



ART COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Last-minute severe weather tips for collectors

Ideally, an emergency plan for a collection is prepared in advance of hurricane season and simply executed as needed. However, there are several last-minute steps you can take to help protect your in-home collection in advance of a severe storm, as well as guidelines to follow in the immediate aftermath.

Before the storm

1. Create a safe storage area for more important and/or fragile objects. This space should be away from windows and doors, such as an internal room or closet, and preferably above the first floor.
Note: If possible, all works of art should be moved and packed by professional art handlers.
2. To protect the collection from flooding and leaks, elevate items at least six inches above the floor.
3. If possible, protect outdoor sculpture from high winds, salt spray and flying debris by bringing them inside to a protected garage or similar space. For larger sculpture that cannot be moved at the last minute, consider protecting the surface with well-secured tarps or blankets.
4. Jewelry and other valuables should be stored in your bank vault or home safe.
5. If porcelain, crystal, or other breakables are stored in cabinets, ensure that all cabinet doors are secured shut.
6. Compile a contact list of preferred conservators and art handlers to respond in the event something is damaged.

After the storm has passed

If you discover damaged items, there are a number of steps you can take to mitigate damage and prevent further deterioration, even if you cannot get your art to a conservator immediately:

- Photograph the damaged item(s) in situ if possible. Both overall pictures and details are helpful.
- Save all pieces or fragments you can find.
- Do not attempt to clean anything using chemicals or abrasives.
- Report the damage to your independent insurance advisor or to AIG Private Client Group's claims hotline at (888) 760-9195.

After the storm has passed (continued)

Depending on the type of artwork in your collection, be mindful of the following suggestions:

Photographs

Wet photographs that have been damaged by flood water may be rinsed with clean water. To prevent further damage or mold, place wax paper between photographs and freeze them immediately. Photos can be defrosted, separated and air dried later.

Books

Books that have become wet are susceptible to mold growth if the temperature is above 70 degrees and the relative humidity is over 60% for longer than 48 hours. To stabilize books and prevent mold growth, freeze them. To pack them for freezing, wrap individual books in paper and pack each book spine down in a waterproof container or cardboard box lined with plastic. If books can be air-dried, they should be stood up and fanned open. Drop the room temperature as low as possible to discourage mold and use a fan to circulate air. Once dry, books should be placed flat with a heavy weight on top to prevent or minimize warping.

Textiles

Do not unfold extremely wet, fragile textiles until dry. Remove mud and debris and re-wet textiles with clean flowing water. To dry, gently press out water with the palm of your hand, do not wring or twist. Blot with dry towels to remove excess water. Do not stack textiles while they are drying, Air dry textiles indoors with the lights on to prevent mold growth. Use fans and dehumidifiers if available.

Paintings

Keep wet paintings horizontal with paint side up. As soon as possible, the works should be unframed by a conservator or framer.

Works on paper

If a framed work on paper is wet and stuck to glass or glazing, leave it in the frame and dry glass-side down.

Sculpture

For large-scale outdoor works, do not move sculptures or pieces of works unless they are in danger of collapsing or they are in the path of rushing water. Be mindful of sharp edges, broken pieces and exposed nails. Do not attempt to clean surfaces with pressurized water, bleach or cleaning solutions. If it can be avoided, do not allow works to dry in the sun or too quickly as this might further damage their surfaces.

In the event of a major storm or hurricane, our Art Collection Management team will be standing by. We work closely with our adjusters and conservation professionals to assist clients in protecting their collections and mitigating damage following a storm. For more information on developing an emergency plan for your collection well in advance of a storm, email collections.pcg@aig.com.

