

Long Term Recovery

Disaster recovery can be a long process. Institutions often must maintain daily operations in addition to rehabilitation of the collections, building, and /or site. Disaster recovery will alter existing strategic management plans and divert implementation of other projects, regardless of the magnitude of the disaster.

- Additional staff time will be needed for ongoing assessment, treatment, repair, de-accession, or replacement of institutional holdings.
- Continual assessments of both collections and priority needs will be required as the affected institution moves through phases of recovery. Additional strategic planning, securing funds, and project staffing will be needed.
- Negotiating new or existing contractual agreements will likely be needed. Contractual agreements may include (but are not limited to) contractors, consultants, disaster recovery companies, insurance policies, FEMA, and shared governance agreements (e.g. historic society collections housed in county buildings).
- Additional funds will be needed for additional staff time, storage and workspace, and to address building repairs and collections needs (treatment and re-housing).
- Damaged collections may require isolated storage and designated workspace. This may necessitate altering existing space allocation or securing satellite storage facilities.

Value of Preparedness

Pre-disaster actions will improve the success of disaster recovery. Undertaking institutional assessments, buildings and collection protection and staff training are imperative. Well-managed collections are better protected through good organization, identification, and housing.

A well-developed institutional disaster plan will suggest systematic long-term recovery options and resources. Pre-identification of resources, such as suppliers, services, insurance, and funders will make recovery easier, faster, and less stressful. Existing disaster plans will require adaptation to the specific type and size of disaster and the type and extent of damages to collections.



Well-planned salvage actions will contribute to staff skills and an understanding in balancing (sometimes conflicting) needs of salvage and recovery. Training in safety procedures and use of equipment will protect needed human resources and stamina. Training in salvage operations for cultural material will control potential loss and more extreme or secondary damages to collections.

Working with experienced heritage response professionals will provide important guidance and options for recovery as damages and needed repairs are identified and prioritized.

Funding for Recovery

Grants are commonly made available to assist after regional disasters and some foundations may offer funds for individual institutional disasters. A list of professional organizations and grantors on the AIC website: www.conservation-us.org/grants

Collecting institutions affected by an emergency event should contact the National Heritage Responders for additional response advice: 202.661.8068 or nhr@conservation-us.org