

Tropical storm Allison

When Tropical Storm Allison circled over Houston, Texas, on June 5–9, it dropped as much as three feet of rain in parts of the city, causing catastrophic flooding in many areas. Damage estimates for the region exceed \$5 billion.

One part of the city that was hardest hit was Texas Medical Center. The Houston Academy of Medicine–Texas Medical Center Library that serves the academic institutions affiliated with the medical center experienced severe flooding. The Street Level of the Jesse H. Jones Library Building was filled with water and raw sewage.

The Street Level of the building housed the computer lab and classroom and the John P. McGovern Historical Collections and Research Center, among other facilities.

Approximately two-thirds of the public-access computers were destroyed. About one-fourth of the McGovern Center's manuscripts, hospital newsletters, and personal papers were damaged. The records from the Medical Arts Hospital were completely destroyed. Historical videos and audiotapes have been sent to a professional company for restora-



Photo by Steve Boss

David Page, journey electrician, rolled up his pants and put on his beach shoes to help remove water-damaged books from the University of Houston Law Center's library.

tion and transfer to new media. More than 800 boxes of documents, journals, reference books, and historical books were sent to be freeze-dried. Despite the damage, the library reopened with limited hours on June 14, with regular hours resuming on July 16.

Another area hit hard by the storm was the main campus of the University of Houston. However, the University Libraries were extremely fortunate in that none suffered any water damage, although high humidity will require vigilance against mold and mildew damage.

Unfortunately, the independent O'Quinn Law Library was not as lucky.

It suffered heavy damage to the facility and its collections. The entire lower level, which housed the government documents and international collections, was totally flooded, while collections on the upper level were damaged by the extremely high humidity.

—Barbara E. Kemp, *University of Houston*, bkemp@ub.edu (some information provided by Deborah Halsted of the HAM-TMC Library)

collections, is being launched by Heritage Preservation, Inc. in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and with major funding from the Getty Grant Program.

The index will measure the condition of collections in the nation's museums, libraries, archives, and historical societies every four years. It is endorsed by prominent conservation professionals and national organizations who will participate in its development and implementation.

The purpose of the index is to assist long-range planning, fundraising, and education in the field of preservation and conservation.

Pitt's School of Information Sciences wins affirmative action award

The 2001 Chancellor's Affirmative Action Award honoring the "outstanding University of Pittsburgh program area or individual that has made a significant contribution in affirmative action" has been awarded to the Affirmative Action Committee of the School of Information Sciences (SIS).

SIS was cited for its recruitment efforts; the role of professor emeritus E. J. Josey as SIS Minority Council advisor; reinstatement of the Minority Resource Office; ongoing support of ALA's Spectrum Scholars; and establishment of the SIS/University Library System minority fellows program. ■