



# CapitalNYAFR

CAPITAL NYAFR  
CAPITAL NEW YORK ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSE

## Capital New York Alliance for Response Newsletter

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### What is CapitalNYAFR?

The Capital New York Alliance for Response, with a volunteer advisory board of area experts, works to build strong partnerships among cultural stewards and first responders in the Capital Region to plan for the protection of our collections. WE do this through advocacy, education, networking, and real-time emergency assistance. CapitalNYAFR is dedicated to serving Capital District libraries, archives, museums and other cultural organizations as well as disaster planners, first responders, and recovery specialists.

**Our goal is to improve planning, communication, and collaboration to minimize loss and damage to our historic sites and valued collections.**

### *Emergency Priorities*

1. Human safety
2. Critical operations (equipment, records, forms, info needed to manage salvage and reopen institution)
3. Thorough photographic and written records of emergency conditions and salvage activities
4. Assemble collections records (shelf lists, inventory, registrar's logs, etc.)
5. Stabilize the building
6. Prioritize collections from important (valuable, heavily used, significant, vulnerable to irreparable damage) to least important.

[American Institute for Conservation](#)



Hurricane Irene caused flooding and then mold. Schoharie County Office Building, 2011

### Mold Resources

Environmental Protection Agency. [Mold](#).

NEDCC. [Emergency Salvage of Moldy Books and Paper](#).

CCAHA. [Managing a Mold Invasion: Guidelines for Disaster Response](#).

National Park Service. [Mold: Prevention of Growth in Museum Collections](#).

FEMA. [Mold: Fact Sheet: Problems and Solutions](#).

### Upcoming Events Fall 2019

Oct 17: Safety Culture for Cultural Organizations, University at Albany Libraries

Nov 13-16: [New York Library Association, Annual Meeting, Saratoga Springs](#)

Nov 18-20: [RISE Conference, CEHC, University at Albany](#)

Nov 21-23: [Researching NY, University at Albany](#)

December 10: CDLC Preservation Interest Group. "Integrated Pest Management"

Feb 11-13: [New York State Emergency Managers Association Annual Conference, Syracuse, NY](#)

## **When Bad Things Happen in Good Libraries**

Vassar's Thompson Memorial Library, built in 1905, was modernized in the sixties with a new HVAC system. This included air conditioning but absolutely no humidity control, creating an environment that led to our largest mold outbreak in library history.

In July of 2009, a student worker discovered mold on the spines of some books in our basement stacks. Upon closer inspection, the mold outbreak (manifested as a dusty, dimensional fuzz on the spines and covers) was identified as being active and widespread. It affected three rooms, 11,000 linear feet of shelving, and 124,000 volumes.

Our initial response was to isolate the rooms using plastic, add dehumidifiers, and increase the temperature of that section to reduce the RH in the room. Wearing protective gear, library personnel boxed about 1000 titles with visible mold and sent them out for commercial dehumidification. The remaining titles were cleaned and vacuumed and the shelves were sanitized using a Lysol solution.

For the last decade the library has followed protocols to prevent further outbreaks, including regular environmental monitoring using PEM2's and systemic, targeted use of temporary dehumidification units to eliminate the sustained build up of humidity. In 2015 the college replaced the HVAC system for the east half of the basement, eliminating the humidity problem in that section. This fall, we are excited to learn that the college is installing a permanent dehumidification system tied into the existing HVAC system for the west side, which will finally eliminate our need to install noisy, disruptive dehumidifiers throughout the basement stacks every summer.

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***Tell us your story!!!  
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