

COSTEP MA VIRTUAL TABLETOP EXERCISE

SEPTEMBER 22, 2020



Scenario 1: Indoor Water Leak during Working Hours

It is a normal (i.e., pre-COVID) working day in July. A sprinkler head accidentally discharges during an afternoon test of the fire suppression system in a collection storage space. Within 15 minutes, staff have alerted the emergency response coordinator (incident commander). The water contains a small amount of rust and particles of pipe debris but is otherwise uncontaminated. Four open shelf ranges flanking the sprinkler head were doused before the water supply was shut down. Affected were bound volumes, document boxes containing documents and containing photographs, and a collection of framed paintings, some behind glass. Conditions range from damp to soaked.

Alternative: If your building has no sprinkler system, assume that a pipe seal has failed in a pipe running through a ceiling over a collection space, causing similar damage.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the considerations for human health and safety?
2. What will you need to do first? Second? Third?
3. What steps should be taken to protect the affected collection items?
4. What supplies and equipment will response require? Where will these come from?

Scenarios adapted from Library of Congress, Level of Collections Emergency Scenarios, <https://www.loc.gov/preservation/emergprep/plan/scenarios.html>.