Disaster Management in the Church and Synagogue Library

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Preservation, conservation, restoration

Escalating tiers of intervention

“A stitch in time saves nine.”
Preservation is Stewardship

Respect for sacred texts and the mission of a religious library lend themselves to particular attention to stewardship of materials.
Slow disasters, fast disasters

Some disasters come like a thief in the night. Others come like the guy who hid under the bed undetected for 3 days and charged his phones. (USA Today, July 24)
Things that can go wrong

Fast and dramatic:

Vandalism

Fire, sprinkler systems

Severe weather

Water: floods, broken pipes, HVAC leak
More things that can go wrong

Slow and insidious:

- Environmental conditions
- Mold
- Embrittlement / “inherent vice”
- Ultraviolet and fluorescent light
- Bugs and rodents
- User behavior
Murphy’s Law goes digital

Fast and dramatic:
- Hard drive crashes
- Viruses and malware

Slow and insidious:
- No physical format lasts forever
- Legacy software
- Data degradation
Prevention

Security
Fire suppression, fire hazards
Facility upkeep
Stacks maintenance
Monitoring
Data backup
User education, policies
Information and communication
Case study

Scenario: You come in early one cold Sunday morning and find a pipe has burst in the ceiling over the library stacks.

If someone else found the pipe, would they know how to contact you?

Who do you call in your organization’s leadership?

How do you turn off the water?

Who do you call to deal with the plumbing? wet carpet and furniture? wet books and media? water-damaged computers?

What are your salvage priorities? What’s better off being replaced?

Where are your supplies?

Are you insured?
Don’t be these guys...

“Do something!”
Response

What - assessing damaged materials
Who - personnel, administrators and vendors to contact
Where - location of supplies
Mold

No such thing as “just a little” mold

Health hazards and damage to materials

Persistent and resilient

Gets deep into materials

Know when to call the pros.

Mold
ELI'S COMIN

[Music notation]

 Allegro Music Services: 01-278 - 0041
Action items

Round up people: leadership, volunteers to draft plan, volunteers to be contacted in case of emergency

Draft a plan. Have a firm deadline.
  Contact information
  Salvage priorities
  Outside vendors
  Communications with congregation, community

Distribute the plan. Have copies on- and off-site.

Acquire supplies. Seek donations: monetary, in-kind

Establish a schedule to assess and update your plan.
Supplies

Talas UV test cards
Onset HOBO data loggers
Power strip and extension cord
Plastic sheeting - cut some in advance; duct tape
Flashlights and batteries
Gloves, respirator masks, disposable gloves, first aid kit
Boxes, packing material, pens, pencils, markers
Utility knives, hammer, screwdrivers (Phillips and slot)
Trash bags, zippered plastic bags
Paper towels
Buckets, Shop-Vac / wet-dry vacuum
Inventory lists
Tools and Resources

D-Plan: http://www.dplan.org/
Amigos: http://www.amigos.org/
American Institute for Conservation / CoOL Conservation:
   http://cool.conservation-us.org/
Northeast Document Conservation Center:
   https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/disaster-assistance/emergency-phone-assistance
With thanks to the ALA Think Tank:
   http://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/planning-coordination/documents.htm
Risk assessment:

Risks particular to your library:
Older buildings
Climate - heat, humidity, pipe-bursting cold snaps
Climate control
Severe weather - which kinds?
Earthquakes
Fire hazards, wildfires
Questions?

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Thank you!