



Flood at the University of Notre Dame's Hesburg Library Damages 1,500 Books

About 1,500 books were damaged and some 8,500 books were removed from shelves Monday morning (Feb. 5) when a frozen pipe ruptured and sent water cascading through parts of the third, second, first floors, and the basement of the Hesburgh Library at the University of Notre Dame.

The library was closed at approximately 9 a.m., when water from the third-floor pipe was discovered on the second floor. None of the books are thought to be seriously damaged, and most of the library reopened at 3:30 p.m.

Library officials believe that an air handler on the third floor failed to bring hot air to the water pipe, causing it to freeze and burst when temperatures in the region dropped below zero.

After discovering the flooding, library staff members draped heavy plastic sheeting over the shelves, keeping water off most of the books. The flooding damaged parts of the economics and music collections on the second floor and reached the rare books and special collections areas in the basement, but caused minimal damage to those collections. Wet books were opened and placed next to table and floor fans. The cost estimate of the damaged is not yet available.

As a result of a similar incident three years ago, officials said, the library stocked up on supplies of sheeting and other equipment needed in the event of a flood.

Employees from the library, fire department, security police department, facilities maintenance, and risk management and safety assisted with clean-up efforts.

[Adopted from a press release by Don Wycliff and Dennis Brown,
<http://newsinfo.nd.edu/content.cfm?topicid=21083> . 02-06-07]