

Care and Preservation of Textiles

Local History Services
Minnesota Historical Society
Spring 2011



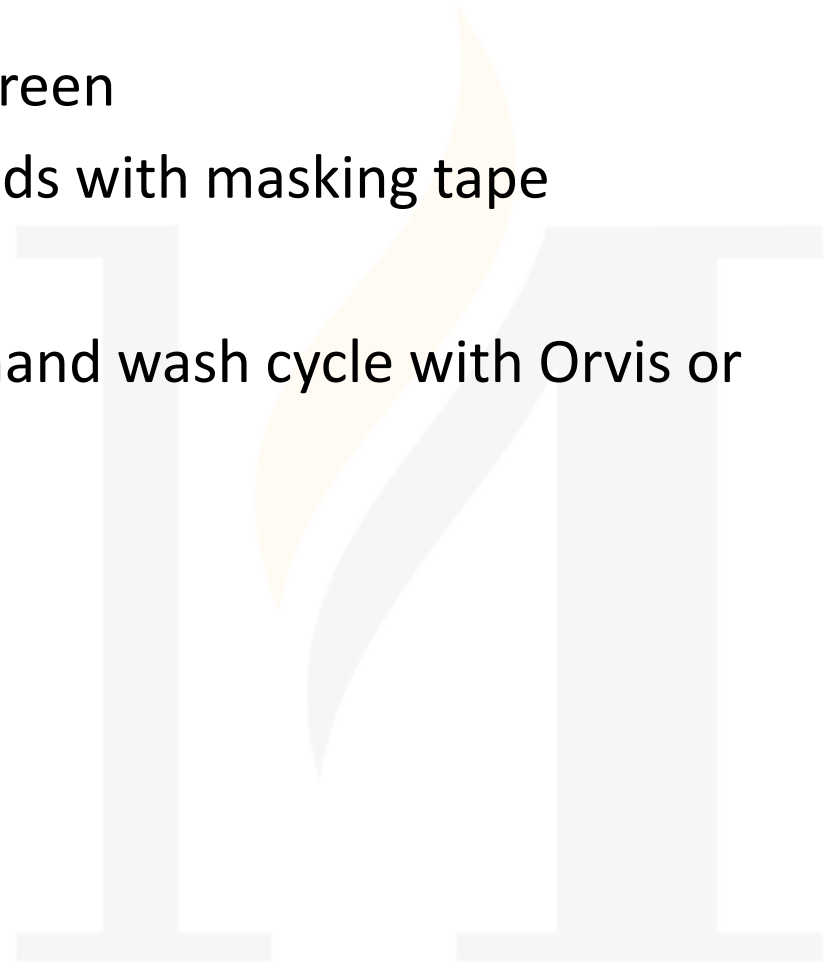
Topics

- Care/Cleaning
- Labeling
- Storage
- Exhibit
- Grants



Care/Cleaning

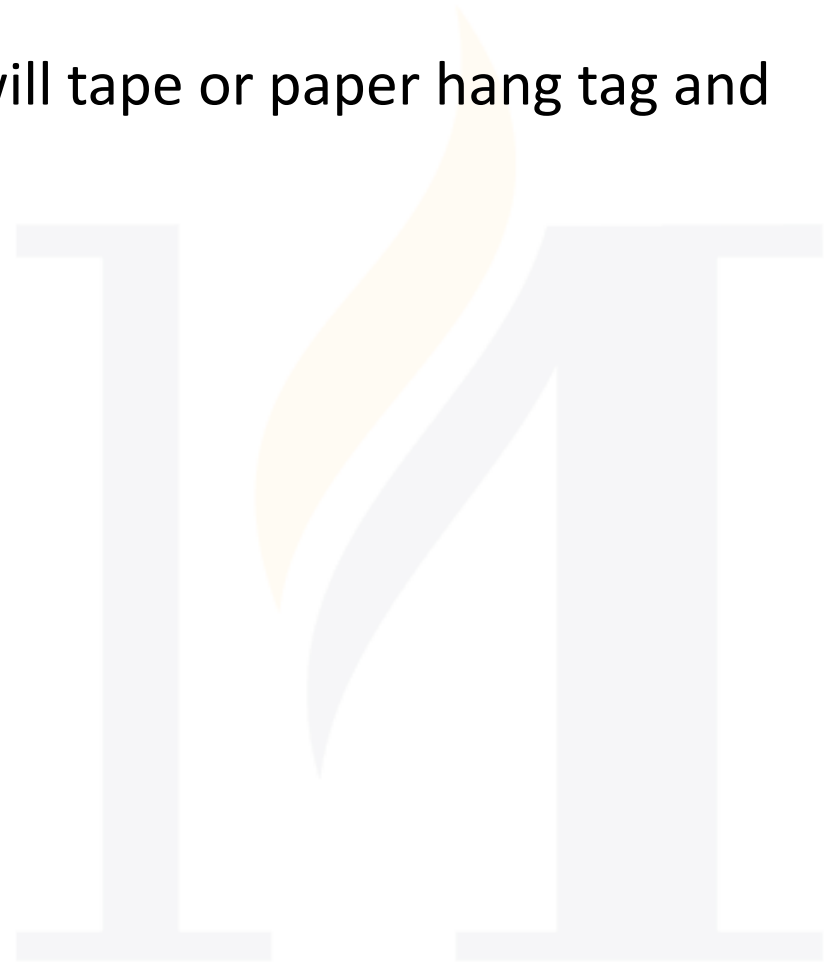
- Use low-suction vacuum with screen
 - Standard screening, tape ends with masking tape
- If sturdy, can wash on delicate/hand wash cycle with Orvis or Ivory Snow





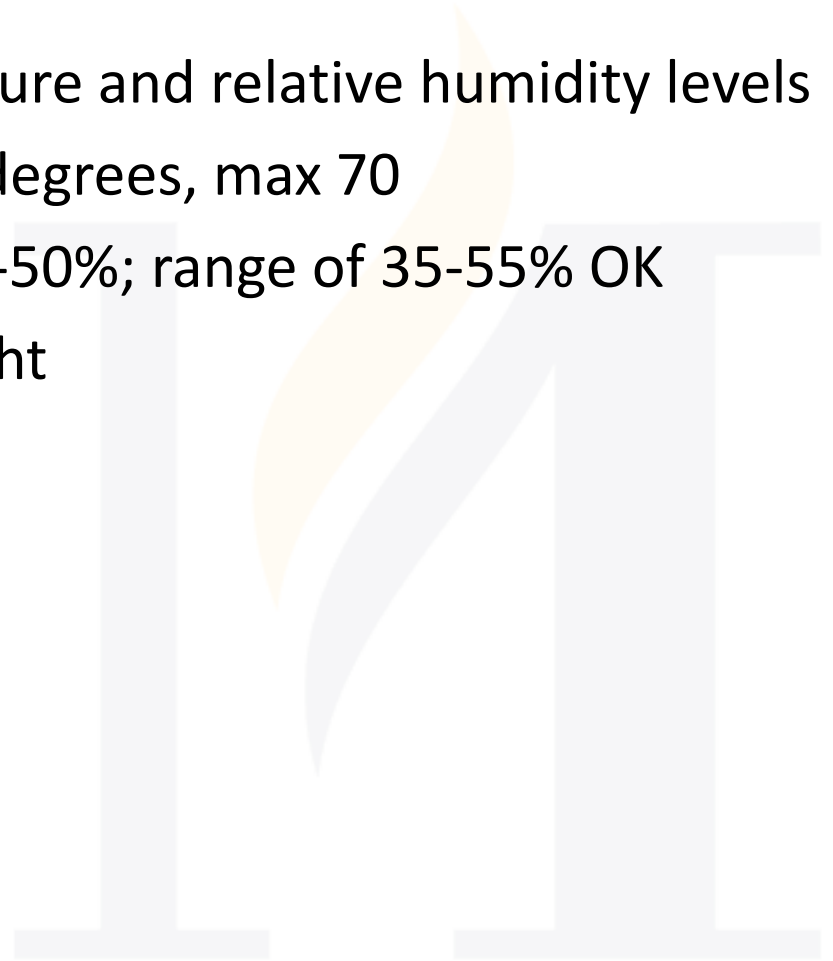
Labeling

- Write accession number on twill tape or paper hang tag and affix with cotton thread



Storage—Environment

- Try to keep constant temperature and relative humidity levels
 - Ideal temperature: 60-65 degrees, max 70
 - Ideal relative humidity: 40-50%; range of 35-55% OK
- Low light levels—ideally no light
- Keep dust down

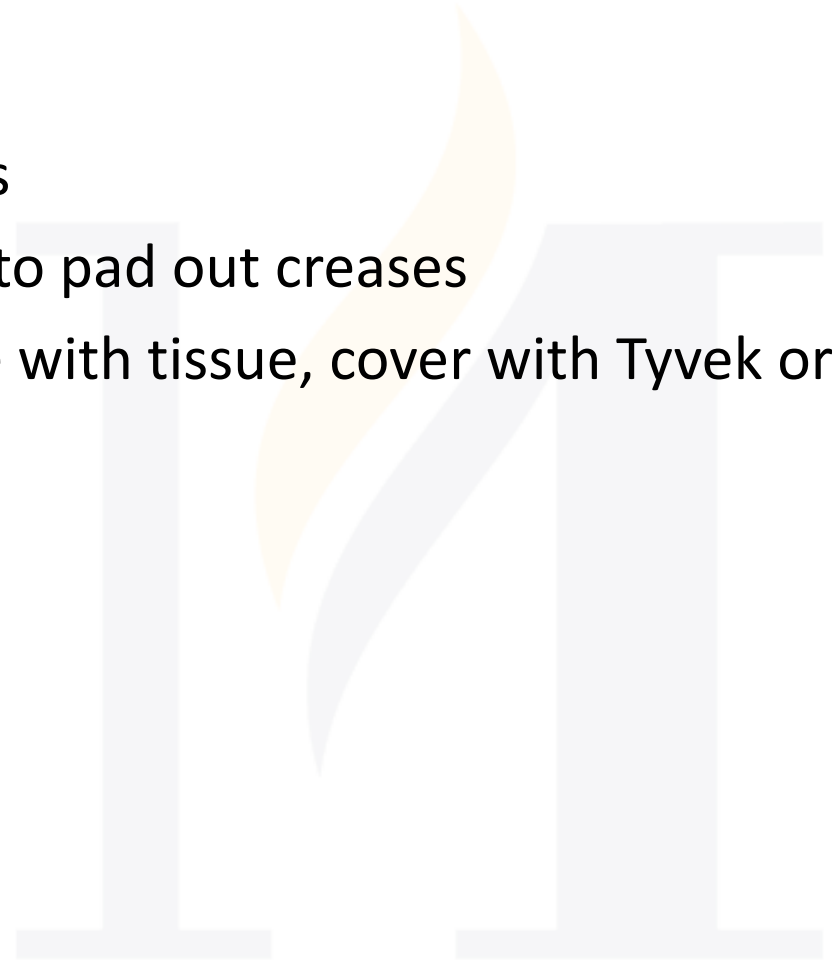






Storage—Methods

- Flat
- Hanging—use padded hangers
- Folded and boxed: make sure to pad out creases
- Rolled and hanging: interleave with tissue, cover with Tyvek or unbleached muslin

























Buffered vs. Unbuffered

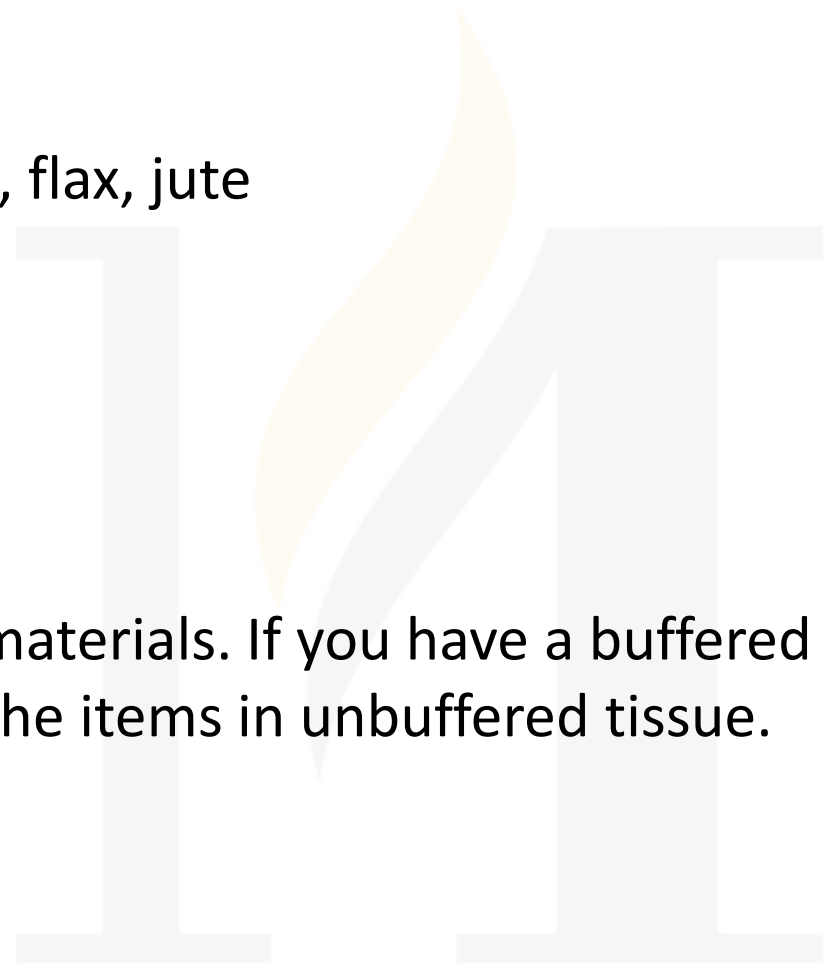
Use buffered tissue/boxes for:

- Cellulose fibers—cotton, linen, flax, jute

Use unbuffered tissue/boxes for:

- Wool and silk

When in doubt, use unbuffered materials. If you have a buffered box and need unbuffered, wrap the items in unbuffered tissue.



Exhibits

- Control light levels—no direct sunlight
- Use motion detectors or simply turn off gallery lights when there are no visitors
- Drape items that are light-sensitive—remove drape for visitors
- Make sure the objects are properly supported
 - Slant boards
 - Padded hanger, mannequin
 - Hanging over a tube
 - Hanging using Velcro strip
 - Folded
- Rotate items regularly so they can ‘rest’





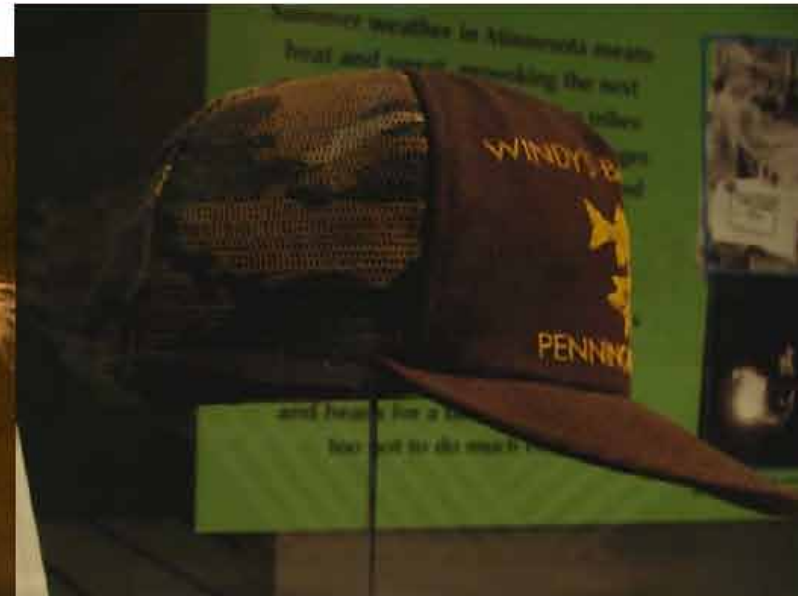












Grants Assistance

- Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants (Legacy Grants)
 - Manual online at www.mnhs.org/legacygrants
 - Grants available for multiple collections projects
 - Survey, Inventory, Cataloging, Storage/Rehousing, Conservation, Pest Management, HVAC, Lighting, Security, ADA Accessibility, Disaster Plan
 - No deadlines set yet; waiting on appropriation
 - Updates on website, Local History News

Grant Application Q & A

- Project Description
 - What exactly will you do? Be specific—What types of textiles? How many? What percentage of the collection?
 - For storage/rehousing: what size of storage materials? What kind of shelving? Why? How many storage materials vs. how many objects?
 - Needs to inspire confidence in the reviewer that the project is well designed and appropriate.
- Need and Rationale
 - Why this project? Why now?
 - Long range plan, museum assessment, etc.

Grant Application Q & A

- Work Plan and Timetable
 - What is the timeline for your project?
 - Build in extra time—keep in mind the project can't start the moment you mail the application!
 - Work Plan must show how the project meets standards
- Project Personnel
 - Who will be doing the work? What are their qualifications?
 - Include resumes or job descriptions/desired skills
 - Demonstrate procurement—have bids/quotes on file

Grant Application Q & A

- Evaluation
 - What are the outcomes?
 - How much of the collections will be preserved?
 - Volunteers or staff are better able to care for the collection with a prioritized list for collections care, conservation, etc.
 - In what way will the public have better access?
 - Measure with outputs
 - Percentage of collection affected
 - Numbers of people who will use the collection, etc.

Grant Application Q & A

- Enduring Value and Sustainability
 - Remember—Legacy Amendment = *preserve and enhance access to Minnesota's history and its cultural and historical resources*
 - Who will continue to care for the collections in the future?
 - How will your organization fund collections care?
 - What avenues will you use to ensure public access?
- Budget
 - Include catalog product numbers, prices, quantities
 - Be specific

Resources

- MHS Tech Talks:
<http://www.mnhs.org/about/publications/techtalk.html>
- NPS Conserve O Grams:
http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/publications/conserveogram/cons_toc.html.
- NPS Museum Handbook:
<http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/publications/handbook.html>
- Local History Office, 651-259-3460 (David) or 651-259-3459 (Melinda)
- Local History News newsletter

Questions?

