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Collection Development
Preservation Preparedness

For each of these problems, there are a few options of what to do to ‘save’ the library.

1) For the bedbug problem, the first thing I would do is take the books in question out of circulation, as well as check any of the surrounding books for signs of the infestation. A commercial exterminator would be called to best find a way to deal with the bug situation on the floor/shelf of the library (to ensure that the bedbugs don’t spread to any other books). The best way I can figure to deal with the bedbugs in the actual books would be to freeze-dry them. This would kill any existing bugs in the books that were infected and also kill any eggs in the materials without having to expose the books to dangerous chemicals. The materials near the infested books will also be freeze-dried to ensure no insect eggs survive to infect other books. If the exterminator has a treatment to remove the bugs without damaging the books, that will also be applied to as many items as the budget affords. Once the books are examined, new copies will replace those that need to be. To ensure the remaining books are not infested, the exterminator will be consulted for bait traps and a strict “No Food in the Stacks” rule will be in place, to deter bedbugs from continuing to thrive in the materials for patrons.

2) When dealing with fire, the first solution is to put the fire out, obviously. I would hope that a wood/paper fire extinguisher would be on hand. If one isn’t on hand, then smothering the fire is the next best option. After the fire has been put out, the books will need to be inventoried to determine which ones need to be replaced due to burns or smoke smell. The books in acceptable condition will be checked in and returned to

collection. The remainder of the books will have to be repaired or replaced, at the expense of the person who dropped the cigarette if at all possible.

3) The first priority is to remove everything that can be saved from the technology department. Isolating the area and collecting as much of the water as possible is the main priority. Maintenance should get to the roof quickly, locate the ice dam and break it up. Additionally, something should be used to stop or slow the flow of water with roofing tape and a tarp over the damaged area after the snow has been cleared away with an aluminum rake. This can be a quick fix until a roofer can come and repair the hole in the roof, but it should be strong enough to prevent too much damage to the technical services department. Once the hole in the roof is repaired, the maintenance staff will have to work to clear the gutters and break up some of the ice on the roof to prevent the event. Frequent checks will have to be done to look for icicles hanging from the gutters to stay on top of ice dams in future years. An inventory should be taken to determine if anything is too damaged and needs to be replaced. The computers should be protected as best the staff can possibly manage, but any items that can afford to be replaced should be prioritized by use.