECTION PRIORITIES]**

The next step in planning for responding to a disaster is probably the hardest part of the disaster plan – setting collection priorities. This is probably one of the most difficult parts of your plan to write, but also one of the most important. When an emergency occurs there may be very little time to decide what collections to save. At that moment you do not want to waste any time deciding, or arguing, over what to salvage. By creating a priority list as part of your disaster plan your institution will be able to concentrate its energies on rescuing the most important collection materials.

### **[SLIDE – SETTING COLLECTION PRIORITIES, list ]**

There are several ways to begin setting these priorities.

- **[click]** If your institution has a collection management policy, this document can help you determine some of your priority collections based on your mission statement and your collecting parameters.
- **[click]** You can also begin by having department heads create a priority list for their collections. Often the most common disasters, such as a water leaks, will only impact one collection.
- **[click]** By having departmentalized prioritization lists, your disaster response team can work together to salvage the most important items in that department.
- **[click]** However, an institution-wide collection priority list should be created from these departmental ones, and this is where some fierce negotiations or even arm wrestling may occur.

### **[SLIDE – ARCHIVAL BOXES AND SHELVES]**

When setting these priorities, think of salvaging collections, not individual items. In an emergency there is rarely time to grab individual items, unless they are paintings or pieces of furniture that are critical to your mission. If your collection includes the personal library of Noah Webster – don't try to grab specific books, but rather house these books in boxes that are well labeled and can be retrieved quickly in an emergency.

## [SLIDE – EACH GUIDELINE]

When working on setting collection priorities here are some guidelines that can be used to determine a collections importance or significance. Not every point will apply to all institutions, but hopefully these are helpful to consider.

- **[click]** *Use* – What collections are used the most by patrons and researchers, and do they support the mission of your institution.
- **[click]** *Uniqueness* – This generally refers to items, such as archival documents, art work, local history items, material culture, that are considered unique and irreplaceable, and therefore would be a high salvage priority.
- **[click]** *Legal responsibility for retaining records* – If your institution is responsible for maintaining any records for which there are government retention and disposition schedules than these records would be a high salvage priority.
- **[click]** *Availability of replacements* – This is a point for our libraries to consider. Even in general circulation collections there may be titles that are out-of-print. If that is the case, determine whether newer additions are available and if they would be acceptable. Hard copies of newspaper may be lost, but they may be available on microfilm. If microfilms are lost, there may be digital formats available.
- **[click]** *Cost of replacement vs. cost of salvage* – sometimes the cost of replacement is cheaper than salvaging, sometimes it's not. This is when you would apply what I like to call the “Danielle Steele Rule.” You do not go through the effort and cost of freezing and drying the works of Danielle Steele, and other contemporary authors whose works are replaceable.
- **[click]** *Scholarly value* – here you want to identify any materials or records that are valuable for scholarly research. This is where the information that is contained in your local history collection may be considered irreplaceable and a high salvage priority.
- **[click]** *Value to Your Institution* – do you have any items in your institution that are one-of-a-kind or directly related to your history or your founders? These may be high salvage priorities.
- **[click]** *Formats that are vulnerable to damage* – this applies to any items that need to be recovered quickly if they are to be successfully salvaged – this includes textiles, photographs, microfilm, cds, lps. If rescued quickly these materials can be salvaged and returned to original or near original condition.

- **[click]** *Length of time in adverse conditions* – This is part two of the point we just discussed – For example, if photos, negatives, microfilm, cds, lps are wet for an extended period of time, they cannot be salvaged, and attention should be directed to a collection which can be rescued and restored.
- **[click]** *Loan items* – if your institution has any items on loan, whether its artwork, or collections, whether they are pertinent to your mission or not, since it is not your property this has to be made a high salvage priority.

### **[SLIDE – FLOOR PLAN]**

A useful addition to this section would be a floor plan of your building. On it you can highlight the areas where important and high priority collection items are stored or displayed. It's also a good idea that once you have determined your collection salvage priorities to use a small piece of reflective tape on the storage container or the accession tag, and if there is time to retrieve the item, the reflective tape would be a way of locating and identifying them, particularly if there is no power.

### **Question**

We've covered a lot of points regarding documenting your collections. Let's look at some of the questions that are coming in.

### **[SLIDE – INSURANCE]**

Insurance. This is a complicated subject, and worth it's own presentation, but as a institution it's important to

- **[click]** know what insurance policies there are,
- **[click]** who holds them,
- **[click]** what's covered, and
- **[click]** what documentation is required in the event of an emergency.
- **[click]** Typically there should be one policy for the building and its mechanicals and another for collections.
- **[click]** It's also a good idea to have an agent of the insurance company visit your institution and review your building, facilities and collections. Some institutions have run into issues with their coverage because the insurance company has not reviewed the policy or visited the location in years.

During my years in disaster response for a regional conservation lab, every insurance company I dealt with insisted on reviewing the value of every item damaged and its relevance to the institution. If you're not able to make the case for its salvage, don't expect your insurance company to cover the cost for conservation.

### **[SLIDE – EVACUATION ROUTES, STAFF LOG]**

As public buildings I doubt there is a institution in the state that does not have posted floor plans that indicate evacuation routes and exits, but has your institution designated staff members to check that patrons have left a floor or area in an emergency? Do you have plans for evacuating disabled people? As part of insuring safe evacuation of your building, it's a good idea to have a staff log and visitor log for special areas. Libraries can be a difficult area to clear out, because of the number of patrons spread throughout the building, but by recording what people are in the library, such as which staff members are in the building at any given time, and if any patrons are in special or restricted areas, your evacuation process will proceed more smoothly.

### **[SLIDE – ASSEMBLY AREA]**

As part of the evacuation process it's a good idea to have a designated assembly area outside on the grounds of the institution. This is an area known to all staff members, sometimes marked with a sign, which is where everyone should meet – and it should be a safe distance from the building, but also where first responders will know to check on staff and patrons and learn firsthand about the type of emergency and if anyone is missing.

After the evacuation and during the recovery there may be a need for a command center or temporary location. This is a central location from which all recovery efforts are coordinated. It might also be a temporary location to keep the institution open and accessible. At least two or three locations should be identified and included in your disaster plan.

There may also be a need for temporary storage of your collections, so similarly research available and suitable areas for the temporary storage of your collections.

### **[SLIDE – AT this point in Disaster Plan]**

At this point in your disaster plan you have

- collected all the pertinent information on your institution and its building
- you have assessed the risks to your building and collections
- you have created a disaster response team and made plans for responding to and recovering from an emergency.

Now it's time to make sure you have emergency supplies in hand, and have arranged for disaster services.

### **[SLIDE – WALK THRU WITH FIRE DEPT, 1, 2, 3, 4]**

A great start is to contact your local police and fire department and invite them for a walk-through of your institution. In an emergency you will be working with your local first responders to save and secure your institution. By working together, cultural institutions and fire departments can gain an understanding of how each other works,

and dramatically increase the possibility of preserving lives, facilities and collections in an emergency.

- [click] Share your disaster plan with your local first responders
- [click] point out any areas that are a concern to you
- [click] indicate the location of high priority salvage items
- [click] but also ask them if they have any concerns regarding your building or collections.

I know many institutions are hesitant to have their local fire marshall out to inspect their building. But I encourage you to work with them. Not only can they help you make needed changes to protect your institution, collections and staff when a disaster occurs, but you can also inform them about your site so they are safe when entering your building. For example, I used to work in an 18<sup>th</sup> century house museum, and I knew that the floor of the kitchen garrett was not a load bearing floor – I needed to make sure our local fire department was aware of that. If three 200 pound men, wearing 50 pounds of gear stepped in that room, the floor would probably give way.

#### **[SLIDE – CT RIVER MUSEUM FIRE]**

Another good example, is the response to a fire at the Connecticut River Museum in the summer of 2010. The museum caught fire in the evening, after the museum was closed, the fire fighters that responded broke into teams – one team fought the fire, while the other removed collections from the museum based on what had been pointed out to them – as a result high priority items were saved and collections were not damaged by the fire.

#### **[SLIDE – EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST]**

Be sure that your emergency plan includes a list of the contact information and phone numbers, other than 911, for your first responders. This part of your plan should also include the contact information for your utility companies, alarm company, electrician, plumber, locksmith, gas or oil company, etc.

#### **Question**

Let's see if anyone has questions regarding working with first responders.

#### **[SLIDE – RECOVERY SERVICES]**

Recovery services is the next item to include in your disaster plan. Do not expect that your staff and any available volunteers will be able to successfully salvage your collections. It's a very good idea to include the contact information for disaster recovery services, such as Polygon, BMS Cat, or Belfor. You don't want to use a commercial company that has not had experience working with historic structures or collections.

## **[SLIDE – REGIONAL CONSERVATION CENTER]**

Salvaging collection items is a challenging business, and only those knowledgeable in historic and artistic works, their composition and their special needs should perform triage or conservation on works damaged in a disaster. It's a good idea to include the contact information for one or two regional conservation labs in your disaster plan. These labs have the expertise to send qualified conservators to your site after a disaster or event to gauge the damage to your collections. The list provided here is of the labs in or near New York State.

## **[SLIDE – RECOVERY SERVICES – bullet points]**

You should also include the name and contact information for one or two local companies that can provide freezer trucks – wet collections, particularly those that are made of paper or textile, can be better salvaged if they are frozen immediately while they are still wet. This section should also include information on local conservators, and state resources for disaster recovery assistance.

## **[SLIDE – DISASTER SUPPLIES]**

Your plan can include a list of available disaster supplies, but better yet start your own emergency response kit. You can use a bucket, a plastic bin, or my favorite – a big plastic garbage can, preferably the kind on wheels. As you begin to collect salvage supplies you can put them in your garbage can or other container, and be sure to label it so you know what's in it and put a staff member in charge of monitoring the supplies to make sure they are replenished as needed. A list of emergency supplies is available on the COSTEP-CT website – it's a big list and its meant to include everything you might need for any emergency, but getting the basics – paper towels, plastic sheeting, plastic gloves, flashlights, extension cords, first aid kits, is a good start.

It's also a good idea to include contact information in your disaster plan for vendors of disaster response supplies. This might be your local hardware store, a nearby Home Depot, or a distributor that can provide large quantities of plastic sheeting, paper towels, fans, dehumidifiers, etc.

And in any emergency you will need access to money. So be sure your plan includes the name and contact information of people who are authorized to sign checks and move funds. Having an institutional credit card is also very important and really useful after an emergency and your plan should also include the name of individuals who are authorized to make large purchase orders.

## **[SLIDE – DPLAN]**

As you can see there are many sections in a well-written disaster preparedness and response plan. Some institutions find the task of collecting information for their disaster plan and organizing the information in a systematic fashion overwhelming. There are a number of online disaster planning templates that streamline the organization of your disaster plan information. One of the most popular is dPlan and dPlan Lite, created and managed by the Northeast Document Conservation Center. A benefit of the on-line planning templates is that it is much easier to go in and update your information on a regular basis and NEDCC updates the contact information for emergency services for you.

### **[SLIDE – Pocket Response Plan]**

And if your site does not have a disaster plan or it's woefully out-of-date – complete a Pocket Response Plan or PReP. PReP was developed by the Council of State Archivists to be used by cultural heritage institution staff members, and others who will play a role in disaster response and recovery. The benefit of the Pocket Response Plan is that it can be customized for your institution, your region, etc.. It is printed on both sides of a legal-size sheet of paper. On one side is an Emergency Communication Directory, with contact information for staff, first responders, emergency services, utilities, vendors and suppliers, disaster teams, and other essential individuals and agencies. The other side contains an Emergency Response Checklist: an organized list of those actions that each individual should take in the first 24 to 72 hours following a disaster.

The PReP is meant to complement, not replace, an institution's disaster plan. It ensures that your staff has the most essential information with them at all times. If your site does not have a disaster plan yet, the Pocket Response Plan is an important step toward becoming better prepared.

A link to creating your own Pocket Response Plan is available on the Connecting to New York's Collections website.

### **[SLIDE – CONTACT INFORMATION]**

I hope recent events and the information I covered today will encourage you to review your disaster plan, if you have one, and make sure it is up-to-date. And if you don't have a disaster plan, there is no time like the present to begin to create a plan to safeguard your institution and its collections for the next disaster. And remember we are 17 days into Hurricane Season and already there has been a storm.

Now let's see if there are any questions out there.