

Harwell Case Study: Harwell's quick response saves vital documents.

When critical documents are affected by an escape of water, rapid response is vital. The movement of moisture through files and boxes increases the level of primary damage, and, if the incident is left untreated, mould growth, ink migration and distortion can occur.

To minimise the cost, complexity and length of time taken to rectify the damage, the documents should be identified, extracted and stabilised as soon as possible.

Problem

A records management company was extending some shelving units within its warehouse. Stored within the units were several thousand boxes which contained records belonging to a leading UK financial services company and a large NHS trust, among other institutions.

One day, the shelving units came into accidental contact with a sprinkler head which activated the fire suppression system. Despite the site staff's attempt to act quickly, the escaping water reached over 3,000 storage boxes.

The company contacted Harwell later that day, following a recommendation of its insurers. Harwell technicians arrived the following morning to inspect the damage, provide an estimate for restoration and establish the next steps.

Solution

With a fear of mould growth setting in, Harwell's priority was to extract the boxes from the shelving and separate the saturated items from those less damaged.



The boxes which avoided any water damage were transferred to a safe, dry area. Those which suffered damage to the very bottom corners were repackaged, provided with a new barcode and upturned to air out any moisture. They were then ventilated, ready to be reassessed by Harwell in three days.

Any boxes which were seriously wet were treated by Harwell away from the site. Harwell began the recovery process the following day, freezing and vacuum-drying 1,025 boxes.

The entire drying process was complete within 12 weeks. To meet business continuity requirements, the client requested that Harwell fast-tracked a selection of boxes through the process. Harwell's Project Manager had discussed any operational continuity needs with the client at the point of salvage, so was able to earmark crucial items for priority return while liaising with the client throughout.

Following the restoration, the Business Manager of the company commented:

"I can honestly say that we have been delighted with the work that Harwell carried out on our behalf to restore our documents following a sprinkler mishap. The whole scenario was a first for us, but when I met with Harwell's Project Manager I was instilled with bags of confidence to know that we were employing the correct supplier to sort out our problems. The whole process was explained so well and everything happened exactly as I was told it would. Harwell were brilliant in providing help, advice and constant updates along the way. I would have no hesitation of using their services again, or in recommending them to others. Well done and many thanks."

