Priorities for Salvage

The following checklist ranks library materials according to value, both financial and artifactual, and risk of loss if not treated immediately. All collections should be evaluated for priority rating before an emergency.

For ease of consultation in an emergency, note collection salvage priorities on library floor plans using letter or color coding.

A. IRREPLACEABLE/ESSENTIAL

- Valuable/permanent papers with legal/fiduciary/evidentiary value (e.g., vital records) or materials essential to the functioning of the library
- Irreplaceable materials that must be retained in their original format (e.g., manuscripts or rare books with intrinsic or artifactual value)
- Microfilm/photographic masters (should be stored off-site)

B. SIGNIFICANT CONTENT/HIGH ECONOMIC VALUE

- Materials with significant research value that are expensive-to-replace/repair (e.g., rare books)
- Materials with significant research value on media or in formats that must be salvaged immediately if they get wet (e.g., pre-1950 photographs, clay-coated paper)

C. ITEMS BELONGING TO OTHER LIBRARIES

D. SIGNIFICANT CONTENT/REPLACEABLE

- Materials that are replaceable with other originals, copies, or formats

E. EXPENDABLE

- Annual replacements and updates
- Duplicates
- Materials not central to mission of the library

N.B. Whenever possible, important materials should be backed-up and stored off-site, (e.g., computer files, finding aids, contact lists, inventories of supplies and equipment).