



**MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Cultural Resources
Best Management Practices**

Records Management in Park Offices

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Goal: Preserve significant files in the Park Offices; annually recycle routine back year files.

Guidelines

The Massachusetts State Archives, in conjunction with the Commonwealth's Supervisor of Public Records, publishes the Massachusetts Statewide Records Retention Guidelines. It is available as a PDF at the following link:
<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcrmu/rmuidx.htm>



Example of how not to store records.

For records created at the Park Offices, the records are generally divided into two main categories: routine annual and seasonal administrative and operations form-based documents, which have a short-retention, and can be recycled; and administrative and reference subject files, documents, and reports, which have a long-term, and sometimes permanent, retention.

Examples of **routine annual and seasonal administrative and operations form-based documents** that have a short-retention include, but are not limited to: narratives; vehicle mileage reports; seasonal staff timesheets; incident reports; special use permits; reports of receipts; camper / walk-in registration; ticket audits; waterfront forms; water quality reports; safety inspections; pass logs; purchase receipts; EPO records; etc.

Examples of **administrative and reference subject files, documents and reports** that have a long-term or permanent retention include, but are not lot limited to: boundary files; building inventories; capital projects files; friends group files; land and real estate files; facility files for each facility within Complex; trails files; correspondence / memo files; newspaper clippings; CFI plots; contract specifications; consultant reports; photo albums; etc. These records are essential to the agency's ability to operate our facilities.

General

The DCR Archives Office manages at leased space in Danvers a collection of 4,500 record boxes and oversize materials consisting of long-term and permanent records created by the more than 30 predecessor agencies and major divisions since the 1870s that form today's DCR. Available for staff and public research use, and being preserved for future generations, are tens of thousands of photographs; thousands of agency-created reports and publications; thousands of engineering contract specifications; dozens of newspaper scrapbooks, and innumerable documents and files. The agency's organizational and facility history resides in these archival records.

For guidelines relative to the management of plans please see the BMP for *Architectural and Engineering Plans*.

Routine Annual / Seasonal Administrative and Operations Form-based Documents

- All routine annual/seasonal administrative and operations form-based records have a 3-year retention.

Storage

- Depending on annual/seasonal volume, store current year and 3-years back in 1-to-4 file drawers. Contact DCR Archivist if a file cabinet is needed, as there are good quality unused cabinets within DCR.
- Group/arrange form-types by calendar or fiscal year, to make it easier to discard a single back-year.
- No need to box back-year records, unless there is very limited file cabinet space.
- Do not store back-year records in the attic, basement, or closet, where they are often forgotten.

Destruction

- Recycle the 4th back year during the winter off-season.
- Destroy seasonal employment files after 3 years that the employee has not worked at the facility.
- Only documents with Social Security Numbers must be shredded. Other records can be recycled.
- Do not recycle records in paper recycling dumpsters on church or school grounds.
- Destroy obsolete paper/plastic signs; and obsolete brochures and pamphlets.

Administrative / Reference Subject Files, Documents and Reports

- Do not inter-file routine annual/seasonal administrative and operations form-based records with the Park Office's administrative/reference subject files.
- Maintain Park Office administrative/reference subject files in A-Z order.
- Never destroy/recycle Park Office administrative/reference subject files that have direct relevance to facility history without first consulting the DCR Archivist. These specific administrative/reference subject files may contain significant facility/agency history.
- Never destroy Park Office reference copies of contract specifications that pre-date 1990; when no longer needed by the Park Office, contact DCR Archivist, as they are needed by the Archives.
- Administrative and reference subject files, documents, and reports are to be passed down to successor Park Supervisors and FOTL's, as they are essential to the operations of the facility.
- Contact DCR Archivist if the Park Supervisor or FOTL is retiring in the near future.

Donations of Agency Historical Materials and Local History Materials

- Park Supervisors and park interpreters should not accept donations of local history historical materials; refer donor to local public library, or other local history collecting repositories. Park Offices are not repositories of local history. If not sure, refer the donor to DCR Archivist.
- Park Supervisors and FOTL's may collect historical postcards of their facility for the Park Office.
- Refer donors of CCC history materials to DCR Archivist.
- Refer donors/donations of park/agency history materials to DCR Archivist.

Disaster Management

- If useful long-term records are water-damaged by leaks or floods, do not destroy the records. Contact DCR Archivist, as the records can be salvaged.

Destruction Cannot Be Reversed, so Ask

- If uncertain about a records issue, ask the DCR Archivist. Remember, destruction cannot be reversed.