



# PROACTIVE AND RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES

for protecting, recovering, and restoring critical  
documents and special archives



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POLYGON – PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

When disaster strikes, an immediate response is critical—especially for your documents. For quick and effective remediation partner with experienced vendors early. They will help you develop a document and contents recovery plan to save time and minimize damage.

Losing valuable documents can bring your organization to a halt, yet some organizations overlook document and contents recovery when creating a business continuity plan. In an emergency, scrambling to find help can cost you precious time. Effective restoration specialists will strive to learn about your business as well as your documents and contents to keep you running smoothly. For example, Polygon has 30 years of document

restoration experience as well as many more years of deep technical knowledge and operational experience in climate control and emergency drying techniques. Our goal is to work with clients proactively to reduce the need for responsive services. With 19 offices, 2 dedicated document recovery centers and 1 contents center, we can support and prepare the most prestigious museums, libraries and institutions across the country.



**MATT DECIRCE**

Director of Client Development,  
East, Polygon

Over 20 in restoration and 12 years at Polygon working with clients like MIT, Boston Public Library, Harvard, the MET, on their emergency preparedness plans and recovery programs.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

Every service provider manages projects differently. Polygon's program is designed to be as proactive as possible. Clients register for free by filling out a detailed questionnaire about the facility and the items they want to protect.

Polygon will call or meet with you to collect additional information, learn about the collection, and understand the building in greater detail. We might ask for or to take photos to develop a clearer picture of what is involved.

Then, we will create a rapid response profile that project managers and technicians can use to effectively recover contents at your location and work to reverse the damage as quickly as possible.

Through our program, clients get priority access to document recovery and emergency drying services making them the first to receive attention. When emergencies happen and resources are limited this could make a great difference in the outcome of a document or building.

Polygon may also suggest the use of sensors to monitor and alert on poor conditions such as high temperatures and excessive humidity, or leaks. Real-time monitoring helps stakeholders be proactive before mold and moisture take hold. This and all other options can be reviewed, considered, even tested during the preparedness planning process.

**“Universities have a treasure trove of collections, both physical and in the digital world,” DeCirce said, “and a lot of these collections are unique and priceless. They go above and beyond to protect these items. The best way to protect items in the event of a disaster is to have a plan in place.”**

Matt DeCirce  
Director of Client  
Development at Polygon

**Want to be a Polygon  
Code Blue Client? Apply at  
[polygongroup.us/codeblue](https://polygongroup.us/codeblue)**

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: THE 4 R'S

### 1. RISK

Begin by identifying vital records and the risks they may encounter. Then develop and implement policies and procedures for mitigating those risks.

### 2. READINESS

Next, develop plans, policies, and procedures for mitigating risk and responding to emergencies.

### 3. RESPONSE

The window before the records deteriorate beyond recovery can be as short as hours. The time it takes to respond can be critical.

### 4. RECOVERY

This last phase involves the necessary actions taken to salvage the records to the best possible extent.

The 4 R's Emergency Preparedness guidance documents were prepared by the [Council of State Archivists \(CoSA\)](#) with support from Polygon and are based on CoSA's work for the Intergovernmental Preparedness for Essential Records (IPER) Project.

**Read the full article or download a check list at [polygongroup.com/en-US/blog/emergency-preparedness-the-4-rs/](https://polygongroup.com/en-US/blog/emergency-preparedness-the-4-rs/)**

## POLYGON – PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

# HURRICANE WATER DAMAGE IN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Nearly 6 years after Hurricane Maria devastated the region, the historic documents in the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña (ICP) in Puerto Rico will be cleaned and restored. It took time for museums and libraries to gain access to funding and find specialized service providers to support them on the island.

During the hurricane the roof to the cultural center was damaged. Over time, water leaks affected the top floor which stored special collections and records of Puerto Rican history and culture. Local managers tried to control the excessive humidity with portal dehumidifiers, but microbial damage started to encroach the space and affect its contents.

In 2020, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) was supporting ICP, and asked their existing document restoration vendor, Polygon, to assist. Polygon flew out, assessed the damage, and got underway with lining up the resources to process the materials. There were some delays with funding and the release of materials but finally in 2023 a 40-foot cargo container protecting more than 2,000 boxes were shipped to Polygon's Document Recovery Processing Center.

“Unfortunately, the time between the hurricane, the leak, and when we can start cleaning will have an effect on the condition of the materials. Ideally, we want to be well-informed of the kind of materials and the building before an event happens,” said Matt DeCirce, Director of Client Development. .

**“Speed helps minimize the damage – and cost. Nonetheless, we are confident we can help bring this collection back to a good state.”**

In September 2023, Polygon began work. The specialized 3-phase recovery process started by normalizing the moisture levels of the paper materials in a state-of-the-art drying chamber. Next, the team will neutralize any microbes on the archives in a remediation process. Lastly, technicians will delicately surface clean each page and recreate the housing with new acid-free folders. Items will be placed in archival cases for long-term preservation of the historic collection.

For an update on how this job turns out, including before and after pictures, sign up for our newsletter at [polygongroup.us/PolygonPages](https://polygongroup.us/PolygonPages)







## POLYGON – PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

# CONTINUOUS ENVIROMENTAL MONITORING

Universities, libraries, and galleries can benefit from monitoring the environmental conditions of their spaces to help protect their materials as well as their staff and patrons from poor air quality, excessive humidity, and water leaks.

Monitoring climate conditions can help stakeholders see potential issues before they turn into costly or devastating impacts to a collection or building. Systems that continuously collect and aggregate real-time data from multiple spaces can make the process very efficient. Data loggers require a lot of handling and processing making it laborious for staff, difficult to glean insight, and by the time a problem is discovered, the effects might have already been realized.

Temperature and humidity are fundamental parameters to track. However, there is technology available that allows users to monitor these alongside other important environmental factors such as indoor air quality, volatile organic compounds, dust and particulates. Facilities can also monitor water leaks which are particularly critical in low-traffic and high-risk areas especially during off-seasons like summer breaks.

### MONITOR

Temperature and Humidity

Leak detection

Dust and particulates - PM1, 2.5, 4, 10

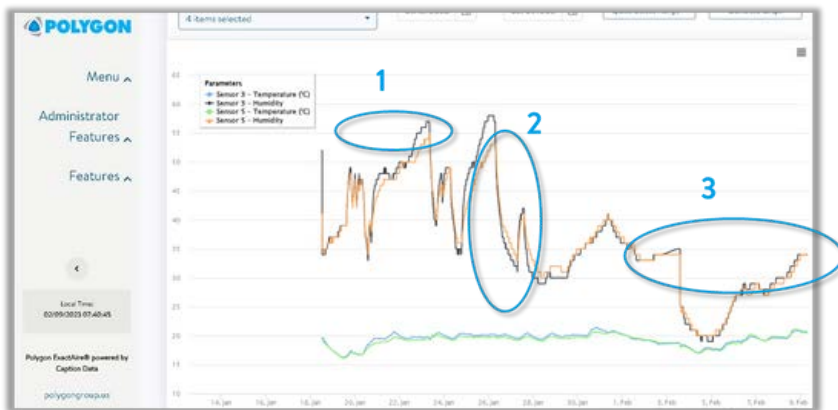
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

## INSIGHTS AND ALERTS FOR BETTER INDOOR SPACES

When shopping for monitoring solutions, look for devices that provide easy to read dashboards and customizable real-time alerts. Also search for useful reporting features and micro-climate control options. Often, data will be used by stakeholders at different levels and for different reasons.

For example, a facility manager might need alerts for basement water leaks while a gallery manager might want a history of conditions overtime to prove their gallery is being managed properly for an incoming exhibition. Moreover, the curator might require tighter temperature and humidity

control for special items than what the house system is capable of. In this situation, consider technology that can be connected to temporary climate control equipment like dehumidification, filtration, ventilation, and heating/cooling. Together, the system can actively produce and maintain a spec without capital expenditure or wasted energy usage.



- 1 Monitoring of temperature and humidity begin at a historic artifact museum.
- 2 Monitoring reveals humidity levels are out of bounds. Extra dehumidification equipment is brought in to help control conditions.
- 3 Humidity stabilizes with help of climate control equipment.

**“Time is critical to keeping damage to a minimum. Remote climate monitoring and leak detection can help you watch over valuable materials. Live updates and alerts mean you can react quickly. Historical data gives you visibility into trends or emerging issues to help you mitigate potential risk.”**

David Simkins  
Director of Engineering  
and Technology at  
Polygon



“

We want to give our customers visibility and control of their indoor spaces. Events will happen, disasters will strike. But with more information and a well-thought-out plan, we can save them time, money, and most importantly, their documents and artifacts.”

Frank Dobosz  
President of Polygon US





## POLYGON – RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES

# DOCUMENT RECOVERY AND CONTENTS RESTORATION

Each year, Polygon salvages millions of paper and film-based documents, artwork, photography, and objects damaged by water or fire. The types of documents may range from books to historical artifacts, tax, medical and legal records, and special collections.

Damaged documents deteriorate quickly, so timely and appropriate recovery is necessary to halt the progression of damage. No matter what you are trying to save, consider a vendor who uses the most technically advanced processes and equipment to meet the specific needs of each project.

Experienced partners will be able to quickly identify and recommend the best recovery method for a

particular material, based on the value of the documents or contents and level of damage.

Value restoration professionals will practice strict security and discretion as well as strive to minimize disruption to your operations. This includes how they approach and structure the project, as well as giving you access to materials while in processing.

**“Polygon provided me with a contact number if there was a situation where I needed an x-ray urgently, and [when I did] I always received them on time.”**

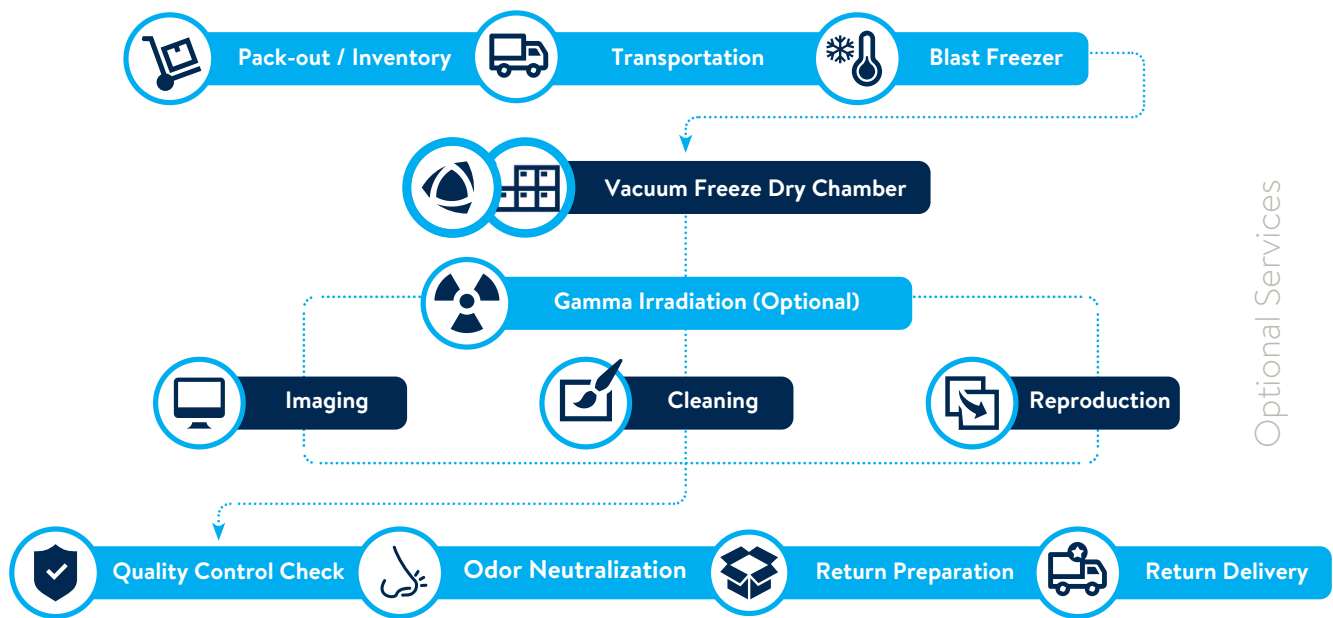
Imaging Services Director,  
Carilion Franklin Memorial  
Hospital

## PROCESS

Each step of the document recovery process is a contributing factor to the successful restoration of your materials. Through the entire process you should expect your vendor to deliver the highest quality, safety, and security standards.

Communication about the process and throughout the process is a must. So be sure to ask potential vendors questions like, who will be your main point of contact? or what happens if I need a document during the project? See more question below.

Download a copy of this process with Polygon emergency contact details for your files at [polygongroup.us/docs-process](https://polygongroup.us/docs-process)



### QUESTIONS TO ASK A POTENTIAL RESTORATION SERVICE PROVIDER

1. What document restoration techniques do you use?
2. How long have you been in the business?
3. Who will be my point-of-contact?
4. Can you share at least three references?
5. What document security measures do you use?
6. Can I get access to materials while in processing?

BEFORE AND AFTER



SUPPORT AND SERVICES

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Disaster Planning    | Odor Neutralization    |
| Consulting           | Digitization & Copying |
| Vacuum Freeze Drying | Archival Restoration   |
| Onsite Drying        | Film & X-Ray Recovery  |
| Surface Cleaning &   | Blast Freezing & Cold  |
| Debris Removal       | Storage                |
| Mold Treatment       | Insect & Pest          |
| Sterilization        | Eradication            |
| Disinfecting         |                        |



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

# RAPID AND BROAD RESPONSE POST HURRICANE HARVEY

In late summer of 2017, Hurricane Harvey made landfall in the Gulf of Mexico region of Texas and Louisiana. In addition to over 100 lives lost, the Category 4 hurricane triggered unprecedented flooding that inundated hundreds of thousands of homes, and commercial and government buildings in Southeast Texas and surrounding areas.

After initial rescue missions and safety protocols were underway, Polygon pitched in to recover critical documents, archives and books of dozens of businesses and organizations throughout the region.

“We started by reaching out to our Code Blue clients, letting them know we are ready to help when they were ready,” said Chris Chylack who was a Project Supervisor during the time and now District Manager of Polygon’s Document in Allentown, PA. “We had already mobilized equipment, people, and partners in just a few days. We knew we needed boots on the ground to accelerate the recovery and minimize damage.”



**CHRIS CHYLACK**  
District Manager, Polygon

While some teams worked on drying out buildings with climate control and water-extraction equipment, Chris and his team spent over three weeks meeting with clients. They spent time evaluating damage, coordinating emergency pack outs, as well as managing shipments to Polygon’s National Document Recovery Centers.

“We inventoried materials at multiple sites – many in Harris County - loaded boxes into refrigerated trucks to stabilize and drove them to our processing centers. I remember moving 10, maybe 12, 53-foot freezer trailers.”

“...an event can be a chaotic and emotional experience for our clients. That is why it is important that we communicate clearly and often.”



Polygon leverages network partners to expand storage capacity and keep materials safe until they can be handled by trained technicians and processed in specialized freeze-dry chambers.

“We helped a lot of organizations in a short period of time. The early assessment and pack-out phases during an event can be a chaotic and emotional experience for our clients,” Chylack explained. “That is why it is important that we communicate clearly and often to create the most effective recovery process for all involved.”

Chris spent time with clients to understand the nature of the materials and organizing high-priority items that might be needed for insurance or legal matters. “Knowing what they care about most is critical to ensuring access to documents during the restoration process and ultimately the safe and timely return of documents.”

**For more on our projects,  
helpful information and tips,  
join our newsletter at:**  
[polygongroup.us/PolygonPages](https://polygongroup.us/PolygonPages)



## ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED

Harris County Jail and  
Judge Office

Justice of the Peace

City of Houston - City Hall

Schools and Museums

Nursing Homes

Hilton Garden Hotel

Lake Forest Utility District

San Jacinto County and  
Orange County Courthouses

Chevron Phillips

Du Pont

Murphy Exploration and  
Production Company

Suburban Propane





## POLYGON – RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES

# EMERGENCY DRYING AND TEMPORARY CLIMATE CONTROL

Work with a partner who can help restore documents and contents as well as help restore your building and space to suitable conditions. For over 60 years, Polygon has been recognized as the US leader in engineering, installing, and operating temporary dehumidification and climate control solutions.

Providers who solve one piece of a puzzle may be exceptional at that one piece. However, if you want to mitigate the most risk, you should consider vendors who offer restoration services and proactive solutions.

Because Polygon has experience in climate control and a track record of emergency drying during 100's of hurricanes and catastrophes, we can help you with the complete indoor climate management of your space

before and after an event. We can diagnosis problem areas with connected sensors, then use equipment to improve them. If there is an event, we can work with your disaster recovery provider to supply additional equipment and services.

As a result, we can minimize potential damage and also expedite the recovery on two fronts. We are the only specialized restoration partner that helps its clients be both proactive and responsive in this way.

Susquehanna River  
Flood 6/2006  
Susquehanna River  
Flood 9/2011  
Louisiana Flood 8/2016  
Hurricane Matthew  
Superstorm Sandy  
Tropical Storm Lee  
Tropical Storm Ike  
Hurricane Harvey  
Hurricane Irma  
Hurricane Ida



Thousands of libraries,  
museums, and institutions  
have successfully saved  
critical information,  
historic documents and  
priceless artifacts by  
employing Polygon as  
their partner.

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To set up a consultation or to  
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andresponsivesolutions](https://info.polygongroup.com/proactiveandresponsivesolutions)