AUB UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
EMERGENCY and DISASTER PLANNING POLICY

Updated March 1, 2024

I. Introduction

The University Libraries' emergency and disaster planning is covered through the American University of Beirut's Emergency Preparedness Plan. An Emergency Response Team (ERT) composed of 25 members, is monitored by the Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management jointly with the Office of Protection (OP), and the Physical Plant Department (PPD). The Emergency Response Procedures may be consulted on the following link:
https://aub.policytech.eu/dotNet/documents/?docid=148&public=true

II. Definition

Disasters have different forms. For libraries, the most common is water as a consequence of flood or fire. The current plan will determine the responsibility of the University Libraries' Emergency and Disaster Planning Committee (EDPC) in cooperation with the ERT.

III. Purpose and scope

This plan is tailored to fit AUB University Libraries' needs in terms of disaster planning. It addresses:

1) Prevention and Preparedness
2) Response
3) Recovery
4) Collection Storage and Assessment
5) Repair and Restoration

1. Prevention and Preparedness

Every staff member at the University Libraries should report any problems occurring in the building: pipe leakage, toilet clogs, wall or window's cracks, electrical burning smells, temperature, and humidity fluctuation, etc. before developing into a disaster.

- Ensuring regular inspections of fire and smoke alarms and controls (including sensors, extinguishers, hoses), and heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment.
- Maintaining up-to-date floorplans of main utilities, fire suppression system (sprinkles and FM200), fire extinguishers, fire alarm pull boxes, smoke and heat detectors, emergency exits, and closing fire doors. Appendix-I
- Maintaining minor supplies and equipment required in case of an emergency. Appendix-II
    - Minor supplies and equipment are stored in room 116B on Jafet Library's first floor.

a. Emergency and Disaster Planning Committee (EDPC)

The EDPC is composed of the Director of Library Systems and Applications (Chair), Associate University Librarians (AUL) for Archives and Special Collections, Head of Access Services and Library Assistant, Conservation & Preservation Librarian, Digital Imaging Specialist, and the Executive Officer.

- EDPC will review the emergency and disaster plan and the evacuation procedures annually, during the summer term.
- EDPC members will regularly inspect their respective storage areas as follows:

Collection	Responsbility
Closed Area	AUL of Archives & Special Collections; Conservation & Preservation Librarian
General & Reference Collection-Jafet, branch libraries	Head of Access Services; Access Services Library Assistant, Conservation & Preservation Librarian
Audiovisual Collection; Digitization Equipment	Imaging Specialist, Digital Initiatives & Scholarship
Computers/Computer Lab	Director of Library Systems & Applications; IT Manager
Environment Control Equipement	Conservation & Preservation Librarian

In case of emergency, the heads of branch libraries and departments will report any incident of water seepage or damage, signs of molds and insects' infestation, building vulnerabilities, fire, etc. to the following members:

- Maha Hussein, Executive Officer at the University Librarian's office, Member - ext. 2601 during working hours, mobile: 76-868870
- Antoine Haikal, Access Services Library Assistant, Coordinator - ext. 2618 during working hours, mobile: 03-972320
- Jad Zahran, Preservation & Conservation Librarian, Recovery Coordinator - ext. 2140 during working hours, mobile: 70-774130

List of emergency contacts is available in Appendix-III

b. Drills, Training, and Supplies

The Chair of EDPC coordinates with EHSRM organizing annual drills, and training the safety wardens on an efficient evacuation plan and accurate usage of fire extinguishers.

c. Fire Safety

The PPD and Safety unit at the EHSRM regularly inspects the Fire Suppression System

- Fire Extinguishers
- Fire Alarm Pull Boxes
- Smoke and Heat Detectors
- Sprinklers
- FM200

The Office of Protection provides inspection of Key controls and Cameras, while PPD monitors the alarms.

d. Chemical hazards

The Conservation and Preservation Unit and the Digitization Lab are the primary locations that store chemicals.
Chemicals should be stored in original containers, in dry, well-ventilated areas far from direct sunlight or heat and preferably away from staff work areas. Appendix-IV

2. Response

a. Water

- Minor damage
    - Determine the source of a water leak. Call the University Libraries' Executive Officer ext. 2601.
    - If collections are threatened, move the cabinets, if possible, and turn off all electrical devices in the affected area.
    - If not possible, immediately contact the Recovery Coordinator, and based on the problem's location, notify the concerned EDPC members.
        - Call the Safety Unit at the EHSRM. Do not reconnect any electrical device until clearance from the Safety Unit is provided.

- Major damage (Flood)
    - In case of severe storms, the committee should be on alert to monitor the basements, mainly the exit doors, corners, drains, etc.
    - If flooding began, disconnect electricty.
    - Remove collections from the bottom shelves.
    - Contact below, to evacuate and drain excess water, if the level of water appears to be rising or collections are affected.

Name	**Office Ext.**	**Mobile**	**Purpose**
Yamen Rajeh	2049	76-686768	Physical Plant Department
Michel Melhem	2051-2050		Custodial Services Manager
Farouk Merhebi	2364	03-362408	EHSRM Director

    - Besides, contact the Recovery Coordinator to assess the damage and prepare for the recovery procedures.
    - Stabilize temperature to 20°C and decrease Relative Humidity. Monitor every 4 hours. Avoid fluctuations for at least 48 hours.

b. Fire

The fire alarms system is designed to alert Emergency Response Team (ERT) in case of fire. Meanwhile, the safety wardens will immediately ensure that all users and staff

evacuate the Library, and will close the doors to isolate fire and smoke from the rest of the building

Any questions or concerns during the operation should be addressed to Bilal al-Iskandarani, Chief Life Safety and Fire Protection Engineer, EHSRM ext. 2368.

c. Molds

For active mold, move the affected material to an area with relative humidity below 45% to dry, separate from the rest of the collection. If few items are affected, place them in paper-based box, along with silica gel packets, until treatment. If immediate drying is not possible, place each item in polythelene a bag then freeze it at -18°C. Items can be later thawed and air-dried. When dry, initiate cleaning infested materials by using vacuum cleaners that contain an HEPA filter. Before shelving the materials vacuum clean the shelves and floor with an HEPA vacuum cleaner, then clean them with a household disinfectant. Return cleaned items to stacks while ensuring the RH is not exceeding 55%.

Tile	Name	Office Ext.	Pager	Mobile	Home	Purpose
Sanitarian and Biosafety Officer	Talal Abou Mujahid	2362	0062	71-180108	05-434952	Pest infestation
Campus Facilities Engineer	Yamen Rajeh	2049		76-686768		Facilities Maintenance Manager- Physical Plant Department

d. Chemical hazards

An effective response to an emergency related to safely managing hazardous Chemicals, such as chemically reactive or toxic substances, corrosives, solvents, etc. contact Environmental and Chemical Safety unit: Samar Khalil**,** Environmental and Chemical Safety Officer, ext.: 2360/1; Mobile: 03-450863.

3. Recovery

a. Water damage

- The EDPC will develop a detailed plan of action, including urgent tasks, staff involved, etc.
- Wet microfilsm should be transferred to a safe place for drying.
- Wet books must be transferred to a safe place for drying. Fans can accelerate the drying process. If this procedure is not possible, they should be frozen, whenever they cannot be dried within 48 hours.
- If feasible, materials might need to *be rinsed* if stained with mud or if the water is contaminated with sewage. The rinsing location is in room B108C (Jafet's first

floor). Rinsing techniques cannot be applied to soluble ink. Use protective measures such as gloves, masks, waterproof cloth, etc.

- Under the supervision of the Recovery Coordinator, pack wet items in cardboard boxes. Stack up to four volumes flat. Fill around 75% of the box.
- If possible, sort based on the water absorption (dry, damp, or soaked) and choose the material of a similar size. Keep around 100 books and freeze the rest.
- Use a cotton cloth to dry the books as much as possible.
- Place each book in a polythelene bag and store in freezers below -18°C. Separate two volumes with a plastic slide and store then in one container. With a permanent marker, indicate the item's shelfmark on the bag.
- Keep frozen until ready for the drying process.
- Document the process for insurance purposes. List discarded material, those with minor or significant damage; include the new location of items: some will be rinsed or frozen, others will be air-drying, etc. Take photos for documentation.
- Drying techniques: to avoid spine distortion, interleave every 50 pages with journal towels. Run a fan to dry to book by placing it on its head, opened, on absorbent papers, and insert blotter inside the back and front covers. Frequently change, while turning the volume over.

b. Fire

- If the bookbinding is charred, replace it; if the text block's edge is affected, cut de damaged edge with a manual cutter.
- Sometimes when exposed to high temperatures, or smoke, the damage is irreversible, and paper becomes very brittle. Books should be evaluated individually and based on their value digitized, discarded, replaced, or stored in a container.
- Natural latex sponges can be used for smoke/soot cleaning.

4. Collection Storage and Assessment

- After salvation, the water damaged or molded collection should be stored separately for three months in a well-ventilated area, with a relative humidity between 35-45%.
- Cataloging will submit a list of damaged material for assessment/replacements and to the University Librarian's office for Insurance purposes.

5. Repair and Restoration

- The Conservation & Preservation section will work on damaged material and will follow the regular workflow for reshelving.

IV. Digital Collections

- The University Libraries' digital collections (born digital and digitized) are stored on servers located at the central AUB-IT premises. Backup and recorvery of the digital collections follow the general IT policies and procedures.

V. Library Insurance Policy

- Library Collections are insured, policy is available at the Office of Procurement.

Appendix-I

University Libraries Floor Plans

Maha will request a floor plan from FPDU, the list will be completed accordingly

1- Main utilities

- Main water shut-off valve
- Sprinkler Shut-off valve
- Main Electrical cut-off switch
- Heating/cooling system controls
- Main gas shut-off (if applicable)

2- Fire Suppression System (by room or area)

- Sprinklers
- Halon

3- Fire extinguishers

4- Fire alarm pull boxes

5- Smoke and Heat detectors

6- Emergency Exits

Appendix-II

Supplies and Equipment

The below supplies and equipment are needed for a prompt action in case of emergency:

1. **Equipment:**

- (1) 1,300L or (2) 700L freezers that can reach -18°C to stabilize the condition of water damaged books, control mold growth, and kill most insects
- (5) Industrial-grade fans
- (4) Heavy-duty portable dehumidifiers
- (2) Wireless flood/water detectors (Kidde recommended) to be placed exclusively in the Manuscript Room and Archives stacks

2. **Supplies:**

- Silica gel packets
- Polythelene plastic bags of different sizes (dependent on freezers availability)
- Nitrile gloves
- Archival blotting paper sheets
- Unprinted newsprint or paper towels for interleaving
- Plastic sheeting rolls
- Spill kit (absorbent snakes/pads) for water disaster recovery with mobile wheeled containers
- Water barricade cushions
- (3) Buckets
- (3) Mops
- (3) Broom
- (3) Dustpans
- Barricade tape
- N95 masks
- Folding corrugated cardboard boxes

Appendix-III

Contact Names in Case of Emergency

Name		Office Ext.	Pager	Mobile	Home	Purpose
Fadi Ghorayeb	OP	2404				Protection
Talal Abou Mjahed	EHSRM	2364 2362	0060 0062	76-700320 71-180108	01-360081 05-434952	Fire, Pest Infestation and Chemiclas
Bilal el-Iskandarani	EHSRM	2368	0069	03-909115	01-790086	Fire
Albert AbdelNour	EHSRM	2361	0061	03-909112		Chemicals
Mike Rbeiz	EHSRM	2366	0077	03-909117		Chemicals
Yamen Rajeh	PPD	2049		76-686768		Flood
Michel Melhem	PPD	2050 2051				Janitorial Services
Antoine Haikal	UL	2618		03-972320		EDPC Member
Maha Hussein	UL	2601		76-868870		EDPC Member
Jad Zahran	UL	2141	0071	70-774130		EDPC Member, Recovery Coordinator
Mona Assi	UL	2604		03-947566		EDPC Member
Samar Mikati	UL	2610		03-885141		EDPC Member
Carla Chalhoub	UL	2619		71-333554		EPDC Member
Rodrigue Hadidi	UL	2993		08-284756		EDPC Member
Maher Kassab	UL	2236		03-901314		Disaster- IT

Appendix-IV

Critical Building Storage Areas

- Conservation Lab, cabinet ADM13101:
    - 1 gallon Ethanol 99.8%
    - 1 gallon Ethyl Acetate 99.5%

- Microfilm Development materials, stocked in the Cold Room on the Ground Floor of Jafet Library, stored under suitable conditions; if microfilming development ceases, these chemicals must be disposed of properly:
    - 30 gallons of 5L Developer (N-methyl-p-aminophenol). The developer oxidizes during the process, reducing the exposed silver in the film to form metallic silver (black).
    - 29 gallons of 5L Fixer (sodium/ammonium thiosulfate). The fixer dissolves unexposed silver.