



SAVING YOUR Treasures

A Website about what you can do to protect and preserve the things of importance in your life



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STORAGE AND EXHIBIT MATERIALS GUIDELINES

Through research and experimentation, chemists and conservators have determined some general guidelines for the selection of materials for use with valuable heirlooms, museum objects, and library collections.

The following materials have been determined to be **relatively safe for use in close proximity to collection objects**:

- Plastics
 - Polypropylene plastics, (PP), Recycling Code 5
 - Polyethylene plastics, fibers, and foam (Volara®, Ethafoam®, Trirod®), (HDPE, LDPE), Recycling Codes 2 and 4
 - Polystyrene plastics, (PS), Recycling Code 6
 - Polyester sheeting (polyethylene terephthalate esters, Mylar D®, Melinex®)
 - Polyester fibers (Dacron®, Terylene®) and plastics, (PET, PETE), Recycling Code 1
 - Polycarbonate sheeting (Lexan®)
 - Polymethylmethacrylate ester sheeting (Plexiglas®, UV Plexiglas®)
- Acrylic glues and paints
- Inorganic pigments
- Powder coated metals
- Glass
- Ceramics
- Fabrics
 - Undyed, sizing-free cotton or linen fabrics and cloth tapes
 - Cotton Stockinet®, t-shirt fabric
 - Tyvek® Sheeting
 - Velcro
 - 100% Polyester felt
 - Polyester fiber (Dacron®, Terylene®) loose and needle-punch batting
 - Cotton fiber batting
- Paper, tissue, and board
 - Acid-free, lignin-free buffered and unbuffered

- Non-formaldehyde based press board (Medex®)
- Micro-Chamber® products (used to adsorb vaporous pollutants and deterioration products)
- Acid free lignin free phase board stock
- 100% cotton rag (mat board)
- Corrosion Intercept® products (protects copper, silver, brass, bronze, and steel)

The following materials are known to be **harmful in close proximity to museum objects**:

- Polyvinyl chloride plastics, (PVC), Recycling Code 3
- Polyvinylidene chloride plastics (example: Saran Wrap®)
- Vinyl "fabrics" (example: Naugahyde®)
- Rubber, rubber foams, rubber-based glues
- Polyurethane plastics and foams (with some exceptions such as moisture cure coatings)
- Uncoated woods, plywood, and pressed boards
- Many dyed textiles and paper products
- Wool and acidic natural fibers, such as jute
- Ground wood paper and board
- Most tapes
- Most fire-retardant additives

When there is any doubt about the suitability of a particular material proposed for use in exhibition or storage context, it is always safest to consult a conservator and/or have the material tested by a conservator.

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