



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**PAPER: UNCOATED**

Priority: Air dry or freeze within 48 hours. Records with water soluble inks should be frozen immediately to arrest the migration of moisture that will feather and blur inks. Records that show signs of previous bacterial growth should also be frozen immediately if they cannot be air dried.

Handling Precautions: Paper is very weak when wet and can easily tear if unsupported while handling.

**Supplies Needed**

- |         |                   |                       |                                 |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| fabric) | bread trays       | blotter paper         | bookends/bricks                 |
|         | dehumidifier      | extension cords       | freezer or waxed paper          |
|         | fans              | masking tape          | Hollytex (polyester spunbond    |
|         | plywood sheets    | scissors              | newsprint (sheets or rolls)     |
|         | polyethylene film | plexiglass sheets     | pliers, screw driver, tin snips |
|         | sponges           | polyester film        | milk crates or Rescubes         |
|         |                   | silicon release paper |                                 |

Preparations For Drying: Pack flat sheets in bread trays, flat boxes, or on plywood sheets covered with polyethylene. Bundle rolled items loosely and place horizontally in boxes lined with a release layer. Remove drawers from flat files; ship and freeze stacked with 1" x 2" strips of wood between each drawer. Framed or matted items must be removed from frames and mats prior to air or freeze drying. See **PAPER: FRAMED OR MATTED, PREPARATION FOR DRYING.**

Air Drying - secure a clean, dry environment where the temperature and humidity are as low as possible. Cover tables, floors or other flat surfaces with sheets of blotter or uninked newsprint.

Freezing - Work space and work surfaces and the following equipment: milk crates and/or cardboard boxes, bread trays, sheets of plywood and rolls/sheets of freezer or waxed paper.

Drying Methods: Air Drying - This technique is most suitable for small numbers of records which are damp or water-damaged around the edges. Keep the air moving at all times using fans. Direct fans into the air and away from the drying records. Use dehumidifiers as needed to maintain 50% RH.

Damp material - Single sheets or small groups of records are to be laid out on paper covered flat surfaces. If small clumps of records are fanned out to dry, they should be turned at regular intervals to encourage evaporation from both sides.

If an item exhibits water-soluble media, allow it to dry face up. Do not attempt to blot the item since blotting may result in offsetting water-soluble components. Wet blotter or newsprint should be changed and removed from the drying area.

Wet material - When separating saturated paper, use extra caution to support large sheets. If sheets are contained in flat files, standing water should be sponged out first. If items are in L-sleeves the polyester must be removed to allow drying. Cut the two sealed edges of the film in the border between the item and the seal. Roll back the top piece of polyester in a diagonal direction. If there are any apparent problems with the paper support or media, stop and seek the assistance of a Conservator. Support can be given to single sheets by placing a piece of polyester film on the top of the document. Rub the film gently and then slowly lift the film while at the same time peeling off the top sheet in a diagonal direction. Lay the sheet flat; as it dries, it will separate from the surface of the film.

Freezing - This option is best if there are large quantities or if the water damage is extensive. Place manuscript boxes in milk crates or cardboard boxes. If time permits, interleave each manuscript box with freezer or waxed paper. If the boxes have been discarded, interleave every two inches of foldered material with freezer or waxed paper.

Do not freeze framed items. Remove frame assemblage before freezing. See **PAPER: FRAMED OR MATTED, PREPARATION FOR DRYING.**