



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Grimwade Centre for
Cultural Materials
Conservation

DISASTER BIN

A disaster bin contains everything you might need in a collection emergency, such as practical safety equipment, cleaning supplies, documentation tools, packing materials and first aid items.

Disaster bins can be purchased pre-stocked or put together relatively cheaply yourself. A wheelie garbage bin is the container of choice for many institutions as they are a good size and are portable. You may require more than one disaster bin if you have a large space or if your collection is dispersed across multiple levels.

CONTENTS OF A DISASTER BIN

Everything you need for a disaster bin can be found across hardware stores, supermarkets and office supply stores.

Things you will need for your disaster bin include:

- A hardcopy of your disaster plan

From a hardware store:

- Crates and storage boxes
- Ladder and step stool
- Heavy plastic sheeting/plastic drop sheets
- Plastic garbage bags
- Brooms, dustpans, mops, buckets
- Extension cords (30m) and surge protected powerboards
- Plastic buckets and rubbish bins
- Water hoses with spray nozzles
- Rubber and/or plastic aprons
- Gloves (rubber/leather)
- Protective masks/glasses
- Torches/flashlights/headlamps
- Clothesline (non-staining)
- Water spray bottles

RESOURCES



Be Prepared - Guidelines for Small Museums for Writing a Disaster Preparedness Plan, Heritage Collections Council, available online:

<http://go.unimelb.edu.au/d4wi>



Emergency Preparedness for Cultural Institutions: Introduction, Canadian Conservation Institute Notes, available online:

<http://go.unimelb.edu.au/g4wi>



All is Not Lost: The Collection Recovery Book, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, available online:

<http://go.unimelb.edu.au/94wi>

From a supermarket:

- Freezer bags
- Polyethylene bags (various sizes)
- Paper towels/Chux - cleaning cloths
- Sponges
- Bottled drinking water
- Hand wash or sanitiser
- Disposable wipes

From an office supplies store:

- Absorbent paper (craft paper, blotter, etc.)
- Digital camera
- Universal phone charger
- Batteries to fit a range of equipment
- Scissors
- Clipboards, paper, pens, waterproof markers
- Tape (duct, packing, masking)
- Utility knife
- Mobile phone rechargers

From a chemist:

- First aid kit

DISASTER BIN TIPS

- Place a list of contents at the top of the bin.
- Ensure that the materials are easily accessible within the bins and that the bins are well placed and accessible in the event of a disaster.
- Make sure staff and volunteers know where the disaster bin is located.
- Ensure there is a list of the contents at the top of the bin.
- Avoid accessing the materials and equipment within the bins other than in the event of a disaster.
- Schedule a regular check of your disaster bins, replenish any used supplies.
- Renew torch batteries every 12 months. CO2 fire extinguishers should be checked and maintained in accordance with your local standards.