GEORGE P. & SUSAN PLATT CADY LIBRARY

Disaster Plan - Public

Adopted by the Board 10/20/2026

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.

Basic measures including unplugging equipment when not in use, cleaning, and ensuring that work areas are clutter-free, help to prevent disasters.

Maintaining proper temperature and humidity (i.e., 68 degrees; 50% humidity) will help preserve the Cady Library's archives.

To ensure staff safety and minimize injury during a disaster, all staff members must know the following:

Layout of the building;

Location of all fire extinguishers and alarms and how to operate them;

Fire exits and alternate escape routes (they need to be clearly marked);

Evacuation procedures (need to be practiced regularly).

DISASTER PLAN

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

Contact information for supplies and equipment necessary for library disaster recovery are provided in this document. Board members and staff may access the Cady Library Disaster Plan from the employee manual, policy binder, and/or website. An additional paper copy is provided to the President of the Cady Library Board; the Director and Nichols Town Supervisor maintain a copy offsite in the event that the Cady Library and or its website are 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—is 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.

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), 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 the town 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.

Also from the Heritage Emergency National Task Force:

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 Illinois State University, 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 water-damaged 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 (including removal from FLLS in the case of cataloged items).

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

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

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

RACE:

Rescue—ensure that everyone is out of the building. At the same time (preferably one person does this while another staff is rescuing)--

Alarm—pull alarm; call 9-1-1

Control—if possible, use ABC fire extinguisher

Evacuate—get out via the stairs or fire escape

- Fire: Take Stairs.
- Tornado: Take stairs to the basement; under staircase is safest location.
- Earthquake: Door jams are safest. Do not attempt to go outside, contrary to popular belief.

Preliminary Control Procedures from Illinois State University:

1. Follow procedures on the Emergency Telephone Numbers list.
2. Get people out of the area.
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 floors above and below and 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 open a wet book (one tear costs at least one dollar to mend.
- Attempting to close an open book that is swollen.
- Using mechanical presses on wet materials.
- Attempting to separate books 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.
- Removing covers from books or scores.