

National Task Force on Emergency Response Update #2 on Cultural Heritage

New York City

DAMAGE REPORTS

✓ Museums and art collections

The American Association of Museums (AAM) Web site indicates that all staff members have been accounted for and that collections are basically sound. Most problems relate to dust, ventilation systems, and interruptions to communications.

There are about 245 pieces of outdoor sculpture in Lower Manhattan, however there is no accurate report of damage as yet, except for excessive dust and soot. Battery Park is the most affected. Several monuments have become focal points for mourning in the community.

A spectacular art collection, including sculptures and drawings by Rodin, has been destroyed with the World Trade Center Towers. Cantor Fitzgerald lost hundreds of staff and the world's largest private collection of works by Rodin in the gallery known as the Museum in the Sky. The collection also included 19th Century American and European paintings, sculptures and photographs. Moreover, works by Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, Joan Miró and Roy Lichtenstein have been damaged or totally destroyed. The memorial fountain to the victims of the 1993 bombing was also lost.

✓ Historic Sites and Landmarks

Preservationists report that most of the 67 city landmarks below Chamber Street emerged ash-laden but unscathed. The hardest hit building seems to be Federal Hall National Memorial, although 13 historically or architecturally important buildings suffered various degrees of damage. An earlier FEMA Situation Update reported that the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church had been destroyed by debris. The Trinity Museum of the Parish of the Trinity Church and the Church itself are fine.

FEMA has been alerted to the existence of a valuable collection of artifacts related to the Five Points site and the African-American Burial Ground. The collection has been maintained by the General Services Administration and stored in the basement near 6 World Trade Center. The condition of the collections is not yet known, nor is their exact location in the ruins.

✓ Libraries and Archives

Most libraries in the area below 14th Street have reopened, except the New Amsterdam Branch of the New York Public Library.

The National Developmental Research Institutes library was totally destroyed. It was located in Building 2 of the World Trade Center. Finding out about damage to small libraries such as this one will take a long time.

Probably lost: a collection of 35,000 photographs and their documentation from the former Broadway Theater Archive. The archive was in the offices of Broadway Digital Entertainment, one block from 7 World Trade Center. A collection of videotapes, being preserved elsewhere, is safe.

THE CURRENT RESPONSE

- AAM has gathered information on resources and volunteering opportunities, and more than 35 offers of assistance from institutions and conservators have been received. These include, among others:
 - The Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC)
 - The New York State Office of Cultural Education
 - The Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA)Information is posted at www.aam-us.org/helpnyc/updates.htm
- Participants at a meeting on September 24, sponsored by the New York State Archives and the Archivists Roundtable of New York have undertaken several actions: a) gathering information on damage to collections and institutions; b) organizing appropriate materials and volunteers; disseminating information on available services; and d) coordinating efforts with national organizations. A full report on the meeting is available from Christine Ward at the New York State Archives, cward@mail.nysed.gov
- A consortium of five historic preservation organizations (the World Monuments Fund, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Preservation League of New York State, the Municipal Art Society and the New York Landmarks Conservancy) is creating the Lower Manhattan Emergency Preservation Fund. It will make grants to help alleviate the impact of the disaster and to restore damaged historic sites in Lower Manhattan. A special Web site has been established: nycpreservation911.org.
- The New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects is collecting information on those who need or can provide condition assessments. Help is also available for displaced firms. Contact Rick Bell, bell@aiany.org.
- The *Cultural Heritage Roster*, a database maintained for FEMA by the National Task Force on Emergency Response, will provide the FEMA Region II office with conservation and preservation names as needed. For further information, see <http://www.heritagepreservation.org/>

- Graduate students from Rutgers University's School of Library Science and Information Services have volunteered their skills in document research, information management and preservation. Contact Suzanne Szerlip, Scilsnewz@aol.com
- As reported earlier, the Library of Congress is leading an effort to collect and document information on the Internet related to September 11. A new site, September11.archive.org went online October 11, and already contains more than 500,000 Internet pages.
- The Special Libraries Association (SLA) set up a special Web site for the exchange of information and postings on the availability of office space for displaced library personnel:
www.sla.org/content/Help/webcomms/sept11help/index.cfm
- On October 4, the Museum of the City of New York and the National Museum of American History convened a meeting to encourage communication and collaboration on the issues of collecting and programming in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. A first step will be the establishment of 911history.net, a Web page where news and communications can be posted. A steering committee to consider future actions will be convened.
- The New York Regional Association for Conservation (NYRAC) met October 10 to discuss how conservators in the New York area can provide assistance to private collections and to the public. The group plans to prepare a simple brochure on salvage and recovery and, with a grant from the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation, hold a series of recovery workshops in New York.
- Dozens of studies on air quality have been conducted near Ground Zero in New York in the last 6 weeks, sometimes with conflicting results. The Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute is attempting to compile and analyze the various studies, as well as make information more accessible to the public. See www.eohsi.rutgers.edu/rc/response.shtml.

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