



**Michigan Library Association  
Emergency/Disaster Plan**

**Prepared by Deborah E. Mikula, Executive Director**

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## **EMERGENCY and DISASTER PREVENTION**

Natural disasters including floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes cannot be prevented; however, the severity of their effects can be minimized by preparing ahead of time. Human-engineered disasters including fire due to faulty electrical wiring or unattended equipment, or water damage resulting from broken pipes, damaged roofs, and malfunctioning dishwashers can often be prevented altogether. Routine inspections of a facility can reveal conditions that invite disaster. Other emergency challenges that we have no control include Medical and Epidemic/Pandemics that cause untold stress and angst.

This manual includes action plans for all emergency and disaster challenges and will be updated when new information is gained on how to handle them and keep staff and members safe.

Despite the best efforts to prevent a disaster, they happen. *MLA's Emergency and Disaster Plan* provides crucial information to minimize injury to staff and others as well as to materials and equipment.

Each staff member and the landlord will have a paper copy of this *Plan*. Board members and staff may also access the *MLA Emergency and Disaster Plan* from the website. An additional paper copy is provided to the President of the MLA Board and the Executive Director maintains a copy offsite with inventory photos in the event that MLA's website is inaccessible.

## **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

Safety is the primary consideration in any disaster. Escape routes and evacuation procedures will be clear to all staff members and visitors. If the building is unoccupied, it cannot be entered until it has been declared safe by the fire marshal or a civil defense officer.

In the best situation, outside sources of supplies and services can be contacted; however, if the disaster is widespread, they may be unavailable, which is why having some recovery materials onsite can be helpful. To avoid health risks in situations where one might be allowed in the building, it is suggested that persons wear plastic or rubber gloves during cleanup. If there is mold protective gear—surgical mask or respirator, goggles, and coveralls—are advised. When working in the aftermath of area floods, tetanus shots may also be recommended — check with the Health Department or Red Cross office for information, including available clinics.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

The Executive Director will secure budget allocations for wages, supplies, transportation and services and will ensure that documents are backed up.

## GENERAL DISASTER RECOVERY

Many disasters result in water-damage; mold can develop within two or three days. The following steps are recommended for an effective recovery operation:

### **Step 1. Assess the damage.**

How much damage has occurred?

What kind of damage is it? According to the Heritage Emergency National Task Force ([www.heritageemergency.org](http://www.heritageemergency.org)), a coalition of 41 national organizations and federal agencies, even if books and other materials are completely soaked, they can probably still be saved if they are not contaminated with sewage or chemicals.

Is the damage confined to one area or is the entire building damaged?

How much of the office has been affected?

What types of materials have been damaged?

Are the damaged items easily replaced or are they irreplaceable?

Can they be salvaged by an in-house effort or will outside help be needed?

Document the damage by a written description and by photographs.

Contacts should be made at this time with the sources of supplies and services.

### **Step 2. Stabilize the environment.**

The environment must be stabilized to prevent the growth of mold. Ideal conditions for a recovery operation are 65 degrees and 50% humidity.

Work with landlord (or contract with an independent contractor) to have on hand:

1. Portable generators, in case a power failure occurs.
2. Pumps, to remove large quantities of standing water. Exercise caution as standing water can conceal hazards.
3. Fans, for air circulation, particularly in the damaged area. Fans should preferably expel the humid air from the site. The Heritage Emergency National Task Force recommends gentle air-drying, indoors, if possible. They discourage the use of hair dryers, irons, ovens, and prolonged exposure to sunlight.
4. Thermometers, P.E.M. units to measure the temperature and humidity.

5. Dehumidifiers to help lower the humidity (need to watch temperature increases—monitor temperature and humidity constantly). As mentioned, mold can form within two days.
6. Remove damaged items; stabilize the environment and thoroughly cleanse the area. Scrub with soap and a fungicide floors, ceilings, and all furniture and equipment. Mold develops rapidly under carpeting and its padding. Only professionals should remove smoke odor or fog with fungicides or insecticides.
7. Separate damp materials: remove the contents from drawers; take photographs out of damp albums; remove paintings and prints from frames; place white paper towels between the pages of wet books.
8. Clean gently. Loosen dirt and debris on fragile objects gently with soft brushes and cloths. Avoid rubbing, which can grind in dirt.
9. Salvage photos. Clean photographs by rinsing them carefully in clean water. Air-dry photos on a plastic screen or paper towel, or by hanging them by the corner with plastic clothespins. Do not let the image come into contact with other surfaces as it dries.
10. Damp objects and items that cannot be dealt with immediately should be put in open, unsealed boxes or bags. Photos, papers, books, and textiles should be frozen if you can't get them dry within 48 hours.

### **SALVAGE PRIORITIES**

Priorities should be based on criteria such as the following:

Can the item be replaced? At what cost? Would the cost of the item be more or less than restoration? How important is the item? Is it unique?

According to most sources, 95% of all disaster damage result from water. The first decision to be made will be whether to air dry or freeze materials. Their directions for handling waterdamaged as well as for fire-damaged books and non-print materials are located at <http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/disasters/plans/isudis.html> . **UNSalvAgable**

### **MATERIALS**

Materials soaked, burned, contaminated, or otherwise damaged beyond repair must be removed. In the case of books, it will be necessary to note title pages or other available identifying matter in order to search for availability, replacement or withdrawal.

The following section of this *Emergency and Disaster Plan* will be dedicated to individual themes:

## **BOMB THREATS**

All bomb threats are to be taken seriously. **While**

### **Receiving a Bomb Threat by Phone**

- Stay calm
- Keep the caller on the phone as long as possible.
- Do not hang up the receiving phone. With a silent signal or message, try to have someone call 911 on another phone to report the phone number on which the call is received. Follow the instructions of the 911 dispatcher.
- Get as much information from the caller as possible and write it down:
  - Exact location threatened: building, floor and room;
  - Time bomb is supposed to explode; ○ Kind of bomb; ○ Listen for clues about the caller, such as accent or background noise.

### **After Receiving a Threat**

- If instructed by Administration to evacuate the building, sound the fire alarm in all parts of the building. Follow procedure for [Evacuation](#)
- Instruct people to move away from the building (at least 300 feet).
- Do not use cell phones or walkie-talkies as they may detonate a bomb.
- Do not search for the bomb; don't risk your life or that of others.
- Complete incident report form.

## **FIRE OR SMOKE**

1. If you discover a fire, explosion, or smell smoke in the building,

a. **YELL FIRE.** You may attempt to put out a fire with a fire extinguisher or by smothering it.

Fight the fire **ONLY IF:**

- You know how.
- The fire is small—**no larger than a fire in a waste basket.**
- Confined to the area where it started.
- You have a way out.
- You can work with your back to the exit.
- You have the right type of extinguisher.

- You feel confident that you can operate it effectively.

**DO NOT** fight the fire if:

- The fire is large—**bigger than a fire in a waste basket**.
- You have any doubts about fighting it.
- It is spreading beyond the area where it started.
- It could block your escape route.

b. **If you cannot put out the fire:** Call 911 and/or pull fire alarm. Alarm stations are at several exits. If you are in immediate danger, evacuate the building and call 911 from a cell phone or from a neighboring building.

c. **Notify Administration as soon as possible.** Notify Administration, but, if in immediate danger, evacuate the building and call Administration from outside the building from a cell phone or phone at a neighboring building.

2. If you hear a fire alarm, close the doors on your level and immediately evacuate the building. Meet at a designated area outside the building. If the alarm stops sounding continue evacuation and warn others who may attempt to enter the building. **Complete evacuation is required.** Leave walks and driveways open for arriving fire fighters.

3. Remember the following fire rules:

- Move away from fire and smoke.
- Use stairs only. Do not use elevator.
- Touch closed doors. Do not open them if they feel hot.
- If your clothing catches on fire, stop, drop, and roll over and over again to put out the flames.

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

Know the location of the nearest extinguisher.

### **Using the Extinguisher**

- Pull the pin.
- Aim the extinguisher.
- Spray at the base of the fire.
- Use a sweeping motion.
- Extinguish the fire completely.

**Fight the fire ONLY IF:**

- You know how.

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Confined to the area where it started.
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- It is spreading beyond the area where it started.
- It could block your escape route.

**If you cannot put out the fire:** Call 911 and/or pull fire alarm. If you are in immediate danger, evacuate the building and call 911 from a cell phone or from a neighboring building.

**Notify the Executive Director as soon as possible.** Notify Administration, but, if in immediate danger, evacuate the building and call the Executive Director from outside the building from a cell phone or phone at a neighboring building.

## **TORNADO**

1. Maintain a weather radio capable of operating both from an electrical outlet and with batteries.
2. Don't be left in the dark, have a flashlight available.
3. If someone at the building sees a tornado or if there is a tornado warning covering the area in which the office is located, do the following:
  - Instruct occupants not to leave the building. Direct occupants to proceed in a quick and orderly manner to lower level of the building and into the copy room/kitchen. This room is the designated shelter area in the building.
  - The Executive Director will check all areas of the office to make sure that all persons have gone to the room designated above.
  - Have assistance provided to persons with disabilities.
4. If winds damage the building:
  - Remain calm and assess the area.
  - Check for possible injuries. If someone is hurt, perform first aid and call 911.

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- Check to make sure everyone is accounted for. If anyone is missing, initiate an immediate search and call 911 if necessary.  
After the storm has passed, evacuate the building or the damaged parts of the building.

5. If there are other storm-related problems:

- Water leak: Evaluate and if necessary evacuate the building.
- Power outage: Activate emergency lighting.
- Phone out: Use cell phones for emergency calls.
- Other problems: Evaluate and react.

## **FLOODING**

1. Follow procedures on the Emergency Telephone Numbers list.
2. Get people out of the building.
3. Take steps to shut off water if possible
4. Protect endangered areas with plastic sheeting or other appropriate means.
5. Catch dripping water in buckets, waste baskets, etc.
6. Monitor area for water dripping from new areas. Also check adjoining areas if accessible.
7. Take necessary steps to stabilize the environment. Air should be circulating; ideal temperature and humidity are 65 degrees F and 50% RH.

### **Avoid:**

- Entering an area until it has been declared safe
- Attempting to separate books and papers that are stuck together.
- Using bleaches, detergents, water-soluble fungicides, adhesive tapes (or adhesives of any kind), paper clips, or staples on wet materials
- Using colored paper of any kind during salvage and recovery operations.
- Packing newly-dried materials in boxes or leave them unattended for more than two days.
- Placing saturated materials next to lightly damaged materials.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

1. Stay calm. The person injured or in a medical emergency is dependent on you for help.

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2. Staff should report all on-the-job injuries regardless of severity to the Executive Director immediately. The Executive Director, if present, will coordinate assistance. If the Executive Director is not present, any staff member can take the lead.

3. Do not put yourself at risk. Use latex gloves and face mask when blood or bodily fluids are present.
4. Help with minor emergencies only with the consent of the victim.
5. For major medical emergencies call 911 **Information to give to a 911 dispatcher:** a. Your name and location  
b. Brief description of problem (breathing, conscious, bleeding, etc.) c.

Victim's sex

- d. Victim's age group.

ASK 911 DISPATCHER FOR INSTRUCTIONS.

6. To avoid harming the victim:
  - a. Do not move or lift unless directed by 911.
  - b. Do not offer food or drink unless directed by 911.
7. If a staff member is injured, it is the responsibility of staff injured on the job to complete an accident report. This is the staff member's statement of how the injury occurred. The completed form should then be given to the Executive Director. The Executive Director must complete an accident report for all on-the-job injuries. All questions should be answered and the Executive Director should be specific as to how the accident occurred. Before returning to work after an injury requiring the attention of a doctor, the staff member must present a return to work form from the doctor. This form must be given to the Executive Director before the staff member can return to work.

## **PANDEMIC INFLUENZA**

MLA will follow the local, state, and federal guidelines for pandemic influenza and other outbreaks. In an emergency MLA will make every effort to disseminate crucial information to the library community and beyond, via its webpage and such social media outlets as Facebook and Twitter.

The following background information is provided in order to explain the conditions for a pandemic as well as what might occur and provide for an initial discussion of preparedness recognizing the sudden nature of a pandemic and the strain it can place on our workforce. **A pandemic may occur when three conditions have been met: 1. a new influenza virus subtype**

**emerges; 2. it infects humans causing serious illness; and 3. it spreads easily and sustainably among humans.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined phases for tracking a potential pandemic:

- **Inter-pandemic phase** -- New virus in animals, no human cases o Low risk of human cases o Higher risk of human cases
- **Pandemic alert** -- New Virus causes human cases. No or very limited human-to-human transmission o Evidence of increased human-to-human transmission o Evidence of significant human-to-human transmission
- **Pandemic** o Efficient and sustained human-to-human transmission

### **Preventative Steps**

The CDC shares that there are simple preventative actions that can be taken, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

### **If MLA Staff are Sick with Flu-like Symptoms**

- Stay home. Let Director know to see if we need to cover for you
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then immediately throw it in the trash.
- **Using disinfecting cleaners on common work surfaces will be helpful in killing germs.** This is especially important for items that are shared or commonly touched by multiple people, such as phones, computer keyboards and door handles. Staff in all areas will be called upon to assist in this process by using disposable cleaning gloves and disinfecting wipes or cleanser to clean surfaces. Clean and disinfect work surfaces and frequently touched objects daily.

**Masks are recommended for use** by members of staff, up to the point where consideration might need to be given to closing. Since person-to-person contact and airborne pathogens are thought to be the major modes of contracting the flu, there will be a concern for **touching objects** and or breathing in common space, especially where sneezing or coughing may occur.

**Pamphlets produced by local, state and national health and safety agencies should be distributed.** If a pamphlet cannot be located that is in print (the health department may have these), then the staff should develop one. The information for this can be taken from the National Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the US Health and Human Services Department of the World Health Organization.

# **EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

**Fire or life threatening emergency: 911**

The Executive Director should be contacted in the event of any type of emergency or disaster:

**Executive Director: 517-404-3533 (cell)**

After emergency personnel are contacted, the Executive Director will be responsible for contacting all MLA staff. The Executive Director will notify the MLA Board of Trustees president.

If the disaster prevents staff from approaching the office, the website will be updated remotely to inform the membership and perhaps the community, depending upon the nature of the disaster.

# **EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES TO HAVE ON HAND**

(Landlord or Clean up Contractor should be able to provide larger items as well)

- Batteries
- Boxes (flat)
- Broom
- Bucket
- Crates
- Dehumidifiers
- Drying racks
- Drying space
- Extension cords
- Fans
- First aid kits
- Flashlights
- Fungicides
  
- Generators, portable
- Hair Dryer
- Masks
- Mops
- Paper towels
- Plastic clothes pins
- Plastic sheeting
- Plastic trash bags
- Rubber gloves

Sponges  
Thermometers  
Transistor radio (weather radio)

## RESOURCES

**American Red Cross:** <https://www.redcross.org>

**World Health Organization:** <https://www.who.int>

**American Library Association, Pandemic Preparedness:**  
<http://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/pandemic-preparedness> **Center**  
**for Disease Control (CDC):** <https://www.cdc.gov>

**Ingham County Health Department:** <http://hd.ingham.org>

**FEMA:** <https://www.fema.gov>

**Heritage Emergency National Task Force.** Includes information and links to professional conservation resources; [www.heritageemergency.org](http://www.heritageemergency.org).

**U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.** *HHS Pandemic Influenza Plan.*  
<http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/>

## MLA INVENTORY

MLA recognizes that in case of a loss, it must have proof of what has been lost in order to collect on an insurance policy. In order to enable us to demonstrate proof of loss it complies with the provisions of the policy.

If at all possible, the disaster site will not be disturbed without the approval of the insurance agent. The provisions of the policy may require that the agent make an inspection prior to the undertaking of any remedial steps, either in cleaning up, removing items, or beginning treatment. At a minimum, an extensive photographic record should be maintained of the affected area and collections. Careful documentation should be accumulated, also, of all staff and volunteer labor devoted to recovery procedures, as well as contracted services and supplies, whether purchased following the disaster or previously stockpiled.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to make sure that a current inventory of the collections, equipment, furnishings, and facilities is maintained.