



Preservation Services Leaflet

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Disaster Prevention and Protection Checklist

The inspection checklist provided on the following seven pages is designed to be used as part of an institutional disaster preparedness program. Through the periodic inspections and information-gathering activities outlined here, staff can reduce an institution's vulnerability to disaster. Some of this information may be gathered in regular tours of the building, while other elements can be ascertained in conversations with others in the organization.

The information gathered is of use in two primary ways. First, some conditions will require repair, replacement, or other maintenance activity. For example, if drains are not flowing freely from the roof, a simple cleaning will remedy that condition. Or if fire extinguishers are missing from a critical area, they may be purchased and installed. Second, staff will identify some conditions that are not easily remediable. The existence of such conditions will alert the institution to vulnerabilities that must be considered in the institution's disaster plan. For example, if there is no automatic fire suppression capability, it may not be immediately installed. But this vulnerability should signal the disaster preparedness team to plan carefully for other strategies that will reduce the risk of fire.

In actual use, an institution may create its own checklists based on the frequency with which each item needs to be checked. Some will need attention only once or every few years (e.g., identifying the type of roof on the structure). Others will require annual or semi-annual inspections, as is the case with furnace and boiler inspections. Others will merit monthly or quarterly attention, such as fire extinguisher inspections and examination of the plumbing.

Many of the inspections outlined here are likely to be the duty of personnel responsible for facilities maintenance. In those cases, the repository staff need only (a) develop mechanisms for learning of remedial actions that are needed and (b) verify that the inspections are done as scheduled. Those areas not included in inspections by facilities staff should be assigned to staff in the library/archives. One individual should keep copies of the completed checklists and track progress in completing repairs and other actions noted on the forms; this may be done by the administrator responsible for the building or by the chair of the disaster preparedness committee.

Most librarians and archivists require some education in order to carry out a disaster preparedness program. A bibliography of readings (available from Lyrasis Preservation Services) will provide a good starting point. Training programs on disaster preparedness are offered by Lyrasis and other organizations throughout the country. Contact the Preservation staff at the above address for further information.

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
1. <u>Outdoor hazards:</u>			
* Railings, benches, planters, light/flag poles well anchored?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Overhanging trees/branches trimmed?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
2. <u>Building:</u>			
* No sign of cracks/seepage visible in exterior or interior walls?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Compliance with seismic, fire, electrical, and other codes?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
3. <u>Roof:</u>			
* "Sloped" or "pitched" (i.e., not flat)?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Roof covering sound? No buckling/bubbles, leaks, cracks, standing water?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Flashing/caulking intact?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Equipment on roof prohibited? or (if present) properly anchored?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
4. <u>Drainage:</u> (eaves, gutters, downspouts, scuppers, drains, interior columns)			
* Connected into sewer system? Water directed away from building footings?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Draining freely?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Good drainage around doors?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
<u>5. Windows and skylights:</u>			
* Caulking/sealants sound?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Trees/limbs trimmed away?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
<u>6. Fire safety:</u>			
* Fire-resistant structure?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Concrete flooring, with no air passages between floors?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Concealed spaces (e.g., false ceilings) identified?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Fire detection in all concealed spaces?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Stairways and pipe shafts enclosed?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Electrical wiring in good condition?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Appliance cords in good condition?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Appliances unplugged nightly?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Do staff have keys to mechanical rooms and janitorial closets?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Regular Fire Marshall visits?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
Fire Safety (continued)			
* Detection systems:			
- appropriate type(s) present?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- wired to 24-hour monitoring station?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- tested regularly?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
* Appropriate extinguishers present? Inspected appropriately and on schedule?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
* Automatic suppression system (i.e., sprinklers, Halon) present and operating?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
* Staff trained in:			
- sounding alarms?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- interpreting annunciator panels (if present)?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- notifying Fire Dept. and others as called for?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- using extinguishers?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- turning off power, HVAC, sprinklers, gas main?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- closing fire doors?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
- overseeing evacuation?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<u>7. Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system:</u>			
* Automatic shut-off capacity in event of fire?	yes no	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
Heating, ventilation (continued)			
* Furnace/boiler inspected each fall?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Air conditioning:			
- no leaks?	yes	_____	_____
- no mold present?	no	_____	_____
	yes	_____	_____
	no	_____	_____
- effective drainage from condensation-collecting pans?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
- dehumidification capacity?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
- capable of operating on exhaust to reduce smoke?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
<u>8. Stack areas:</u>			
* Shelves well braced?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* No water sources located above collections?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Books shelved snugly?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Shelving 4-6" off floor?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* "Canopies" atop shelving units?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* No valuable materials in basement?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Exits unobstructed?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Important collections away from windows?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
<u>Stack areas (continued)</u>			
<u>9. Protection from water damage:</u>			
* Pipes and plumbing well supported?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* No pipe/plumbing leaks?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Water detectors present?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Sump pumps and back-ups present?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Appropriate dehumidifiers available?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* No leakage/seepage through walls?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Valuable materials stored above ground level?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Valuable and fragile media stored in protective enclosures?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Do staff have keys to mechanical rooms and janitorial closets?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Do staff know location of water main and have appropriate tools (if needed) for shut-off?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
<u>10. Security:</u>			
* Book drops (if any) located away from building or in fire resistant enclosure?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Building exterior well lighted?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Locks/alarms on all windows and doors?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
Security (continued)			
* Intrusion detectors/alarms present and monitored 24 hours?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Effective closing procedures to ensure building is vacant?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
<u>11. Housekeeping:</u>			
* Cleaning supplies and other flammables stored safely?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Trash removed nightly?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Staff room cleaned daily and well?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Smoking prohibited?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Food and drink prohibited? And prohibition enforced?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Pest management strategies in place and effective?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
<u>12. Insurance:</u>			
* Policy up to date?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* "Acts of God" covered?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Replacement costs specified as needed?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Staff aware of records required for claim, and those records maintained safely?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____

<u>Area/Item to be inspected</u>	<u>Condition OK?</u>	<u>Action Required (Describe in detail)</u>	<u>Action Complete (date and initial)</u>
Insurance (continued)			
* Duplicate shelflist, catalog, inventory, and/or back-up computer tapes for entire collection?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
<u>I3. Construction projects:</u>			
* Responsibility for fire safety precautions clearly specified in contract?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Fire guards used in all cutting/welding operations?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Debris removed nightly?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Fire-resistant partitions used?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____
* Extra fire extinguishers on hand?	yes no	_____ _____	_____ _____