

PLANNING FOR DISASTER RECOVERY IN HIGH-DENSITY, HIGH-BAY LIBRARY STORAGE

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Although planning for response and recovery of library materials after a disaster has been practiced by preservation and conservation professionals for many decades, many libraries that now have “high-density” storage facilities for low-use book storage are finding that our standard plans for disaster response are completely inadequate in an environment where books are shelved 9 to 12 metres high, ordered on shelves by size to maximize space, and findable only by a series of barcodes in a database linking row numbers to shelf numbers to box numbers to item number. Not only does this situation present enormous physical challenges for the rapid removal of materials, but also presents significant challenges to maintaining intellectual access to materials during and after the recovery effort.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the United States has drafted a disaster response and recovery plan specific to this high-density book, manuscript, and media storage environment and is seeking to share our perspectives and encourage dialog with other cultural heritage institutions about how to best plan for disaster recovery from such a challenging material storage environment.

Keywords

books, disaster recovery, storage, high-density, disaster planning