

Disaster Planning and Preservation for Academic Libraries in Louisiana: A Survey

The survey was disseminated via e-mail to all LaLINC library directors in January/February 2000. (Several for whom no e-mail addresses were available received paper copies.) Replies were received from directors or their designees of 24 institutions.

1. In your library building (or buildings), have you experienced any of the following problems (mark all that apply):

17 Mold/mildew
10 Termites or other insects
1 Fire
15 Water (floods or leaks)
8 Asbestos
0 Other. Describe.
4 None.

[Comment: most institutions experienced multiple problems]

2. Does your library have a sprinkler or other fire suppressant system?

Yes 12 If yes, describe.

No 12

Descriptions: 1 "wet pipe"

1 sprinklers; Halon in Special Collections

1 Halon in Old & Rare Room only

1 dry pipe (added during renovation; not yet operational)

3. What kinds of preservation does your library do in-house? Mark all that apply.

9 Encapsulating
7 Deacidifying
7 Microfilming for preservation
8 Making protective enclosures, such as phase boxes
21 Repairing books
5 Binding books
4 Other. Describe.
1 None

Descriptions: 2 archival materials stored in acid-free containers

1 electronic scanning

1 interleaving; making preservation negatives of historic photographs

[Comment: nearly every institution repairs books; most engage in one or more additional preservation activities]

4. In the area of disaster preparedness and response, what do you perceive as your library's area of greatest need? Mark all that apply and list any other areas that you believe relevant.

- 16 Training for disaster response
- 16 Help writing a disaster response plan
- 6 Other. Describe
- 1 No response

Descriptions: 1 college disaster plan
 1 fire suppression system/fire alarm system
 1 funds to return to normalcy
 1 contracting outside suppliers; storing needed supplies in building
 1 contract with disaster recovery company; asbestos abatement

5. Does a member or representative of the library administration conduct a periodic safety review of your library building (or buildings) with police and fire officials?
 Yes 16
 No 8

6. Does your library have a preservation officer (a person who provides, for the library as a whole, the expertise, services, and necessary direction to enable the library to successfully preserve books and materials)?
 Yes 9
 No 15

[Comment: Three respondents who said "yes" added that the preservation officer is unofficial]

7. Does your library have a facilities manager (a person within the library organization who is responsible for planning and coordinating activities and services relating to building and equipment management)?
 Yes 12
 No 12

[Comment: Two respondents who said "yes" stated that the facilities manager is the College maintenance supervisor (or similar). Two other respondents who said "yes" added that the preservation officer is unofficial. One replied that the director fills this role; another, the administrative assistant.]

8. Does your library have a source of funds to respond to a disaster?
 Yes 2 If yes, describe.
 No 22

[Comment: One "yes" came from a respondent who, in #7, said that the library's cited Risk Management funds through the state's self-insurance program. Such funds also are available to others who may not have noted it here.]

9. Does your library have special resources, such as a "disaster closet" (a designated storage area with response supplies) or a large freezer, to respond to a disaster?
 Yes 4 If yes, describe.
 No 20

[Comment: One respondent who said "yes" described the disaster closet as containing, essentially, Visquine and tape. Two reported limited disaster response supplies on hand;

one of those has a single "Rescube."]

10. Does your library have a written plan to respond to disasters?

Yes 8

No 18 (3 have plans in progress)

11. What year was the plan written?

1 10-12 years ago

1 ca. 1990

2 1992

1 1997

1 1998

1 1999

12. Has the plan been updated?

Yes 3 If yes, when?

1 1999

2 in process

No 5

[Comment: The plans that were written 10-12 years ago, ca. 1990, 1998, and 1999 have not been updated.]

13. Is the plan reviewed and revised on a regular basis?

Yes 4 If yes, how often?

2 annual

2 biennial

1 plan currently in process will be updated every three years.

No 4

14. Was the plan reviewed and approved by the administration of your institution?

Yes 4

No 5

[Comment: Two plans currently in process will be reviewed.]

15. Does your library have a regular program of instruction for the library faculty and staff about the plan?

Yes 0 If yes, describe.

No 11

[Comment: A plan currently in process will include a program of instruction. One library reported, "For 1998-99, the library had a regular program of instruction concerning safety in the workplace. Several workshops and in-house safety video programs were held. The library plans to continue instructional programs.]

16. If your library has a written response plan for disasters, would you be willing to share it with other LaLINC libraries?

Yes 6

No 3

17. Would you like help writing a response plan for disasters?

Yes 18

No 5

No response 1

18. If you answered "yes" to 17, give us an idea of the type of help you would like. Check all that apply:

16 Examples of model plans

17 Fill-in-the-blanks disaster plan template

9 Workshop on writing a disaster plan

11 Workshop on how to react to a disaster

1 Other. Describe.

Descriptions: "Videotaped lectures on how to write a disaster plan or on how to react to a disaster would be helpful."