

Disaster Preparedness at the Institutional Level

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3rd December, 2004

Why Should We Be Concerned About Disasters?

- Unplanned and most often without warning.
- Lost memory.
- Disruption/Loss of services.
- Preplanning, training, readily available supplies & resources are the primary ingredients for saving time, lives, and money at the time it is most needed.

Defining Disasters

Minor Disasters

Moderate Disasters

Major/Catastrophic

Minor Disasters

- Typically applies to situations in which less than 100 items have been either damaged or are at risk of being damaged.

Minor Disasters cont'd.

- In most cases, minor disasters can be handled either by staff in the effected department and/or preservation staff.

Moderate Disasters

- A moderate disaster is usually larger in scope and severity than a minor emergency.
- Usually involves more than 100 damaged items but fewer than 4000.

Moderate Disasters cont'd.

- Will probably require help from commercial recovery vendors.

Major/Catastrophic Disasters

- Major emergencies involve more than 4000 damaged items.
- Damage is typically more severe.
- Probably requires assistance from outside the institution.

Major/Catastrophic Disasters cont'd.

- Major emergencies may also be described as a Level I (non-catastrophic) or Level II (catastrophic).

Major/Catastrophic Disasters cont'd.

Even though the *number* of damaged items often determine the classification of emergency situations, value and rarity are also important factors.

A few items from the Archives & Special Collections department may qualify as a major emergency.

Major Threats to Cultural Institutions

- Fire
- Water (flooding)
- Tornadoes
- Hurricanes
- Earthquakes

Additional Threats

- Human-induced (e.g. arson, terrorism)
- War

Earthquake Damage

1994- California State University
Northridge

- 6.7 magnitude earthquake
- All buildings on campus damaged
- 400 million dollars in damage

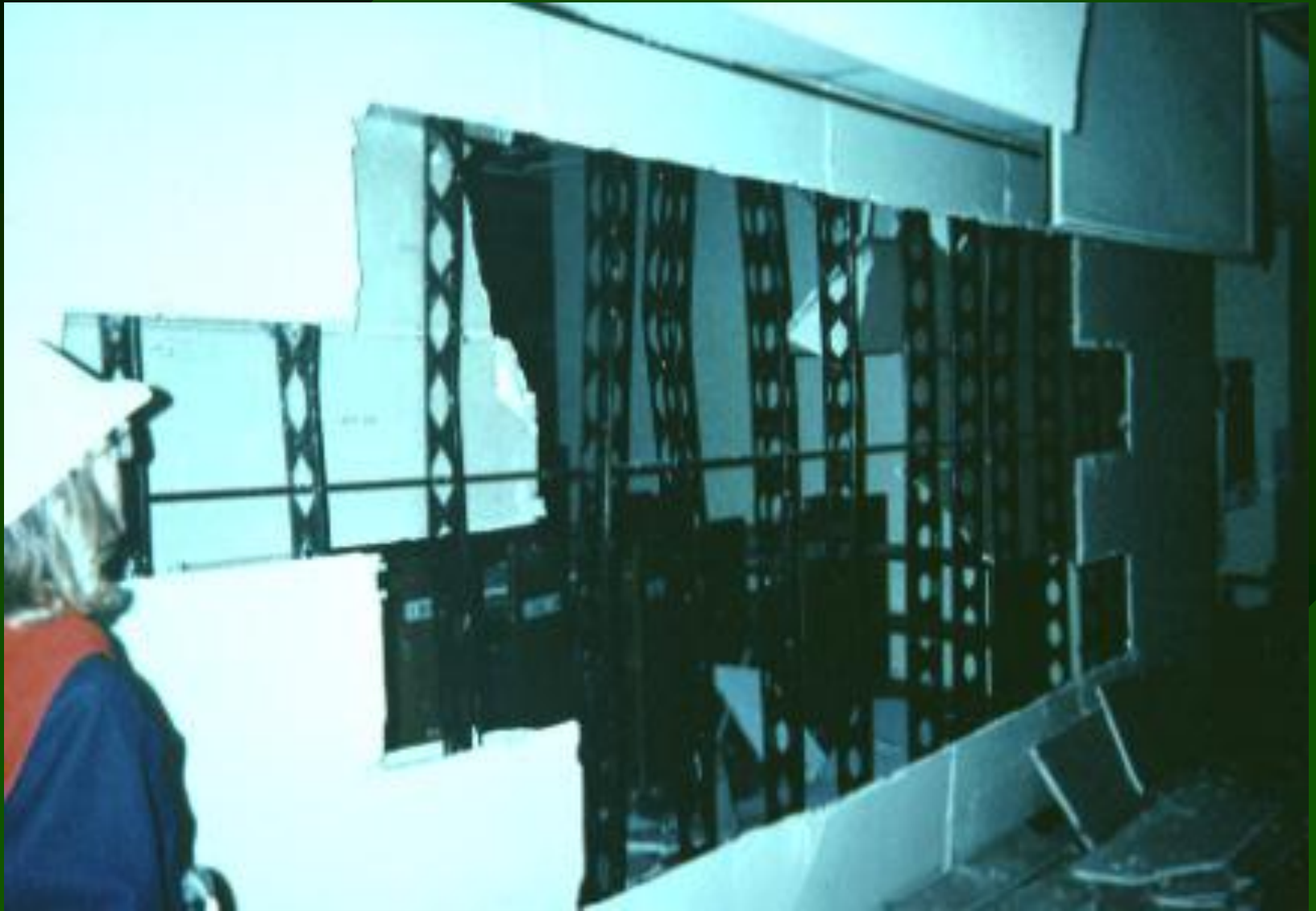
CSU Northridge

- Approximately 600,000 volumes off the shelves
- Between 15,000-20,000 books in need of rebinding

CSU Northridge











Water, Water, And...

1997- Colorado State University extensively damaged by 500 year flood

- 11.5 feet of water in library basement
- More than 460,000 saturated volumes
- 30 campus buildings damaged
- Approximately 100 million dollars in damage

More Water ...

October 2004- University of Hawaii- Manoa
damaged by flash flood

- 6 feet of water in library's ground floor
- Extensive damage to building and library collections
- Salvaging continues...

What Have We Learned?

- Libraries, museums and other cultural institutions are not immune to disasters
- Need to be prepared
- How to prepare

How to Prepare

- Structural soundness of building
- Disaster plan
- Staff training
- Availability of emergency supplies
- Recovery plan and resumption of service

O.U. Libraries Disaster Plan

Purpose

1. Articulate preventive measures aimed at averting disasters, by identifying existing hazards and recommending appropriate corrective actions

Purpose cont'd.

2. Minimize loss and/or permanent damage to the libraries' collections
3. Provide guidelines for resuming library activities as quickly as possible after a disaster.

Charting the Plan

- Team approach
- Identifying resources
- Setting priorities (i.e. collections)
- Major components of disaster preparedness and response manual
- Manual distribution and maintenance schedule

OU Library Resources

- Trained/experienced staff
- Comprehensive preservation department
- Experience in disaster planning
- Possible storage space

Opportunities for Collaboration

- Purchasing emergency supplies
- Cooperative/group contracts with external vendors
- Staff training
- Source of volunteers (service learning)