



20 Years of Disaster Preparedness and Response

Inadequate planning for emergencies remains a serious problem for museums, libraries, and archives. For more than two decades, NEH has offered support to help cultural heritage institutions across the country prepare for and recover from natural disasters. Through three grant programs in the Division of Preservation and Access, NEH helps institutions become better prepared to protect and salvage collections when disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and tsunamis strike. In addition, after major regional disasters, NEH has responded with special initiatives to help cultural institutions salvage collections damaged from floods, hurricanes, and tsunamis.

1992-1994 NEH awards \$1.2 million to 53 institutions and organizations to help salvage of collections after four major disasters including Hurricanes Andrew & Iniki in 1992, the Midwest floods in 1993, and the Northridge earthquake in 1994.



1995 The Heritage Emergency National Task Force is formed, with NEH as a founding member, to help libraries and archives, museums, historical societies, and historic sites better protect their cultural and historic resources from damage. The Task Force continues today to promote preparedness and to develop educational tools and resources for the cultural heritage community.

1996 NEH supports the printing and distribution of nearly

45,000 Disaster Response and Salvage Wheels for museums, libraries, archives and historical organizations across the country.

2000 NEH funds the translation of the Disaster Response and Salvage Wheel into Spanish and its printing and distribution. The wheel has since been translated into Dutch, French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic.

2000 NEH supports the development of a curriculum for training cultural heritage professionals in disaster response.

2001 NEH supports a survey of cultural institutions affected by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks; a special meeting of the Heritage Emergency National Task Force to discuss the findings; and preparation of a report on lessons learned entitled *Cataclysm and Challenge: Impact of September 11, 2001 on Our Nation's Cultural Heritage*.

80%

Percent of cultural repositories in the U.S. lack disaster or emergency plans and the trained staff to carry them out.

34

Number of special awards following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005

6

Number of cities hosting online response forums between 2010 and 2012

2005 NEH funds a "Field Guide to Emergency Readiness and Response," which has step-by-step advice on how to salvage humanities collections immediately after a disaster and a DVD that illustrates the most typical problems encountered in a disaster and the techniques employed to salvage collections.

2005 Immediately after Hurricane Katrina strikes the Gulf Coast, NEH awards funds to enable the Heritage Emergency Task Force to convene conferences calls among key cultural heritage parties in the disaster response effort; gather information about damage to museums, libraries, and archives; and distribute published materials on disaster recovery.

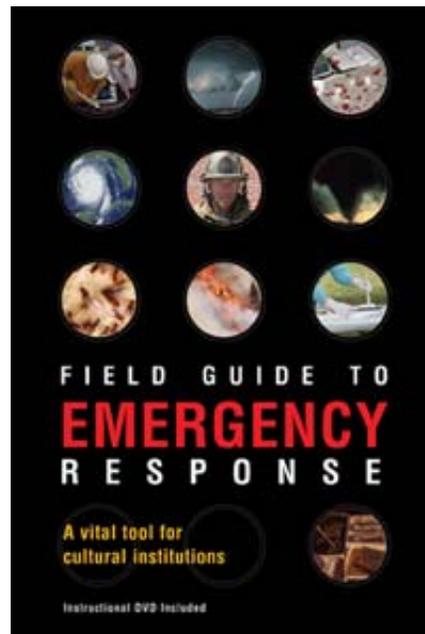
2005 NEH announces a special initiative to help cultural heritage institutions along the Gulf Coast salvage collections damaged during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, making 34 awards totaling \$998,058.

2006 NEH supports a survey of cultural heritage institutions affected by Hurricane Katrina and the creation of a report on lessons learned from the 2005 hurricane season.

2008 Immediately following the severe flooding in the Midwest in 2008, NEH funds the creation of a free online video on salvaging water-damaged collections, showing hands-on demonstrations of salvage techniques with concise advice from leading preservation experts. Practical tips on safety, simple equipment, and salvage priorities also make the video a useful guide to help the public rescue family photographs and other heirlooms.

2008 NEH announces a special initiative to help cultural institutions affected by the flooding in the Midwest. Nine awards totaling \$104,706 helped cultural institutions salvage water-damaged collections.

2010-2012 NEH supports the development of an online Disaster Response Resource Center and Alliance for Response forums in 6 cities: Portland, Oregon; Houston, Texas; Salt Lake City, Utah; Miami, Florida; Chicago, Illinois; and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. Forums are designed to bring together emergency responders and cultural heritage representatives before disaster strikes. The goal is to build networks of mutual assistance among local institutions to enhance the protection of cultural heritage collections.



To learn more about local Alliance for Response networks visit

www.heritagepreservation.org/AfR. Additional cities and localities with online resources include: Atlanta, Boston, Central Pennsylvania, Denver, Galveston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Raleigh, Savannah, and Seattle. States represented include: California, Ohio, Utah, Texas, and Vermont.

2011 NEH provides support to the state humanities councils in New York and Vermont, which enables them to offer assistance to small cultural institutions for salvage and recovery of cultural heritage damaged by flooding from Hurricane Irene.