



On the Record

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September is Preparedness Month

September is Preparedness Month, a great opportunity to develop or review your office's Disaster Plan and to evaluate your records storage areas for risk.

Creating a Disaster Plan for Records

If your disaster response and recovery planning does not include your records, there are a lot of resources, especially in Massachusetts, to help you incorporate them.

COSTEP MA

COSTEP MA is a group whose mission is to build and foster emergency planning process that serves the emergency management and cultural communities (including records creators) and addresses disaster mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. COSTEP MA has a curated list of resources available at <https://mblc.state.ma.us/costepma/index.php/cultural-institutions/mitigation/planning/>.

Massachusetts Archives and Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)

Any state agency or municipal office that has questions about disaster planning for records or is responding to an emergency that impacts records can reach out to the Massachusetts Archives for assistance. The main number is 617-727-2816 and the general email is archives@sec.state.ma.us.

Municipal libraries in Massachusetts can also reach out to the MBLC for support. Details on their Disaster Assistance programs can be found at <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/disaster-assistance/index.php>.

Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC)

NEDCC has extensive resources to support disaster preparedness, including the dPlan planning tool, and a 24/7 Collections Emergency Hotline number (1.855.245-8303). More information on these programs and other online resources is available at

<https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/disaster-assistance/>

Council of State Archivists (CoSA)

CoSA recently published a series of Emergency Preparedness Guidance Documents available at <https://www.statearchivists.org/connect/blog/2020/05/new-emergency-preparedness-documents-available/> and they held webinars on the topic <https://www.youtube.com/user/StateArchivists/search?query=emergency>

Storage Basics for Boxed Records

There are some basic preventive measures that you can take to mitigate the risk to your records in case of emergencies and disasters. Records often end up in attics and basements, but these locations often have the highest risk of water damage due to flooding, pipe leaks and pest incursions.

- Store boxes off the floor in case of flooding.
- Be aware of where the pipes are in your building; watch out for leaks that could impact records.
- If fiscally possible, purchase boxes that have multiple layers of cardboard on the sides; boxes can absorb water and keep it from reaching the records.
- Keep records in storage areas that do not have big temperature shifts.
- Monitor the humidity in your storage areas.

E-Records Day coming in October

The Council of State Archivist (CoSA) is hosting their annual Electronic Records Day activities on and around October 10, 2020. E-Records Day is designed to raise awareness among government agencies, the general public, related professional organizations, and other stakeholders about the crucial role electronic records play in their world. This year, CoSA will be focusing E-Records Day on resources for working digitally from home. Follow the CoSA blog at <https://www.statearchivists.org/connect/blog/> for details as they become available and keep an eye open for hashtag #ERecsDay.