
Background
In September 2011, Diane Geraci announced the membership and responsibilities for the MIT Libraries’ reshaped Disaster Response Team. (Previously, disaster response activities were carried out exclusively by Curation & Preservation Services staff.) The new team got underway with its first training session on October 28, 2011. This report summarizes the Team’s first year.

Membership
- Team Coordinator & Response Leader: Ann Marie Willer, Preservation Librarian
- Response Leader: Nancy Schrock, Conservator
- Facilities Administrator: Mike Smith
- IASC Representative: Nora Murphy
- CSM Representative: Millicent Gaskell
- IDLA Representatives: Christine Quirion and Greg Padilla (nights)
- New members added November 2012: Jeremiah Graves, IDLA; Nancy McGovern, CPS (ex officio)

Responsibilities
1. To assist with disaster response and recovery
   - The Preservation Librarian and/or Conservator will typically lead disaster response, and during work hours Curation & Preservation Services employees will provide assistance. Other Disaster Team members will be asked to assist when possible in order to maintain their skills and broaden their experience.
   - The Team Coordinator will coordinate coverage for non-work hours.
2. To lead a small- to medium-scale disaster response (e.g. leak in the stacks) in the absence of both the Preservation Librarian and Conservator
3. To assume defined leadership roles (as assigned by the Team Coordinator) during a large-scale disaster
4. To participate in an assessment of the new disaster team format after its first year, and periodically thereafter on a schedule to be determined.

Training
Each team member was given a clear plastic envelope containing the Libraries’ disaster response guidelines, the Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel, and the Field Guide to Emergency Response. The latter was customized with information and phone numbers for MIT-specific resources.

Each of the first three “responsibilities” listed above was addressed in a separate training session, led by Ann Marie Willer and Nancy Schrock. These were held on 10/28/11 (included a hands-on salvage exercise), 11/18/11, and 4/6/12. At a fourth meeting, held on 11/30/12, a representative of Rapid Refile (a document recovery company) presented on vendor actions and salvage capabilities during large-scale disaster response efforts.
**Disasters**

The MIT Libraries did not have any disaster response needs for the first 11 months of the disaster team’s tenure. This dry spell (pun intended) was unprecedented and meant that the team had little opportunity to apply and practice their training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Location &amp; Description</th>
<th>Materials damaged</th>
<th>After hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Archives “Pit” 14-0710</td>
<td>Water seeping under wall due to leak in steam room next door</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Hayden basement</td>
<td>Water leak above aisle 104A</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Hayden basement</td>
<td>Water leak above aisles 87A-88B</td>
<td>320</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Hayden basement</td>
<td>Water leak above aisles 88AB-89AB</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In two events, the deliberately diverse membership of the disaster response team was helpful. During the July event in Archives—which occurred on a Saturday—IASC representative Nora Murphy was familiar with the space and knew whether there were materials stored on the floor that were in danger. When Team Coordinator Ann Marie Willer phoned Christine Quirion, the IDLA rep, Christine was familiar with staff habits and the summer schedule of library hours and could predict that a member of her staff would be on the scene within 30 minutes. She was able to provide the best phone number and group email address to reach the Hayden desk staff.

After the first September leak, CSM rep Millicent Gaskell contacted subject specialists and provided feedback on the value of the damaged chemistry journals and their availability in electronic form. This enabled CPS staff to focus salvage efforts on items that were irreplaceable or prohibitively expensive to replace.

Three team members contributed approximately 30 minutes each to hands-on response activities during the second September leak. It was very helpful to have even this small amount of help to augment the recovery efforts of CPS staff members.

**Assessment**

The fourth responsibility outlined for the new disaster team was to complete an assessment after its first year. Feedback was gathered from team members via an online survey and discussed at the 11/30/12 meeting. The following action items rose to the top:

- Create a priority list of collection materials to guide response efforts, especially for LSA
- Make duplicate response packets for team members to keep at home for after-hours use
- Rank or differentiate salvage vendors to facilitate decision-making during disaster response
- Document roles within MIT Libraries for coordination during larger emergencies
- Discuss inventory control with AMES; how can we best track library materials sent to vendors?
- Publicize the Libraries’ disaster preparedness resources to new library staff
- Consider training additional library staff for daytime disaster response. The current members of the Disaster Response Team are frequently in meetings and unavailable to participate in disaster response during business hours.
- Consider adding a weekend employee from IDLA, an SCS employee, or an AMES employee