

# WATER EMERGENCY DEMONSTRATION

Presented by the Collection Management Group of the  
Rutgers University Libraries

This presentation contains audio information, please turn on your speakers.



# Introduction

- The Collection Management Group is responsible for the physical management of the Rutgers University Library's collections.
- This presentation is based upon recommendations of preservation techniques found in current literature and the collective experience of the Collection Management Group in dealing with Water Emergencies.



# What constitutes a water emergency?

- Any event where water can damage your collections, materials or equipment.



# What constitutes a water emergency?

- Leaks in the roof
- Cracked pipes



# What constitutes a water emergency?

- Floods



# What constitutes a water emergency?

- **REMEMBER: YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY COMES FIRST!**



# Hazardous materials

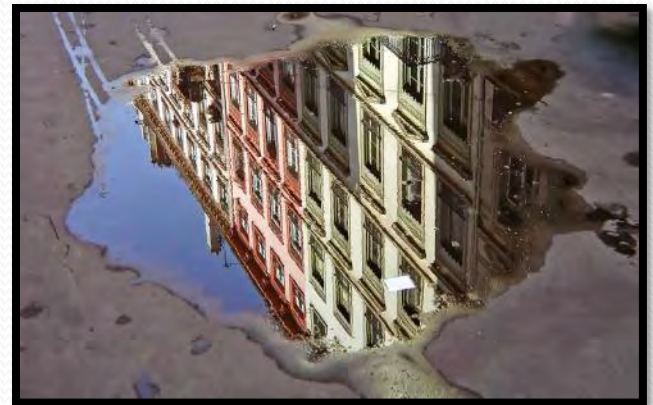
- If you suspect that flood water may contain hazardous materials such as poison, mold or toxins at a flood site do not attempt to recover materials.





# How to spot a small water emergency.

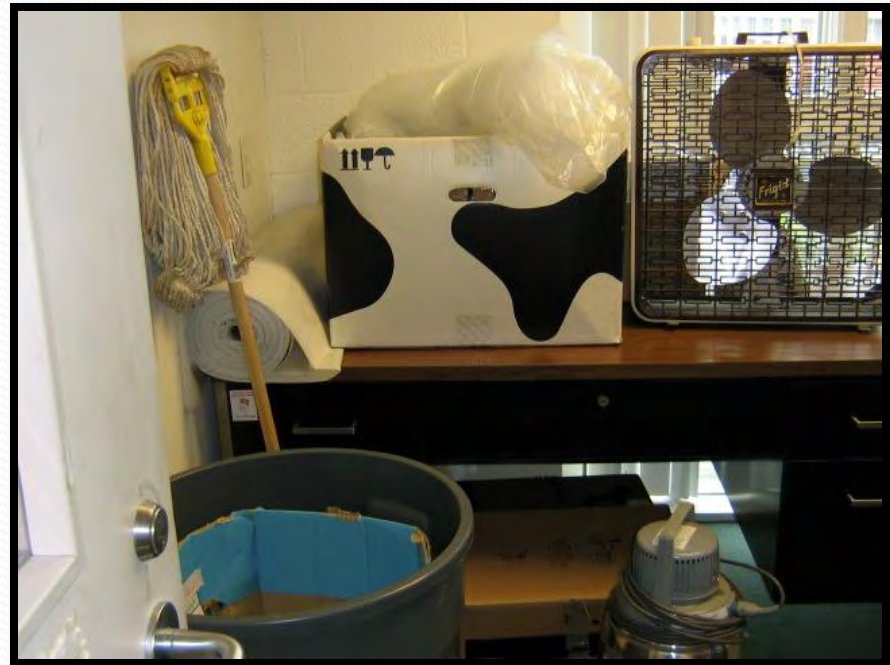
- Check for damp, discolored, dripping or bulging ceiling tiles.
- Look for puddles on the floor, especially near restrooms and water fountains.





# Preparation: Before the leak.

- Know where the *water emergency supplies* are located and how to access them.



# Emergency Kit contents

- Heavy Duty Plastic Sheeting
- Stick- to poke holes and knock down tiles
- Fans
- Tape: Caution, duct, packing
- Tape gun
- Scissors/Utility knife
- Twine or rope
- Paper towels
- Mop/Bucket
- Garbage cans/buckets
- Extension cords/Surge Protectors/Adapters
- Flashlights
- Plastic gloves



# Water Emergency Procedures

- You can NOT stop a water emergency by yourself.
- Contact a supervisor **immediately!**
- You should then take steps to protect the collection!



# Water Emergency Procedures

- **DO NOT WAIT FOR RUTGERS FACILITIES.**
- It will be up to *YOU* to protect the collection!



# Water Emergency Procedures

- Protecting the collection is **everyone's** top priority!



# Water Emergency Procedures

- Step 1: Covering with Plastic
- Step 2: Remove wet books
- Step 3: Close off the area
- Step 4: Remove wet ceiling tiles
- Step 5: Triage the Collection





# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- Pre cut plastic drapes ahead of time to fit aisles or sections.
- Cover the stacks with pre-cut plastic sheets if water is dripping on books.



# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- First unfold the sheet vertically so that it stretches out but is not unfolded horizontally.



# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- Toss one end of the plastic sheet over the stacks. A second person should be on the other side to catch the other end.



# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- Unfold the plastic horizontally across the stacks, covering the area where water is dripping on to the books.



# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- After the plastic is in place, channels must be formed





# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- Be creative!





# Step 1: Covering with Plastic

- Be sure to cover the entire stack!



# Step 2: Remove Wet Books

- Remove wet or damp books from the shelves.
- Transport to another location for evaluation.



# Step 3: Close Off Area

- Use caution tape to close off the area.
- Keep patrons safe!



# Step 4: Remove Wet Ceiling Tiles

- Remove any wet or discolored ceiling tiles



# Step 4: Remove Wet Ceiling Tiles

- Stand at a angle- away from the tile . Take a broom stick or pole and gently break the ceiling tile up into smaller pieces.
- Use the stick to control where the tile falls. **DO NOT STAND DIRECTLY UNDER THE TILE.**
- Have a bucket on hand to catch any stream of water flow from the broken tile.
- Custodial staff can be of assistance



# Step 5: Triage the Collection

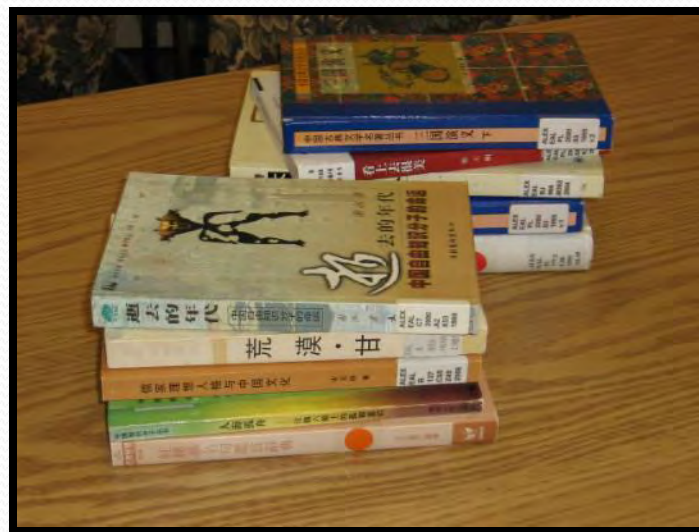
- Is the area now secure?
- If no other books are in danger, it is time to turn your attention to the wet books.





# Step 5: Triage the Collection

- In medical terms, to triage is to separate patients by the severity of their injuries. A similar process is used to separate damaged library materials.
- A selected Collection Management staff member or supervisor will be in charge of triaging the materials.



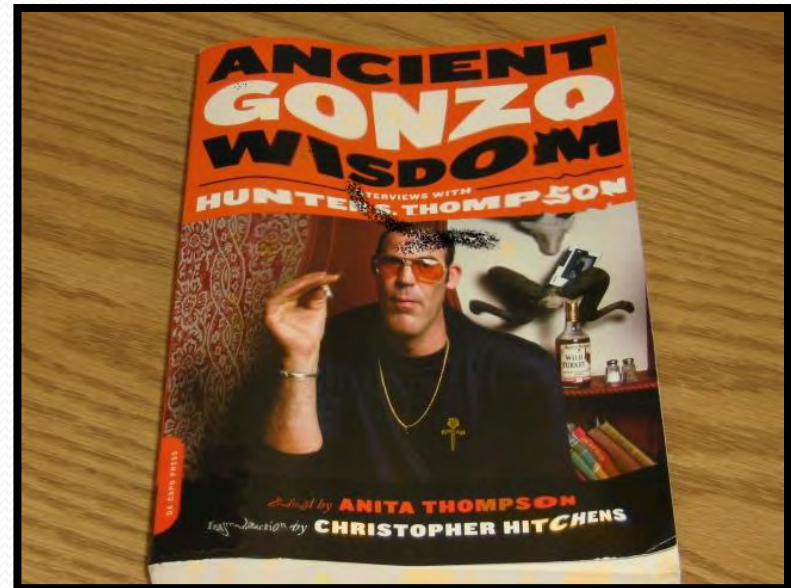
# Step 5: Triage the Collection

- What types of materials are there in the Rutgers Libraries?
  - Books and other printed materials
  - CD's
  - DVD's
  - Photographs
  - VHS tapes
  - Microfilms & Microfiche
  - And more!
- Each material is handled differently



# Step 5: Triage - Books

- Separate wet from damp books
  - Wet books are books that are saturated. These books will need special treatment.
  - Damp books are only slightly wet, or only have water on the covers.



# Step 5: Triage – Wet Books

- Insert one paper towel every 20-40 pages depending on the thickness of the pages.



# Step 5: Triage – Wet Books

- Leave in front of a fan to assist drying
- Change the paper towels once every hour
- A preservation specialist will decide if items should be sent to a professional company for freeze drying.





# Step 5: Triage – Damp Books

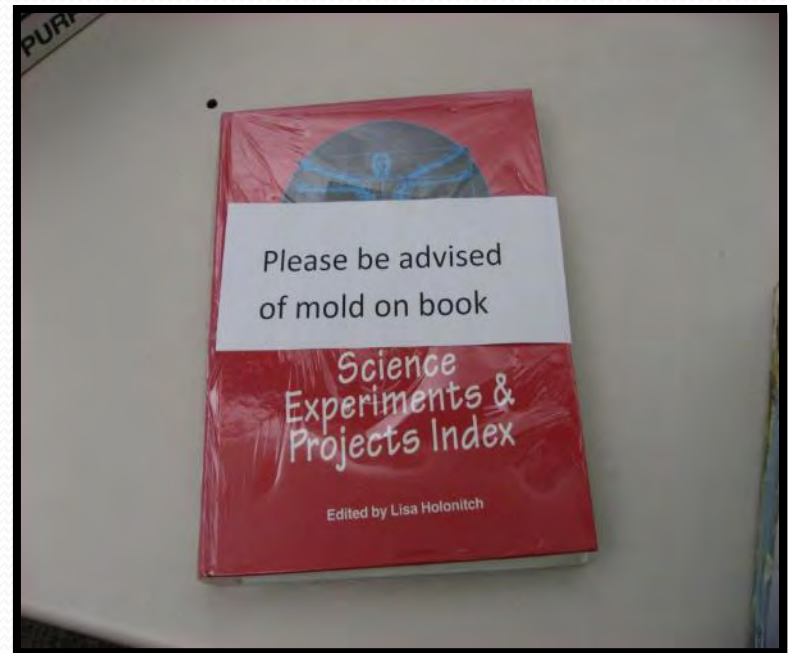
- Stand damp books on end, dampest end on top.
- Fan the books open in front of a fan.





# Step 5: Triage – Mold Concerns

- If you find mold on a book, stop drying it immediately!
- Record the barcode, call number and title of the book and then seal it in plastic wrap.



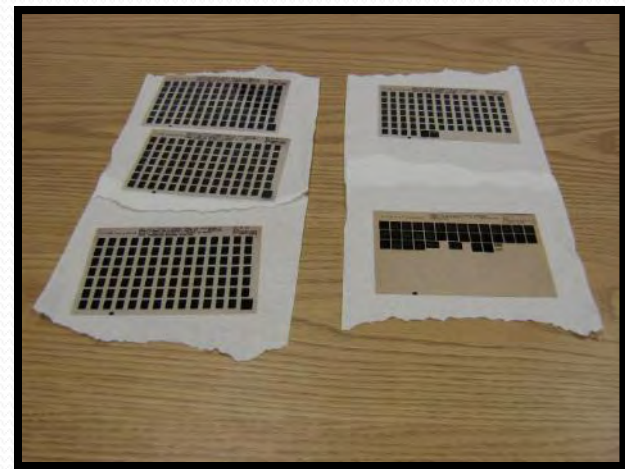
# Step 5: Triage – Mold Concerns

- DO NOT dry books on space heaters or heating vents.
- DO NOT raise the temperature in your building or in the room the books are in.



# Step 5: Triage - Microfiche

- Microfiche is more resistant to water than paper.
- Microprint are printed on a card stock or heavy paper material.
- You must lay the fiche flat on a paper towel. If you stack microfiche, they will stick together!



# Step 5: Triage - Photographs

- Handled with extreme care!
- Contact a preservation specialist immediately!
- Lay photographs out on paper towels (face up) and let them air dry. **DO NOT STACK PHOTOGRAPHS!**



# When the water stops

- Remove plastic sheets no later than 72 hours after the leak to prevent humidity from building under the plastic.
- Remove containers of water and dispose of them in an appropriate place.
- Put supplies back into kit and reorder as necessary.



# Helpful hints

- Know where the emergency kit is ahead of time, and how to access it.
- Know where the outlets are for each area and if they are operational.
- Know where empty book trucks are located.
- Know who to call to report a leak (or leaks!)





# THE END

- Thank you for viewing this water emergency presentation.
- If you have additional questions please contact a Collection Management staff member or your local Access Services supervisor.



# Resources

- Useful links:
  - [RUL Mold Tutorial](#)
  - [RUL Insect and Pest Directory](#)
  - [Northeastern Document Preservation Center](#)

For further collection management related information please visit the Access Services page on the RUL website.

[http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/staff/access\\_serv/access\\_serv.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/staff/access_serv/access_serv.shtml)

For more information regarding disaster planning, please see your collection management coordinator about their copy of the “Field Guide to Emergency Response” handbook and DVD produced by [Heritage Preservation](#).