

Handling High Risk Materials
University at Albany Libraries, Preservation Department

These are recommended procedures for staff who encounter materials returned to Circulation, found in book returns, or discovered in the stacks that are, or are suspected of being

- Wet
 - Moldy
 - Infested with insects
 - Treated with chemicals (e.g., insect spray, gasoline, Lysol)
 - Otherwise unsafe to handle (e.g., biohazards)
1. Remain calm.
 2. If the patron is present find out what you can about the suspected nature of the problem.
 3. If the materials are returned in a plastic bag leave them in the bag. Otherwise immediately put them into a zip-loc bag and seal it tightly.
 - If there is a health or safety risk do NOT discharge it. Bring it to a supervisor immediately.
 4. Make a note of the patron's ID and list the affected titles, if possible. Notify your supervisor of the problem.
 5. Daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. call the Preservation Librarian at 437-3923 and describe the damage. If no one answers dial the general number of the Preservation Department, 437-3925 to report the situation. For immediate assistance after hours contact Karen Brown (consult the University Libraries Emergency Response Plan, available on the staff intranet, for her contact information).
 6. If the book is WET and you cannot contact Preservation staff FREEZE the book to stabilize and prevent mold.
 7. Work with Preservation staff to arrange transport to the Preservation Department, SL 310. DO NOT send materials through the campus mail/courier.
 8. Preservation staff will examine the materials and report back with the facts of the problem if one is identified and whether they can be salvaged or must be disposed of.

Based on procedures developed by Columbia University Libraries 2007
Last updated: January 17, 2008 KEB