

The Emergency Management Cycle



Emergency management aims to reduce, or avoid, the potential losses from hazards, assure prompt and appropriate assistance to damaged materials, and achieve rapid and effective recovery. The emergency management cycle illustrates the ongoing process by which all organizations should plan for and reduce the impact of disasters, react during and immediately following a disaster, and take steps to recover after a disaster has occurred. As a cyclical process, it is never complete. Recovery, even from the smallest incidents, can inform prevention and mitigation.

- **Mitigation:** Activities designed to alleviate the effects of a major disaster/emergency or long-term activities minimizing the potentially adverse effects of future disaster in affected areas.

Examples: Keeping collections stored 4"-6" off of the floor on risers and/or shelves. Using earthquake straps to secure collections stored on shelves.

- **Preparedness:** Activities, programs, and systems that exist prior to an emergency that are used to support and enhance response to an emergency or disaster.

Example: Having supplies, like plastic sheeting and absorbent pads, stocked and placed near collections storage.

- **Response:** Activities and programs designed to address the immediate and short-term effects of the onset of an emergency or disaster.

Examples: Draping shelves in plastic sheeting during a water emergency. Freezing wet materials within 48 hours.

- **Recovery:** Long-term activities and programs beyond the initial crisis period of an emergency or disaster designed to return all systems to normal status or to reconstitute these systems to a new, less vulnerable condition.

Example: Sending damaged materials to a conservator for treatment.