



foundation
for advancement
in conservation

**Protecting Cultural
Heritage**

NOTICE

Authorization to Reproduce Risk Evaluation and Planning Program Materials

Any person may reproduce any portion of this material subject to the following conditions:

- The material may be used for non-commercial purposes only.
- The material may not be modified in any way.
- Any copy of any portion of the material must credit the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation and the Risk Evaluation and Planning Program.

Please direct questions regarding authorized use of these materials to emergencies@culturalheritage.org

Risk Evaluation and Planning Program Pilot Museums Make Mitigation Happen

During assessments conducted through the pilot Risk Evaluation and Planning Program (REPP), preservation professionals and emergency responders identified ways for the participating museums to mitigate hazards and safeguard people and collections. Following the assessments in the fall of 2008, staff from the 15 pilot museums implemented simple but significant mitigation measures. Here are some examples:

Ensure a Safe Evacuation

- Clear or create a path to vital fire and HVAC control panels.
- Place flashlights in strategic spots throughout the facility and periodically check batteries.
- Post up-to-date floor plans and emergency exit routes at multiple locations throughout the facility.
- Create a map showing the location of all exits, hand-held fire extinguishers, sprinkler heads, and shut-off valves.
- Assign specific responsibilities to staff members to ensure safe evacuation of the building.
- Contact the American Red Cross or local or university health departments to conduct CPR and first aid training for staff.

Step Up Fire Protection

- Inspect and map smoke detectors.
- Install additional smoke detectors in seldom-visited areas of the building.
- Cover exposed outdoor electrical sockets.
- Consult with the fire marshal on the need for additional fire extinguishers.
- Remove hazardous materials (paint, solvents, etc.) from the building, leaving only small quantities of necessary materials in a safety cabinet away from collections.

Protect Collections

- Organize collections storage to allow optimal coverage by the fire suppression system.
- Prioritize collections for evacuation and salvage.
- Create a "crash cart" that contains basic emergency supplies like plastic sheeting, blotter paper, and gloves.

The Risk Evaluation and Planning Program, a pilot project of Heritage Preservation, was supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. REPP provided each participating institution with an evaluation of risks to its collections and is helping staff to create or update an emergency plan.

A version of this article originally appeared in Heritage Preservation's Summer 2009 Update.