
Research Papers



Emergency Plan For Library before Disaster

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Abstract

Care and maintenance of Library building and library collection including equipment are vital aspect of librarianship right from the beginning. This article dealing with the library security as emergency plan. Regarding emergencies related all topics are covered in this artical for the benefit of professionals of libraries. It include the planning of emergency, desigring, precautionary measure, saving property etc. point higlighted. This article may be useful to all researchers & library professionals.

Introduction :

Emergency - as the word reflects a sudden happening - it needs sudden and quick actions even. Library emergency situations can affect a large or small areas. It can damage the whole library or a few books. Emergencies may be of varied and several types. It may include natural as well as man- made. It ranges from ice-storm to faulty wiring and even technological data losses. It can damage or destroy important materials as well as can endanger human lives too. The only way to get rid of all such losses is that anticipation of those emergencies and installation of preventive measures. Some-times such happenings are simply unavoidable and material in library is required to shift by different means. Advance supply of recovery materials too can mitigate the damages. Some staff members may feel anxious but they must not be the same they should deny the seriousness of the problem and act rationally. Hasty actions in such cases may be harmful rather

than beneficial if they are wrong.

Co-ordination with each other at the accidental place may really save a library. Staff members are expected to posses necessary knowledge to put in action at emergent situations. Creation of an emergency planning in advance, training of staff members, regular inspection of tools needed for adequate emergency action comes under the title of emergency preparedness.

1. Planning

A step towards avoidance of emergency actions is the 'emergency planning'. This process is undertaken by every institution including libraries. Basically this planning process include designs to :

- (i). Evaluate reason of Building disaster.
- (ii). Preventive planning for disasters
- (iii). Reason of emergencies, identification.
- (iv). Alternative recovery after the

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emergencies are over.

(v). Advance measures for emergencies.

(vi). Effective and alert library staff.

Basically what we need towards emergency planning is a commitment to the institution in which we serve. An institution must approve the expenditures of time and money necessary for drafting and implementation of such plan as well as training of the staff members. 'An emergency planning committee should include staff members and librarians as their head. Such committee depending upon the size of the library may be inclusive of library professionals, conservator and technical assistants. Other additional officials may be police and other helps for different manual jobs to be undertaken. Such committee should be appointed by the Libraries the responsibility lies with the Superior Officials of respective sections. The Secretary of such a committee must be responsible. He should be able to decide the objectives of the committee, establishing necessary budgets sanctions of expenditure etc. A library must be provided with a set timetable for completion of each task or goal of emergency action as well as testing and updating of before plans. An emergency planning committee can be held responsible for following reasons, the Committee should do the survey of the library and sort out the precautionary measures:

2. Emergency Planning for precautionary measure :

Library Security

- (i). Defining of scope and plan of the committee. Explain ing the types of emergencies and its coverage protection.
- (ii). Assessment of building structure regarding disaster points. A clear assessment of dangers to library collections, its identification and preventive actions.
- (iii). A study of environment of location & preventive precaution should be taken.
- (iv). Setting of recovery procedures for different kinds of collections.
- (v). Training of staff members including the committee members about emergency preventions and response.
- (vi). Timely identification of the financial implications such as insurance coverage's and commercial recovery services etc.
- (vii). Make a power and duties of security staff and other.
- (viii). Daily checkup by the responsible staff and report carried out by vigilance team.

A well-checked-out plan should be

circulated among the committee members and staffs so that valuable suggestions for improvement of it can be had for its proper implementation. The emergency planning committee should make an assessment of all these factors. Probable emergencies and effects of it should be considered under the title of "Risk assessment".

3. Risk Assessment :Some factors are the risk assessment as under :

- (i) Frequency of the occurrence of post problem such as roof leaking, pipe leaking causing water damages to collections; Problem with the geographic location (i.e. the building on a flood plain);
- (ii) There may be a risk associated with some neighbor-hood businesses even (for example a restaurant);
- (iii) Deficiencies within the building construction and its structure. Reliability of the roof electrical wiring system etc;
- (iv) Effectiveness of detection and alarms systems (e. g. fire, water security);
- (v) Other factors such as maintenance, house keeping and pest management controls should be included.

These are all the facts, which can be considered consciously for the assessment of risk by Emergency Action Committee. Till the risks have been identified, preventive measures cannot be implemented. Recommendation may be of several types which may include long term and short term solutions. Provision of long term schedules and timetables for repairing or building and inspections are necessary.

4. Saving of Property

Though all and every collection and books are valuable but emergency planning of most valuable and rare collections should be kept prior to all. In the emergency planning it should be determined primarily that which are such a things to avoid confusion during a crises; whole staff department. There is no set range or classes of things to which we should give priority can be given to important records including account records, payroll, legal records etc. To restart all the operations, it is really important to have all above information at hand. Other high priority measures may be variable as : Rare and unique collection ; Books / materials which helps to achieve a library's objectives ; Material used by researchers which has a very high frequency of use; Collection which if lost are really difficult to replace ; Materials which may damage if not done

with proper treatment such as leather bindings. Equipments & other electrical equipment care should taken.

5. Emergency Plan

It is the responsibility emergency committee to identify and list the sources of necessary supplies, services and other equipments before the accident occurs. An update information about the equipments, their sources, addresses and telephone numbers for repairing purposes should be always at hand. Facilities and equipments such as fans, freezing facilities, fire extinguisher, vacuum freezing etc should be considered first from salvage point of view. Members of Emergency Action Committee should keep this information with them . But the possibility of accidental happenings cannot be denied. The whole recovery process be divided into four stages : (i) Preparation to deal with affected materials and equipments; (ii) Returning of books /collections to their proper places after freezing or drying is over ; (iii) Replacement of books includes long term process for the damaged materials ; (iv) Weeding theft, misplacement and mutilation of book.

It is always good to assign responsibility for specific response and recovery efforts in advances. A committee member or librarian put himself full in the implementation and recovery plans. Priority must be given to establish normal conditions by reducing the temperature and control over humidity etc. Actual assessment should be prepared with the help of written / photographic or video documentation or CCTV. It may prove very essential when there will be a claim for insurance is to be made. Later on under the policy of recovery several method can be used. It may be : Air drying ; Freezer drying ; Vacuum freeze drying, Fire alarm etc.

Emergency plan must be prepared by taking into consideration the information about prevention activities and response to an emergency form. This plan must be prepared by the 'Emergency Planning Team' and should be supervised and approved by its Chairman of library committee. A good emergency plan should include some basic concepts such as introduction of the plan, its objectives etc. Introduction should be inclusive of purpose and scope of the plan, tips, guidelines for using the plan, periods on which regular updating is to be made and their proper location in the library. The emergency information sheet should be always ready before calamities. There must be some communication methods and

modes of communication so that the accidental news can be circulated immediately to senior officials. Collection priorities should be inclusive of prevention and protection measured. These measures should be tested and inspected; at the same time a check-list comparing the follow-up actions and their up-gradation should be prepared.

6. Action Before Disaster

Pre-disaster actions should include if there is warning system for the approaching disaster and if so them shifting of materials to the proper and aids, turning off gas, water, electrical power etc, should be done at prior basis. Instructions should be there for response and recovery from water, fire insect attacks, thefts, mishandling etc. Inspection checklists should include detection systems, electrical system, leakage etc. Response and recovery instruction for offer form of media such as computer records, electronic records, photographic, video, films, books, paper collections etc. should be described in the plan. Apart from all these steps, some other things which needs equal importance to be imparted are treatment options, insurance information, building plans, supplier and service lists, accounting information etc.

7. Security

It is clear that every institutions, which has got a collection of things experiences theft and mishandling of the same. Therefore a basic security policy along with preventive activities and proper response procedures is of utmost importance in case of library too. These security preparations can be taken as a part of the basic emergency plans are alike to the security risks and preventive measures as well as specification of procedures for response should be explained in this plan. Security of collections can be really improved with the help of rules and regulation for staff/patrons basic building maintenance etc. Check on theft and legal uncertainties may help a librarian to identify the ways to improve security of library. Exterior security can be improved by extending level and coverage of exterior lights, security windows etc. Tamper proofing of power, telephone wires should be ensured. To avoid any mass attacks and bigger thefts entries and exit doors must be strong enough with steel fittings so that cutting, twisting of the frames, bars can be resisted. A glance at all these security measures and “ plans of emergency planning”, will show as a very wide picture of its network and it includes both manpower as well as economy.

Conclusion :

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For the library security preventive method should be applied to take care of all types of property/asset of library. Successful planning and proper care should be implemented by emergency planning such plan should be sound with administrative control. Staff education and training part is most important for execution the emergency plan.

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