

PROCEDURES FOR RECOVERING PRINT MATERIALS AND AIR-DRYING BOOKS

Books that are thoroughly wet:

- Place absorbent paper on table or floor where books will be dried (unprinted newspaper works well). Change paper on the table/floor as it becomes wet.



- Lay book at edge of table with foreedge pointing off edge and gently, but firmly apply pressure from spine to fore edge, pushing out excess water. Gently open book and insert paper towels every 20-25pp. Change when the paper towels are wet.
- If cover is bleeding or coming off, remove and put aside to a place where it can be found again. In many cases book will need to be rebound.
- Use fans to generate air circulation in room. Books should be dry enough for the next step: books that are partially wet.

CAUTION:

Do not attempt to fan leaves. Do not remove covers unless they are bleeding. Leather and vellum bindings will present problems. When leather gets wet, especially red-rotted leather, it will turn black and take on a slimy consistency. These covers should be removed and put aside (inside to inside) with pieces of freezer paper between them to prevent transfer of discoloration. Likewise, vellum bindings will need special attention because they will warp severely upon getting wet. Call Preservation or Conservation @ 443-9937 or 443-4560 for help in recovery.



Leather covered boards from the same book depicting water damage and subsequent blackening to the board on the right; the leather became extremely brittle on drying and also suffered some degree of shrinkage. This type of damage is irreversible and will necessitate rebinding.

Books that are partially wet:





- Open book partially (at a fairly shallow angle) and interleave with absorbent paper (paper towels work well).
- Begin at the back of the book and interleave every 20 or so leaves (i.e., pages).
- Leave book flat until paper towels have absorbed some of the water--i.e., in about one hour. Change paper towels periodically until book is only very slightly damp, then go to the next step: books that are damp.

Books that are damp:

- Stand damp books on edge, lightly fanned, and dry in front of fans. If the cover is damper than the text, place absorbent paper between the boards and the book, changing them as needed. When almost dry, go to the next step: books that are almost dry.



Books that are almost dry:

- Lay the book flat, push the back and boards gently into position, and place under a light weight. Leave in this position until book is thoroughly dry.
- When books are dry to the touch at the gutter, stack from largest to smallest and fore edge to spine with a board on top and underneath. Place weights on board to help flattened.



NOTE: The drying time for a book can range from 1 to 7 days.

NOTE: Coated Paper (shiny paper)

- If this paper is allowed to dry with pages stuck to each other, it will NOT be possible to separate them. For this reason, it is important that they be interleaved between every page with paper towels. Change as often as necessary and then follow steps from "Books that are almost dry."
- Pages should be carefully separated. If uncertain contact Preservation or Conservation @ 443-9937 or 443-4560 for help in recovery.