



**CT State Library**

*Office of the Public Records Administrator*

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**State Records Management Training**

**Session 7**

**RECORDS PRESERVATION &  
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

**May 21, 2025**

**Presented by**

**State Archives**

**Office of the Public Records Administrator**

# Presenters

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**Lizette Pelletier**

*State Archivist*

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*Government Records Archivist*

State Archives

Connecticut State Library

<https://portal.ct.gov/csl/departments/state-archives>

# Agenda

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## ❖ Records Preservation

- Responsibilities
- Life Expectancy
- Inherent Vices

## ❖ Disaster Preparedness

- Responsibilities
- Essential Records
- Risks
- Response / Recovery

# Records Preservation

**Damon Munz**

Government Records Archivist

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<https://portal.ct.gov/csl/departments/state-archives>



# Preservation vs Conservation

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- ❖ **Preservation** – To prevent/reduce damage and to extend life.
- ❖ **Conservation** – To treat and repair individual items to restore them to a usable state.

# Preservation Responsibilities



- ❖ Provide adequate safe storage space
  - Physical
  - Digital
- ❖ Provide careful supervision of records and their use
- ❖ Identifying permanent records

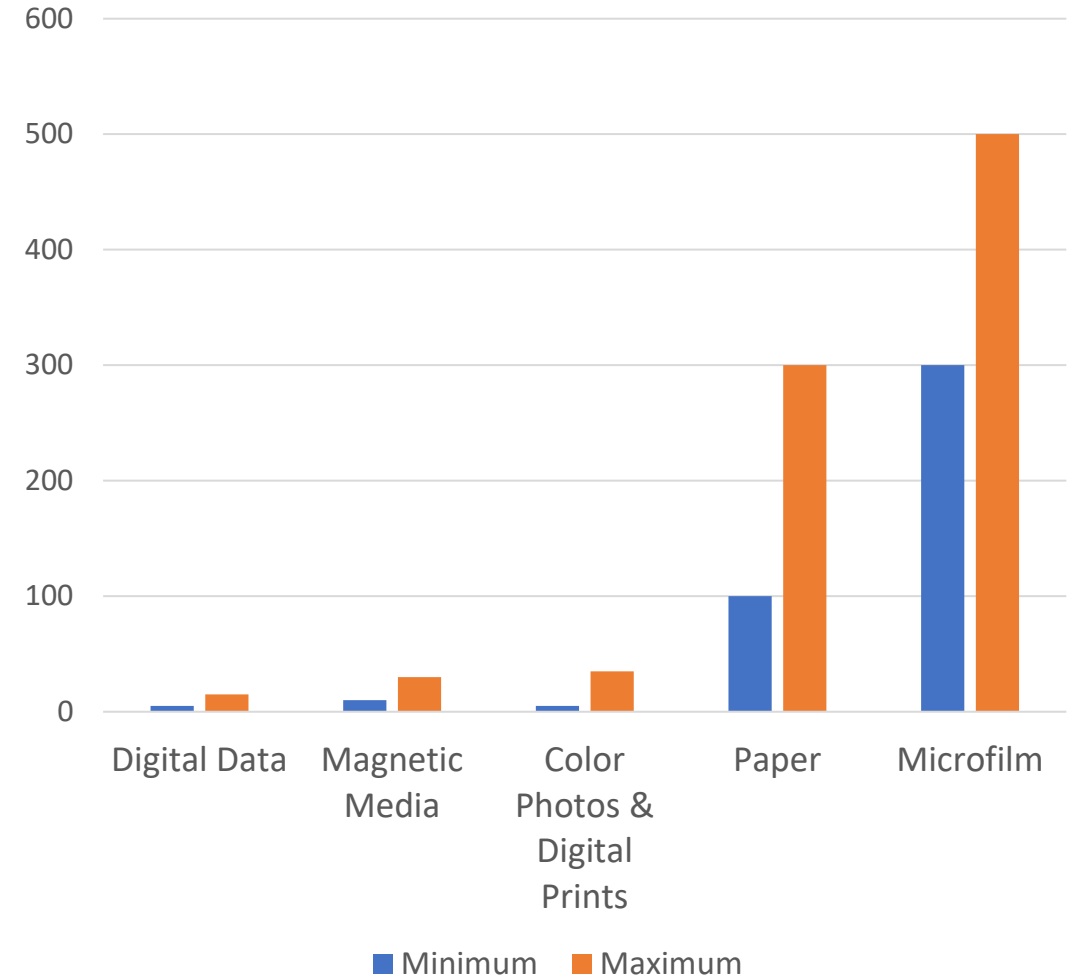
# Common Life Expectancy\*

\*if properly made and properly stored



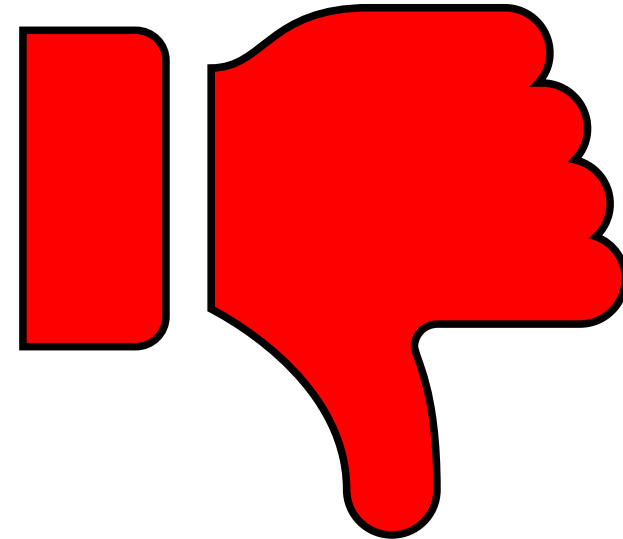
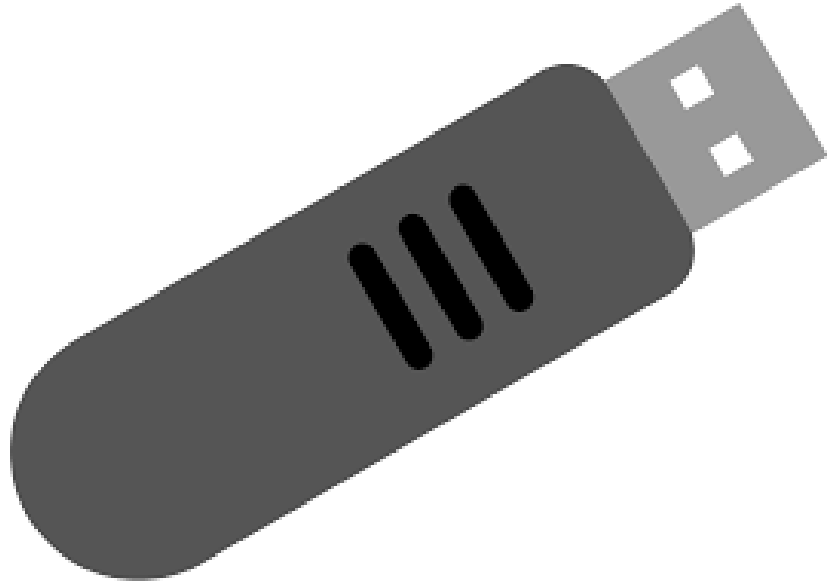
- ❖ Digital data
  - 5 to 15 years (storage medium, software, and hardware must all be functional)
  - Unknown (third-party data hosting vendors lifespan and terms of service)
- ❖ Magnetic media (video, cassettes, etc.)
  - 10 to 30 years (if equipment available)
- ❖ Color photographs & Digital prints
  - Noticeable fading in 35 years
- ❖ Paper
  - Several hundred years
- ❖ Microfilm
  - 300-500 years

Years of Record Life Expectancy



# Common Life Expectancy\*

\*if properly made and properly stored





## ❖ Threats to a record's life span:

- Inherent weakness and poor materials
- Environmental factors
- Poor housekeeping
- Poor shelving and enclosures
- Magnetic fields
- Static electricity



# Inherent Vice



10

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Governor Rell's Scheduling Sheet  
CONFIDENTIAL

Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day of Week: Friday Location: Hartford  
Event Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Letter Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Letter Received: 1/24/07  
Scheduler's Comments: Regret - OSS. Send someone?

Lisa's Recommendation: repeal They have asked if we could send a representative -  
Press Opportunity? \_\_\_\_\_  
Governor's Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
OFFICE INFORMATION

NO

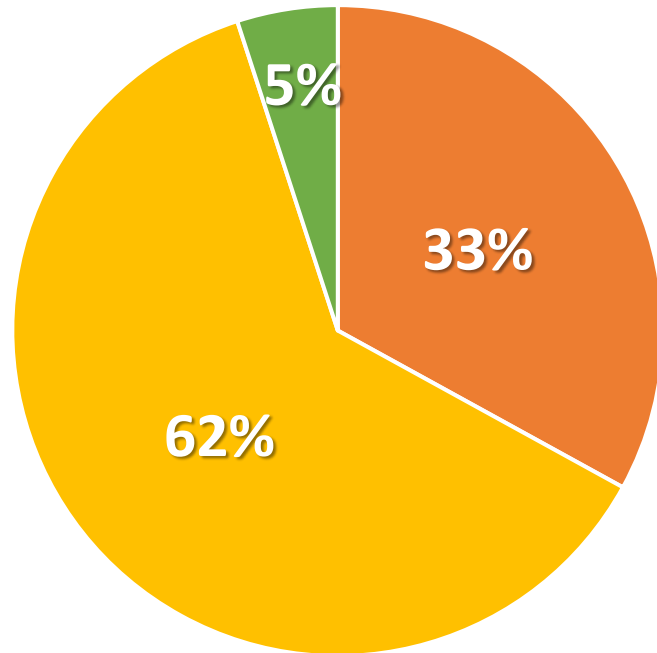


- ❖ Any property that causes a material to self-destruct
- ❖ Materials and manufacturing processes
  - Ink
  - Color pigments in film and photography
  - Adhesives

# Inherent Vice



Organizational Records



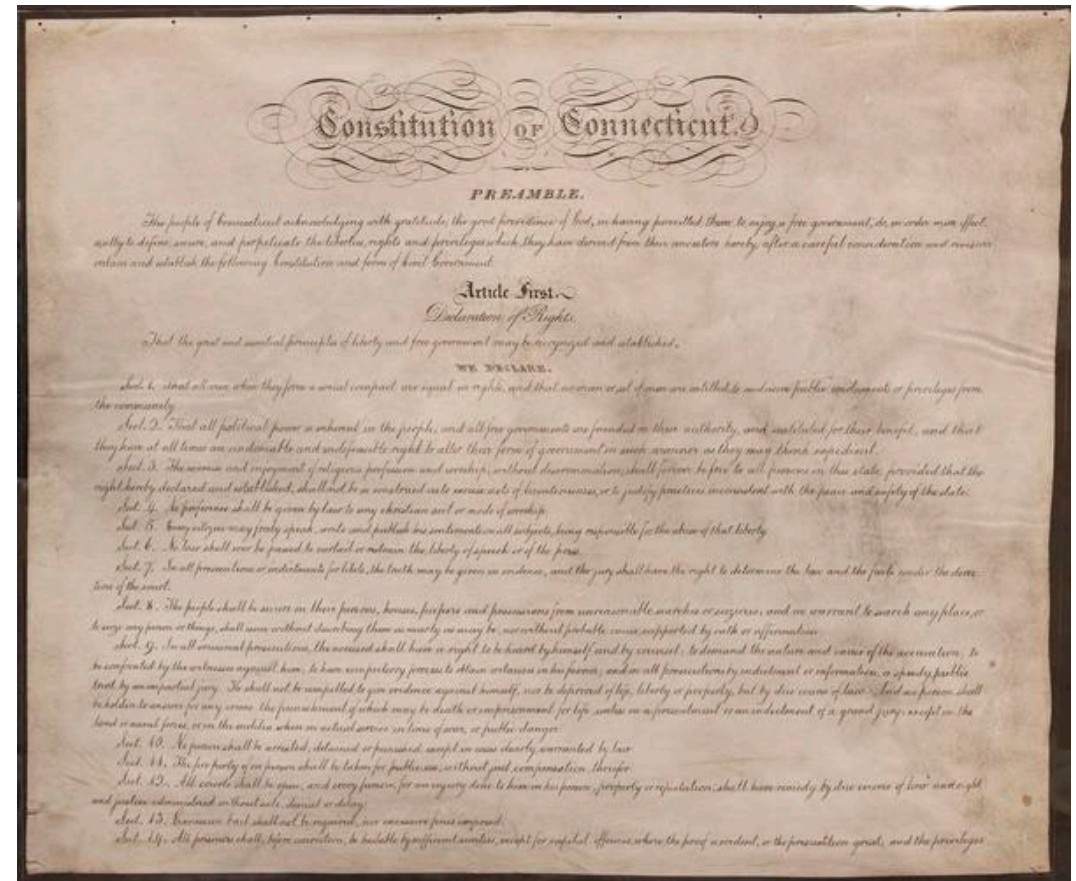
- Redundant, Obsolete, and Trivial
- Active and Inactive Awaiting Retention
- Archival

- ❖ **Redundant, Obsolete, and Transitory**
  - Records that legally can and should be destroyed.
  - Both paper and electronic form
- ❖ ROT accumulates over time
- ❖ Inherited ROT is a common challenge.

# Stabilize the Medium



- ❖ Information is primary
  - Recreate onto permanent paper
  - Get a high-quality reproduction (graphic materials)
  - Follow the electronic records management policy and digital imaging standards
- ❖ Intrinsic Value
  - Conserve using the most appropriate methods



# Proper Shelving



## ❖ Storing items

### — Upright

- Books and films
- magnetic tapes and compact discs

### — Flat and fully supported

- oversize books and maps

## ❖ Shelving

- **Metal shelves (powder coated)**
- **4 inch minimum** from off the floor,
- **Materials should not touch exterior walls**



# Keep Records Dry



- ❖ Avoid
  - Basement and Attic
  - Near or under pipes
- ❖ If unavoidable
  - Away from walls
  - Keep off the floor
- ❖ If no climate control
  - Fan
  - Dehumidifier

# Poor Housekeeping



- ❖ Clutter
- ❖ Dust, grit, air pollution
- ❖ Rodents and vermin
  - Food source
  - Nesting



# Good Housekeeping



- ❖ Maintain a stable environment
- ❖ Keep the area clutter free
- ❖ Dust and vacuum regularly
- ❖ Get rid of excess copies and unrelated materials
- ❖ Keep food and drink in a separate area

# Reformatting or Re-creation



## ❖ *Conn. General Statutes §§ 1-13; 1-16 through 1-18*

- Any officer of the state ... may cause any or all such records, papers or documents to be photographed, microphotographed or otherwise reproduced by electronic imaging or any other process approved by the Public Records Administrator.”

## ❖ *Reformatted records*

- *Microfilming standard General Letter 96-2*
- *Public Records Policy [PRP] 04: Electronic Records Management*
  - *Electronic Records Standards [PRS 04-1]*
  - *Digital Imaging Standards [PRS 04-2]*

# Why Not Digitize Everything?



- ❖ Retention of physical archival material remains standard practice
- ❖ Digitization is not a proven long-term preservation method
- ❖ Costs of labor and storage space
  - Estimated cost for 25 million pages (10,000 cubic feet) is **\$1.76 billion dollars**
  - Manual metadata creation
  - Trusted digital preservation repository

# Additional Information

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## Resources for RMLOs

Northeast Documents Conservation Center:

<https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview>

Connecticut State Library

<http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/collserv/preservationbasics>

# Disaster Preparedness

**Lizette Pelletier**

State Archivist

<https://portal.ct.gov/csl/departments/state-archives>



# Enduring Constitutional Government

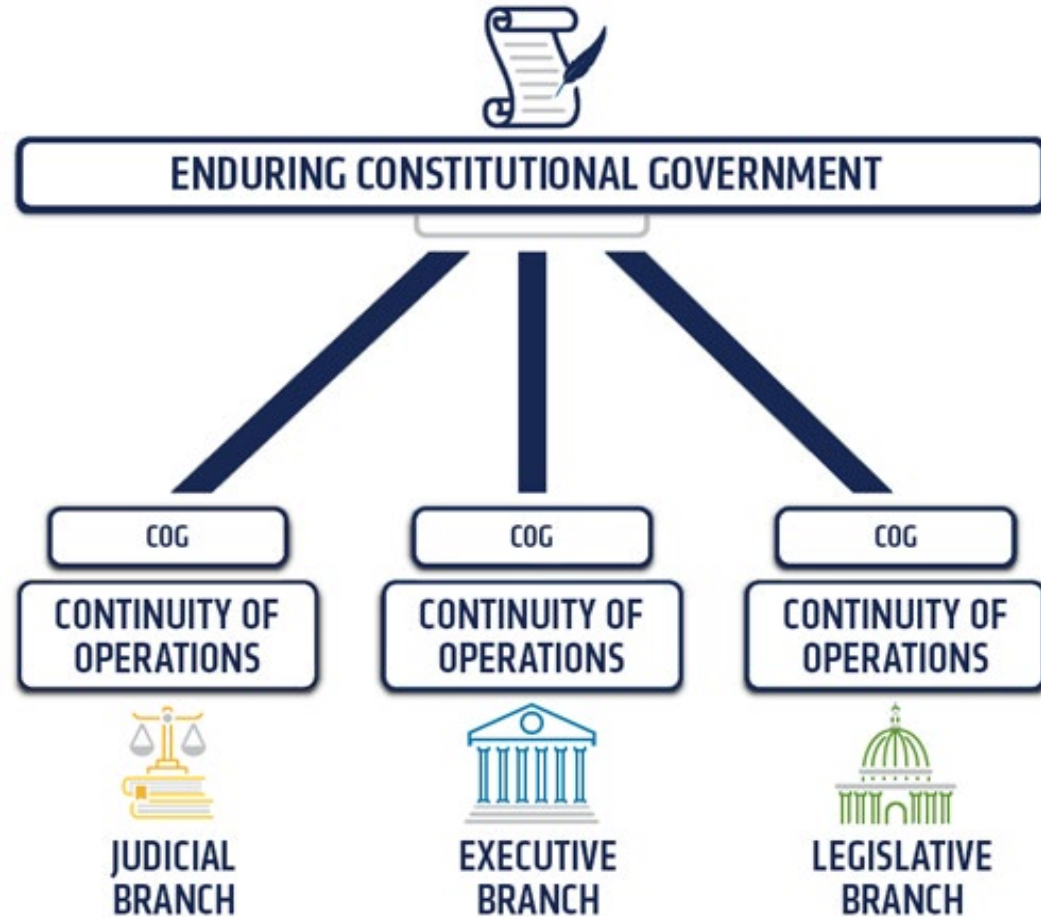


Image: Indiana Department of Homeland Security

- ❖ Cooperative effort among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches
- ❖ Preserve the framework under which people are governed.
- ❖ Focus on the ability of the three branches of government to
  - coordinate and execute constitutional responsibilities,
  - provide for orderly succession and appropriate transition of leadership,
  - support essential functions during an emergency.

# During an Emergency ...



Provide  
critical  
services



Exercise civil  
authority



Maintain  
safety and  
well-being of  
the general  
population



Protect rights  
of its citizens



Sustain the  
economic  
base



Continue to  
operate under  
all  
circumstances

**Government must ...**

# During an Emergency ...



Could your agency or office access the records needed to continue to operate?



Waveland, MS City Hall after Hurricane Katrina

# During an Emergency...



Could your agency or office access the records needed to continue to operate?

**System failures continue to disrupt Louisiana OMV services; governor declares state of emergency**



<https://www.fox8live.com/2025/03/23/system-failures-continue-disrupt-louisiana-omv-services-governor-declares-state-emergency/>



**Moldy contaminated records from a basement sewage backup in a government facility**

**Cyberattack hits New York state government's bill drafting office**



FILE - The New York State Capitol stands on March 13, 2023, in Albany, N.Y. The New York state Legislature's bill drafting office has been hit with an apparent cyberattack Wednesday, April 17, 2024. (AP Photo/Hans Pennink, File)

<https://apnews.com/article/new-york-cyberattack-legislature-bill-drafting-4f680cbcb88254642666ff8976ae13e9>

# Composite County Hazard Ranking



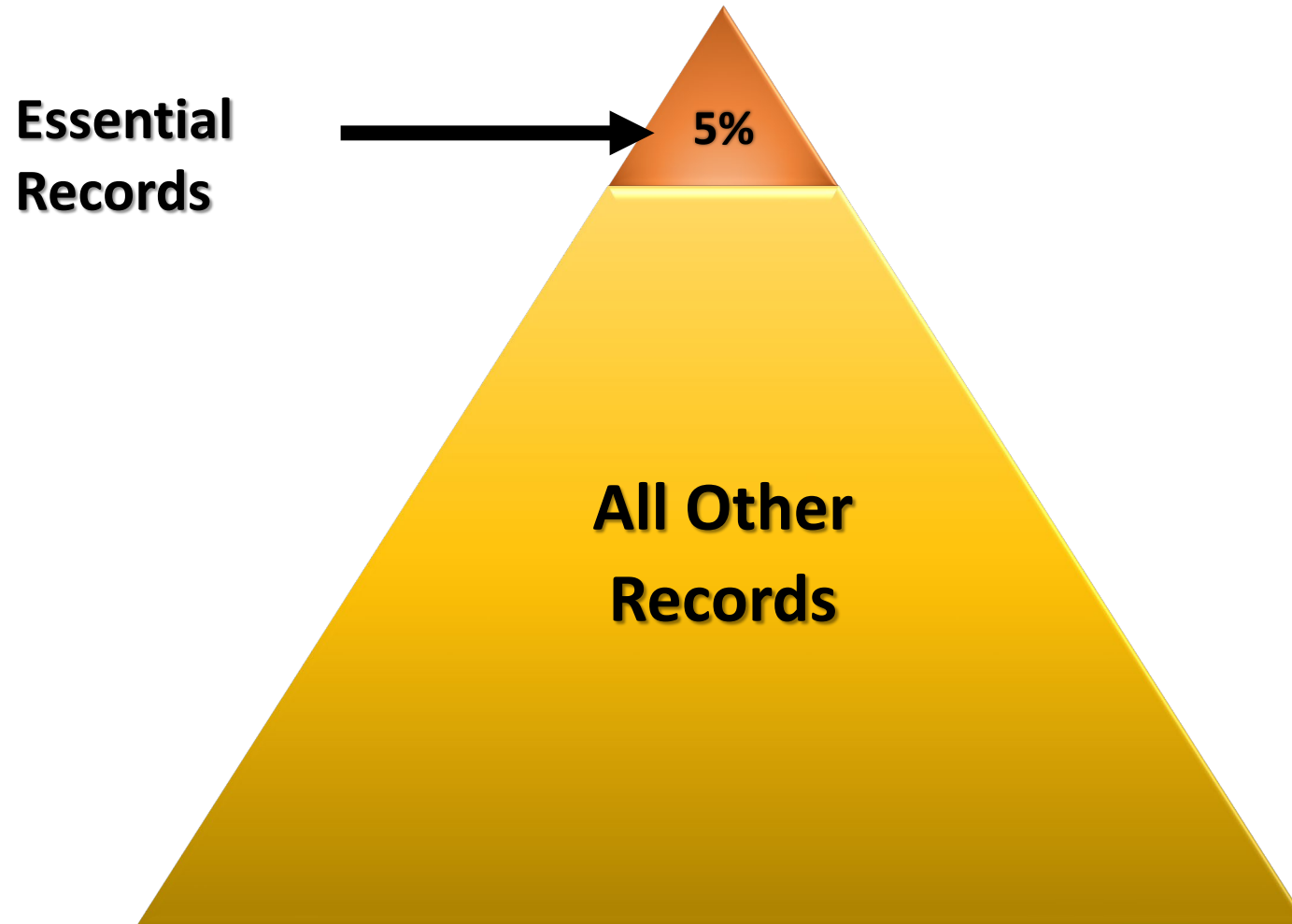
Event	Hartford	Litchfield	Tolland	Windham	Middlesex	Fairfield	New Haven	New London
Tropical Cyclone	4	2	2	1	3	4	5	4
Extreme Heat	4	2	1	1	2	4	4	3
Flood	4	3	1	2	2	4	3	3
Drought	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	3
Thunderstorm	4	3	4	1	2	5	4	4
Extreme Cold	4	3	1	1	2	4	4	3
Tornado	5	4	2	1	2	3	4	1
Winter Weather	4	3	2	2	1	4	3	1
Dam Failure	2	3	2	1	2	3	3	3
Wildland Fire	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
Earthquakes	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	1
		Low	Medium Low	Medium	Medium High	High		

Table 191: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/demhs/\\_docs/plans-and-publications/ehsp0024---2023-natural-hazard-mitigation-plan---final.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/demhs/_docs/plans-and-publications/ehsp0024---2023-natural-hazard-mitigation-plan---final.pdf)

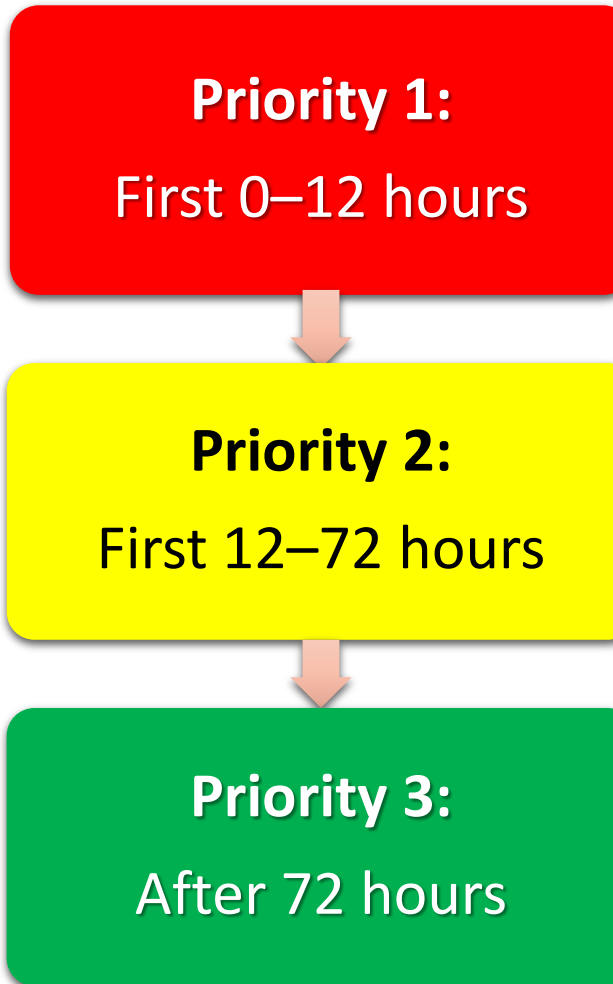
# Essential Records



## Critical Services and Emergency Response



# Which Records Are Essential?



# Emergency Management Cycle



# Mitigation

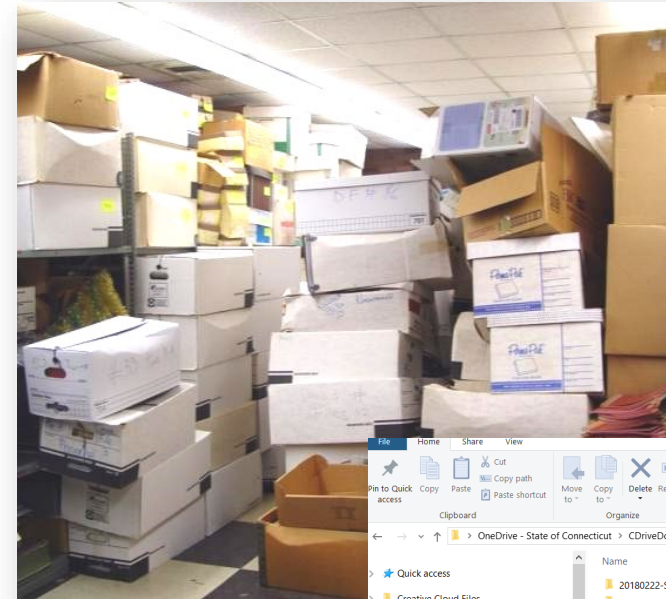


# Assess the Risks



## ❖ Potential Risks

- Poor records management
- Loss of institutional memory
  - Physical
  - Intellectual
- Emergencies
  - Natural disasters
  - Technological issues
  - Civil emergencies



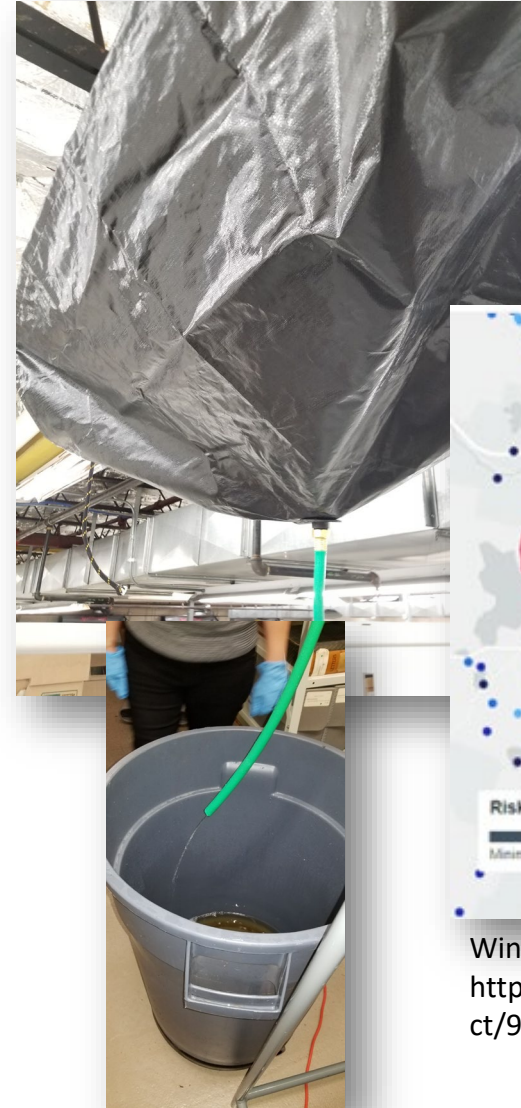
Name	Status	Date modified	Type	Size
20180222-SHRAB Town Hall(8308836335...		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Allen Ali Nomination		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
AllStaffDay		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Bluetooth Exchange Folder		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
CONNector		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
CoSA		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
CT History Day		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
CT SHRAB		1/18/2022 3:12 PM	File folder	
CTDA_DigitalPreserv		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
FileNet ECM		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
For review		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Genealogy		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
GRANTS (NOT SHRAB)		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Homework		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Old Stuff for review		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Permission to Public		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Policies and Procedures		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Preservation Contract		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
PublicRecordsStateCT		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
Resources		6/26/2020 11:32 AM	File folder	
2019 Connecticut State Employees Camp...		3/5/2020 4:18 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...	828 KB
Accessions		3/1/2019 10:57 AM	Microsoft Excel W...	19 KB
ARMLO Email Query		10/17/2019 10:35 AM	Microsoft Excel W...	14 KB
Backup of Accessions		3/1/2019 9:39 AM	Microsoft Excel Ba...	20 KB
Candidate question-LPrev		10/22/2019 3:36 PM	Microsoft Word D...	14 KB
CORE Chartfield Values Summary		11/5/2008 9:54 AM	Microsoft Excel 97...	266 KB
Core-CT Codes		5/14/2013 3:38 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...	91 KB
ElectronicRecords&Annet-Deferred Skills		10/4/2018 11:37 AM	Microsoft Word D...	73 KB

# Assess the Risks



## ❖ Existing Risks

- Physical location
- Vulnerable areas
- Security and controls
- Timing
  - Seasonal
  - Workday v. evening or weekends



Winsted CT flood risks:  
[https://riskfactor.com/city/winsted-ct/987350\\_fsid/flood](https://riskfactor.com/city/winsted-ct/987350_fsid/flood)

# Assess the Risks



## Leading Cause of Damage - Water

- ❖ Floods
- ❖ Leaks
  - Roofs
  - Basements
  - Pipes
- ❖ Fire response

# Risk Assessment



RISK ANALYSIS RATING SYSTEM				
Impact of Risk	<b>High</b>	Catastrophic impact; devastating loss  The event has little chance of occurring.	Catastrophic impact; devastating loss  Similar events have occurred in the past.	Catastrophic impact; devastating loss  The event is expected to occur.
	<b>Medium</b>	Serious/critical impact; significant loss  The event has little chance of occurring.	Serious/critical impact; significant loss  Similar events have occurred in the past.	Serious/critical impact; significant loss  The event is expected to occur.
	<b>Low</b>	Minor/marginal impact; some loss  The event has little chance of occurring.	Minor/marginal impact; some loss  Similar events have occurred in the past.	Minor/marginal impact; some loss  The event is expected to occur.
		<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Probability of Risk</b>				

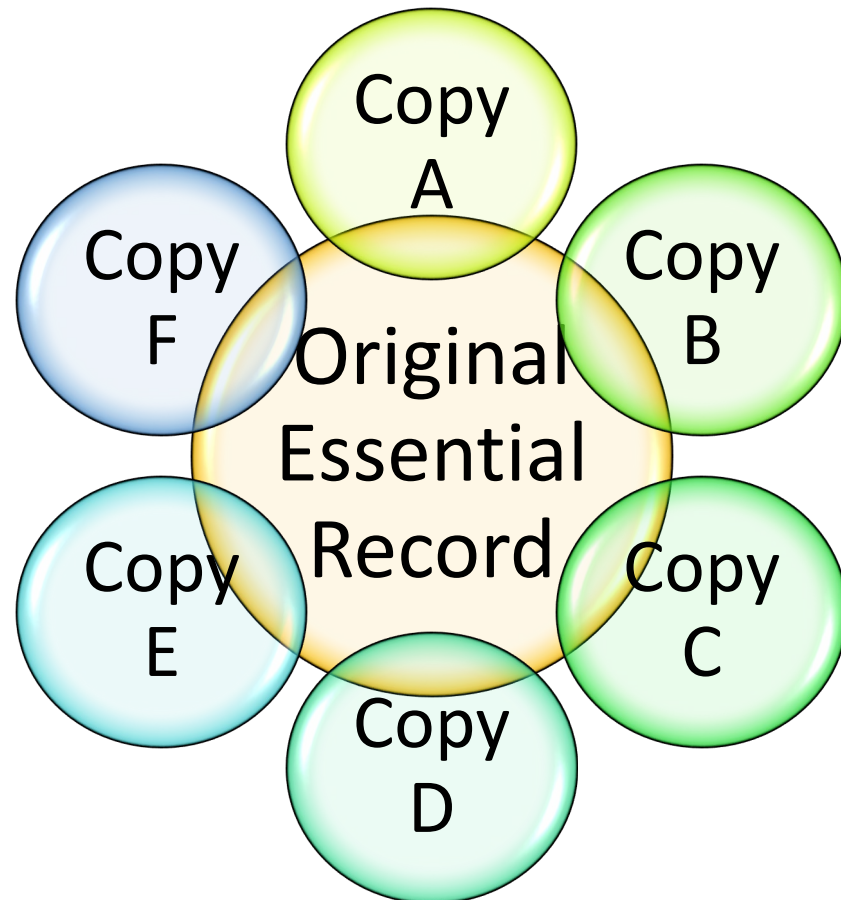
= Take Action

= Take No Action  
(at this time)

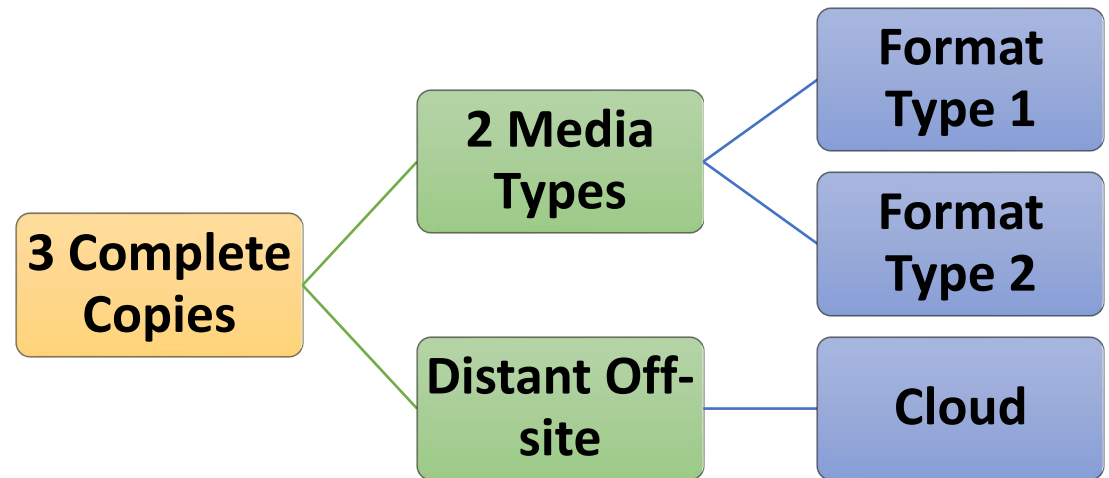
# Risk Mitigation



## Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe (LOCKSS)



## 3-2-1 Backup Rule



# Continuity of Operations Plan



## Continuity Plan Template and Instructions for Non-Federal Entities and Community-Based Organizations

[Department/Agency/Organization Name]

[Month Day, Year]

[Department/Agency/Organization Name]

[Street Address]

[City, State Zip Code]

[Department/Agency/Organization Symbol/Logo]

August 2018

Continuity Plan Template and Instructions for Non-Federal Governments September 2013

### ANNEX C. ESSENTIAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT

*This section should address the Essential Records management requirements needed to support MEFs during a continuity event. The identification, protection, and ready availability of Essential Records, databases, and hard copy documents needed to support MEFs under the full spectrum of all-hazard/threat emergencies are critical elements of a successful continuity plan and program. Sample text for this section is provided below.*

“Essential Records” refers to information systems and applications, electronic and hard copy documents, references, and records, to include classified or sensitive data, needed to support MEFs during a continuity event. [Organization Name] has incorporated its Essential Records program into the overall continuity program, plans, and procedures.

The [Organization Name]’s Essential Records program incorporates into the overall continuity plan with a clear authority to include:

- Policies
- Authorities
- Procedures
- The written designation of the [Organization Name] Essential Records manager

The [Organization Name]’s official Essential Records program:

- Identifies and protects those records that specify how the organization will operate in an emergency or disaster
- Identifies those records necessary to the organization’s continuing operations
- Identifies those records needed to protect the legal and financial rights of the organization

Within 12 hours of activation, continuity personnel at the continuity facility for the [Organization Name] should have access to the appropriate media for accessing Essential Records, including:

- A local area network
- Electronic versions of Essential Records
- Supporting information systems and data
- Internal and external email and email archives
- Paper copies of Essential Records
- [Insert any other media here]

#### Identifying Essential Records

The [Organization Name] has identified the following as vital to its operations, and has assigned responsibility for those records to the [insert personnel or office here], which includes a combination of continuity personnel, personnel in the [insert division/office title here], and records management personnel.

Continuity Plan Template and Instructions for Non-Federal Governments September 2013

### SAMPLE

The following table shows examples of Essential Records, files, and databases.

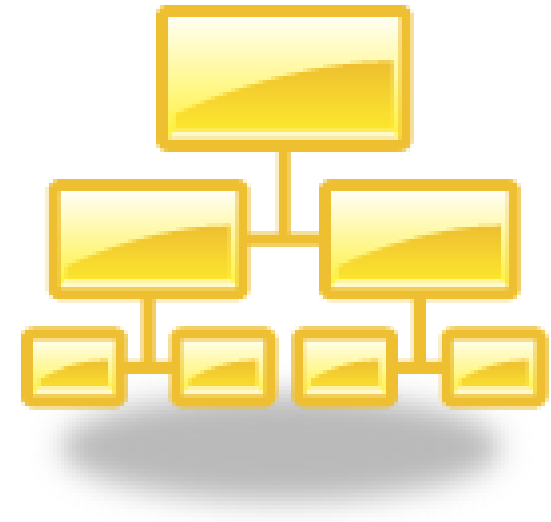
Essential Record, File, or Database	Support to Essential Function	Form of Record (e.g., hardcopy, electronic)	Pre-positioned at Continuity Facility	Hand Carried to Continuity Facility	Multiple Storage Location(s) Y/N	Maintenance Frequency
Mapping Database	Function #1	Electronic	X		Y	Monthly
Licensed Spill Cleanup Contractors List	Function #1 & 3	Hardcopy		X	N	Quarterly
Regional Dams List	Function #2	Hardcopy		X	N	Annually
Pollution/Chemical Incident Database	Function #3 & 4	Electronic	X		N	Monthly
Public and Private Sewage System Records	Function #3, 4, & 5	Electronic	X		Y	Quarterly

For additional information on Essential Records management, see CGC 1, Annex I.

# Records Emergency Action Plan (REAP)



- ❖ **Official document** that includes the **information and actions** needed to **respond to and recover from a records emergency**.
  - Responsibilities and Authorities
  - Records Salvage Priorities
  - Vendors and Suppliers



# If A Disaster Occurs ...



- ❖ You **must notify** the Office of the Public Records Administrator
- ❖ **Written permission** is necessary **before disposal of any damaged records**



# Assess the damage



- ❖ **Nature and severity**
- ❖ **Safety is paramount:**
  - Do not enter until location is declared safe
  - Ensure that hazards have been corrected
  - Ensure that the location is secured
  - Establish a security entry checkpoint



# Assess Ability to Handle



- ❖ **Time is of the essence.**
  - **Mold** develops in **48 hours**
  - Information **loss accelerates**
- ❖ If records are **accessible**
  - **Mitigate damage** to records
    - Move from area or cover
    - Lower temperature
    - Circulate air
- ❖ If records are **not accessible**
  - **Plan** next steps
  - **Gather** supplies



Slide  
1-39

# Special Handling Required



## ❖ Mold

- **Appropriate personal protection is critical**
- **48-hour** window
  - high temperatures
  - high moisture content
- **Quarantine** records
- **Cannot remove** from wet or damp records



# Special Handling Required



## ❖ Stand upright:

- Small, bound volumes with rigid covers that are **partially wet or damp**



## ❖ Lay flat:

- Volumes with **soft covers**

## ❖ Lay flat and open:

- **Large and heavy volumes**
- **Folders**



# Special Handling Required



- ❖ Special Media Records
  - CDs and floppy disks
  - Maintain the box with the information on the contents



Photo courtesy of NARA—Suitland—NIH material—2006

# Outside Expertise is Available



**BELFOR** 



 **POLYGON**



[Public Records Home](#) > Essential Records Program

## Essential Records Program

- The Essential Records program supports the identification, preservation, protection, and accessibility of essential records of the state and of its political subdivisions.
- Essential records are those that are essential for the government to continue operating during or after an emergency or disaster.
- The Essential Records Program is administered by the Office of the Public Records Administrator in accordance with Sec. 11-8(a) of the General Statutes of Connecticut

### What Constitutes an Emergency or Disaster?

Emergencies can be small, like a burst pipe within an office or storage area; mid-sized, like a propane tank leak that forces the closure of town hall for multiple days; or large scale, like tornadoes, hurricanes, snowstorms, and power outages that Connecticut may experience. Each one of these events could and has had an impact on public records.

### How do Public Agencies Operate During or After an Emergency or Disaster?

Public agencies provide essential services, so they'll need to continue operating during or after an emergency or disaster. Essential records are critical for the government to resume normal operations in these circumstances.

### Essential Records for Emergencies and Disasters



# For Additional Training



FEMA

## ❖ Basic Emergency Management

- Federal Emergency Management Administration [FEMA]

FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers free of-charge independent study courses designed for people with emergency management responsibilities in some form and the general public. The courses range from basic introductory to advanced certification. A complete listing of courses is available on the FEMA training website. <https://training.fema.gov/is/>

## ❖ Records Disaster

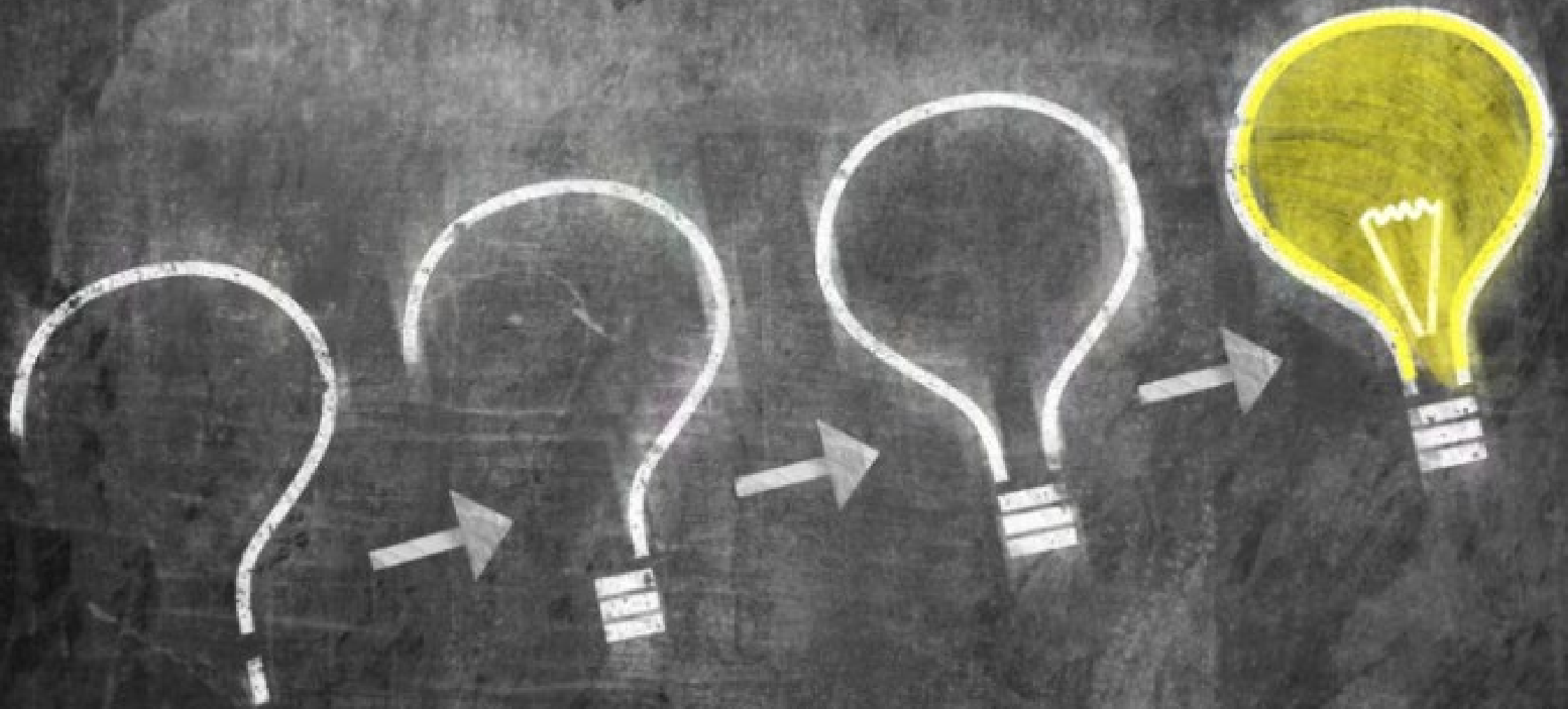
- Northeast Document Conservation Center  
<https://www.nedcc.org/preservation-training/training-currentlist#scheduled>

# Thank you!

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- ❖ *Recordings of previous sessions are available through the Office of the Public Records Administrator*
- ❖ *Keep an eye out for future presentation announcements*



**Questions?**





# CT State Library

*Office of the Public Records Administrator*

## State Archives Contacts

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<https://portal.ct.gov/csl/departments/state-archives>

**Office of the Public Records Administrator**

**Elise Marzik**, *Records Management Specialist* | (860) 757-6513 | [elise.marzik@ct.gov](mailto:elise.marzik@ct.gov)

*State Records Management Program:* <https://portal.ct.gov/csl/departments/public-records/state-program>