

# Packing Tips for Wet Paper & Documents

## **THINGS YOU SHOULD DO**

### **Pack books to minimize sticking, distortion, and swelling**

- When possible, maintain order and proper sequence
- Give priority to 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century leather bindings and coated paper
- Place waxed or freezer paper between books
- Place books one at a time in either of two ways: flat reversing spines, or spine down in a single layer
- Support each book firmly on either side to prevent further swelling.
- Pack books next to others of a similar size
- Pack boxes tightly enough to reduce shifting, but do not crush. Books will emerge from freezing in pretty much the same condition as they went in

### **Pack materials to provide support and minimize shifting**

- Records that are stored in boxes may be frozen, box and all, if the box is still strong
- It is also possible, in the interest of saving handling and reducing identification problems to freeze entire file drawers removed from cabinets (if weight not an issue)
- If folders are to be packed in boxes, tilt or lay the box on its side so that the folders don't need to be supported as they are loaded. Interleave folders every two inches with waxed or freezer paper
- Loose documents, or those that have become separated from their folders may be piled flat in boxes. Fill the space between piles of documents and the sides of the box loosely with crumpled paper towels or other absorbent non-printed paper to prevent the contents from shifting when the boxes are moved

### **Prepare to transport boxes**

- Keep coated paper wet by lining boxes with garbage bags, then freeze ASAP
- Label boxes. Keep an inventory by box number and location of boxed and frozen materials
- If boxes are piled on top of one another, stack neatly and straight with corners aligned

## **ARRANGE FOR DRYING AFTER FREEZING IS COMPLETE**

## **THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO**

- Do not pack books with spine up (bindings will sag and textblocks will pull out of bindings)
- Do not pack with unequal sizes side-by-side (smaller books won't adequately support larger books)
- Do not pack a second layer of books on top of spine-down books (creates too much weight on bottom and provides inadequate support for books on top)
- Don't pack books or papers with too much space at the bottom (will allow shifting)
- Don't haphazardly stack or cross-stack boxes that are filled (risks toppling, crushing boxes)