

Storage and Handling Worksheet

1. Who on staff is responsible for choosing shelving units and storage materials? _____

2. What kinds of storage furniture (e.g., map files, compact shelving, freestanding shelves, file cabinets, microfilm cabinets) are in use? _____

3. Is sufficient furniture available for orderly, uncrowded storage of all collections? _____

4. Are shelves or cabinets large enough to support objects completely? _____

5. Is there good air circulation around collections? _____

6. Are wooden shelving units or cabinets used for storage of historical collections? Where and for what materials?
 - a. What type of wood is used? Are any composite materials, such as particleboard or plywood, used? _____

 - b. Have these storage units been sealed? With what? _____

 - c. Is there any barrier (e.g., archival box, phase box, metallic laminate, glass, Plexiglas) between collections and wood? _____

7. In general, what types of enclosures are used for collections?
 - a. Are plastic enclosures made from stable plastics? _____

 - b. Are paper enclosures lignin-free and buffered? _____

 - c. Do photograph enclosures pass the Photographic Activity Test (PAT)? _____

8. From what supplier(s) does the institution purchase enclosures? _____

9. Are all staff members who handle collections trained in proper handling procedures?

a. What does the training consist of? _____

b. Does it cover all types of collections? _____

c. Is a refresher course offered periodically? _____

10. Does the institution have rules governing the use of research materials, including handling (e.g., only pencils may be used; no food and drink in the research rooms), and are these stated for every user? Are they enforced?

a. Are instructions given to users verbally, written, or in both ways? _____

b. Do handling instructions cover all types of collections? _____

11. Who is allowed to photocopy historical collection materials -- staff, patrons, or both? What may be photocopied? Are there materials that cannot be photocopied because of their fragility and the danger of damaging them? How are these materials identified? _____

12. Is an edge copier available? _____

13. Are original photographic prints and negatives handled only when absolutely necessary, and are gloves used? _____

14. What type of workspace is available for staff and researchers? Is there sufficient flat space within the storage area to remove and set down large boxes or map folders? Is there sufficient table space for users to work with large folders and boxes? _____

15. How are historical books processed? Are labels or other adhesives used to attach call numbers? _____

16. When is the last time the collections and storage furniture were cleaned? How was this done, who did it, and how were they trained? _____

