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# Here we come to save the day!

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# HERE WE COME to save the day!



Library staff receiving disaster prevention training.

**H**ow do you keep 600,000 books dry, cool, and comfortable? That is just one of the concerns of the Disaster Response Team at Bucknell University. The preservation of all types of information resources, from books to microfilm to computer files, is the responsibility of a team of staff members from the Library and Computer and Communication Services. A large part of the job is disaster preparedness, like having the supplies on hand to deal with water leaks and floods. The team members also receive training in disaster prevention, response, and recovery. Planning to prevent disasters, and planning to react quickly and efficiently to the ones that happen anyway, is key to the team's success.

The team is made up of ISR staff from every department and level of the organization, and includes a Physical Plant representative as well. Membership reflects the needs of such a group: the library stacks manager, a staff member trained in book repair and preservation, experts in multimedia software and hardware, and experts in computers, to name a few.

by **Jim VanFleet, Librarian/Information Specialist in Engineering and Science Resources**  
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The team also maintains contact with other departments at Bucknell. Dining Services provides us with valuable space in a deep-freeze facility if we need to store wet books. Public Safety and the Physical Plant staff provide essential support in an emergency. External support includes outside contractors and commercial firms that specialize in services like freeze-drying those wet, frozen books, and restoring them to good condition for far less than the cost of replacement.

Knowing how to save wet books by freezing them, or how to protect computers from lightning strikes, requires ongoing training and practice. The Disaster Response Team spends time training the other ISR staff, so that when the crunch comes, we can have a team of over 90 staff able and willing to help with the recovery.

All of these parts of the puzzle fall into place during an emergency, like the recent flooding caused by



hurricane driven rains. Library staff responded in the middle of the night, discovering leaks and moving books out of harm's way. The really wet books were carefully packed and sent to the freezer, while others were air-dried and repaired. An outside contractor brought in the unusual-looking air ducts and fans needed to dry the library building, while Physical Plant staff found and fixed the sources of our leaks.

We hope that all our efforts were easy to ignore! If the Disaster Response Team is doing its job well, there will be no interruption of ISR services. Books will be quickly restored and reshelfed, computers will continue to function, and staff will still greet you in the Information Commons, even when they have been up all night saving the library, the phone switch, or the campus network!