

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Select a team and a leader. These team members should be capable of making decisions under stress and be able to take charge. The team should be relatively small, perhaps four people. Assign backups or alternates for each team member, for at least one will be on vacation or out sick when the disaster strikes. When responsibilities are assigned to these team members, the director of the library/information center should provide the authority to go with the job. Staff and administrators should be notified of this potential authority and responsibility. Unless the library is very small, the director should assign someone else to head the disaster response team. The director will be responsible for dealing with the administration, insurance agency, any hired disaster recovery firms, and consultants. This precludes daily and hourly supervision of the disaster response and recovery operation. Responsibilities should be assigned ahead of time. This may entail listing jobs to accomplish or areas of responsibility.

The director will have to deal with the administration, whether the director of the institution or the board of trustees. The director will be responsible for making major decisions. These decisions should have been thought out and discussed during the disaster response planning process. Directors must allocate emergency funds and assign extra staff to do a variety of jobs. In a large institution, reassignment during a disaster or crisis should be expected, especially if the building is closed to the public until the worst is cleaned up. Directors have to work with consultants and drying or recovery companies. They must allocate emergency expenditure of petty cash. This could be assigned to a team member. In this same vein, the director could designate a staff member to deal with the insurance adjuster and then approve the requests. Most importantly, the director will be called upon to update the staff and administration as to the overall recovery of company; boost morale; provide food, drink, and comfort; and enforce rests.

The disaster response team leader should be able to coordinate the response and recovery operations. This person will have to assign extra responsibilities to team members and other staff persons. The team leader will work with the disaster

response team members and communicate with the director and team members on a regular basis. Information should be passed along to the public information officer or communications officer. The team leader may coordinate volunteer efforts or suggest jobs to the person who is supervising them. If the operation is large enough, the team leader will have to coordinate multiple shifts and assign staff to supervise these shifts. Communicating with the staff, enforcing rest breaks, and boosting morale are essential for the smooth completion of the recovery operation. All this cannot be accomplished without a team.

The disaster response team members will lead the efforts to recover normal operations within the library/information center. During the planning process, overall responsibilities should be assigned. The team member should be able to train regular staff and volunteers in the necessary recovery tasks. Overall responsibilities may include locating additional supplies, finding a temporary location, moving damaged or dry collections and packing them for shipment, and supervising volunteers. It is important that the team members communicate with the team leader on a regular basis and help boost morale.

One spokesperson should be assigned to discuss the disaster situation and ultimate recovery. This assignment naturally falls upon the public information officer or communications officer. If neither position exists within the organization, then one person should be assigned. This person will communicate with the media and write press releases. Information can be relayed to and from the administration. Other responsibilities might include providing contact and temporary location information for vendors and customers and public information to staff on where to report and on which shift. A fund-raising campaign should be considered at the onset of a disaster. This will be essential if the disaster is major, and internal funding and insurance are not enough to cover recovery needs.

The administration or board of trustees will need to allocate emergency and contingency funds, approve the hiring of disaster recovery firms, and work with the insurance adjuster. The administration should be familiar with the goals of the disaster response plan and assist in its swift and efficient execution. Communication with the affected departments and buildings is imperative. The administration should learn and see firsthand the scope and magnitude of the disaster and support a speedy recovery.

Other players in the disaster response operation include security, facilities or building maintenance, and the drying/recovery company. Consultants are often hired to assist the disaster response team. Involve them in the planning process. This will provide an interest in working toward recovery during a disaster and a familiarity with the needs of the collections.

Security should know whom to notify in case of a disaster. Is it the director or head of administration? Several names should be on the list, all with authority to declare a disaster and start the recovery operation. Disaster response plans should be discussed and reviewed with security. They should know their roles and responsibilities within the disaster response plan. Procedures should indicate whom to call when an alarm is triggered, standing water is found, or a broken pipe is noticed. Other responsibilities during a disaster may be to assign staff or hire temporary guards to prevent theft or board up broken windows and doors. Security should know where the keys to the building are and what they open.

Facilities or building maintenance departments are responsible for assisting in the cleanup of water or debris from the water or a fire, boarding up broken windows and doors, and helping with miscellaneous cleanup efforts. They may be able to hire a drying company based upon the library/ information center's recommendation. Building maintenance or facilities should know the location of all utility shutoffs and know how to shut them off.

Outside assistance is important. These people and companies can provide the disaster response team with solid advice, emotional balance, and additional labor. Outside assistance may include security and disaster recovery consultants, and disaster recovery or drying companies. Meet with any potential outside agents while working on the disaster response plan and during training sessions. This will familiarize you with each other.

Consultants can provide a variety of assistance, including recommending treatment of water damaged materials and equipment, coordinating recovery operations, and writing specifications for services and procedures. Consultants can locate necessary emergency funds, supplies, and services; train staff and volunteers; explain options for recovery of the collections, building, and if needed, the institution itself. A consultant may act as liaison between the director, administration, the team leader, and the staff. In addition, they may help explain recovery procedures and options to the insurance adjuster, facilities and maintenance departments, and the disaster recovery companies.

Disaster recovery and drying companies are essential for any large disaster. If a large area or a large number of items are affected, ask for outside assistance and a company to provide recovery work. These firms will dry and recover all wet materials and furniture. They also dry the building structure. Disaster recovery companies provide the best possible treatment based on specifications for recovery of water damaged and dirty materials. They will inventory and return all treated items in the best possible condition, and remove all mold, dirt, and mud. Disaster recovery companies can work through the insurance agency or institution. They are usually

paid by the insurance company. Disaster recovery companies may be called in by the consultant, insurance adjuster, facilities, or the institution itself. The company may bring in their own consultant to assist with the recovery operation and deal directly with the library or information center.

During the planning and recovery process, risk managers and insurance agencies should work together to evaluate the appropriate level of insurance needed to adequately insure the collections, building, and services. Risk managers can identify potential risks and hazards and insure against them. The insurance agent should write any special clauses and riders so that they are easily interpreted by the adjuster during the disaster.