

Storage for Infinity: Part 1

Museum 202, Section 1

Storage Philosophy

presented by

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Course Goals

To learn the fundamentals of storage conditions and how to plan for better storage areas.

Course Agenda

Section 1: Storage Philosophy

Section 2: Agents of Deterioration

Section 3: Storage Facilities

Section 4: Storage Furniture

Section 5: Conclusion

Section 1 Agenda

- 1: Storage Philosophy**
- 2: Preservation and Conservation**
- 3: Collections Management**
- 4: Storage Room Basics**
- 5: Planning for Disasters**
- 6: Storage Locations**

Storage

The collection is the heart of a museum, and its single greatest asset.

Be neat, clean,
organized and keep
stuff off the floor.

(make your mother proud)

Not like this



Importance

Because most items spend the majority of their time in storage, safe collection housing significantly increases their useable life.

Like this

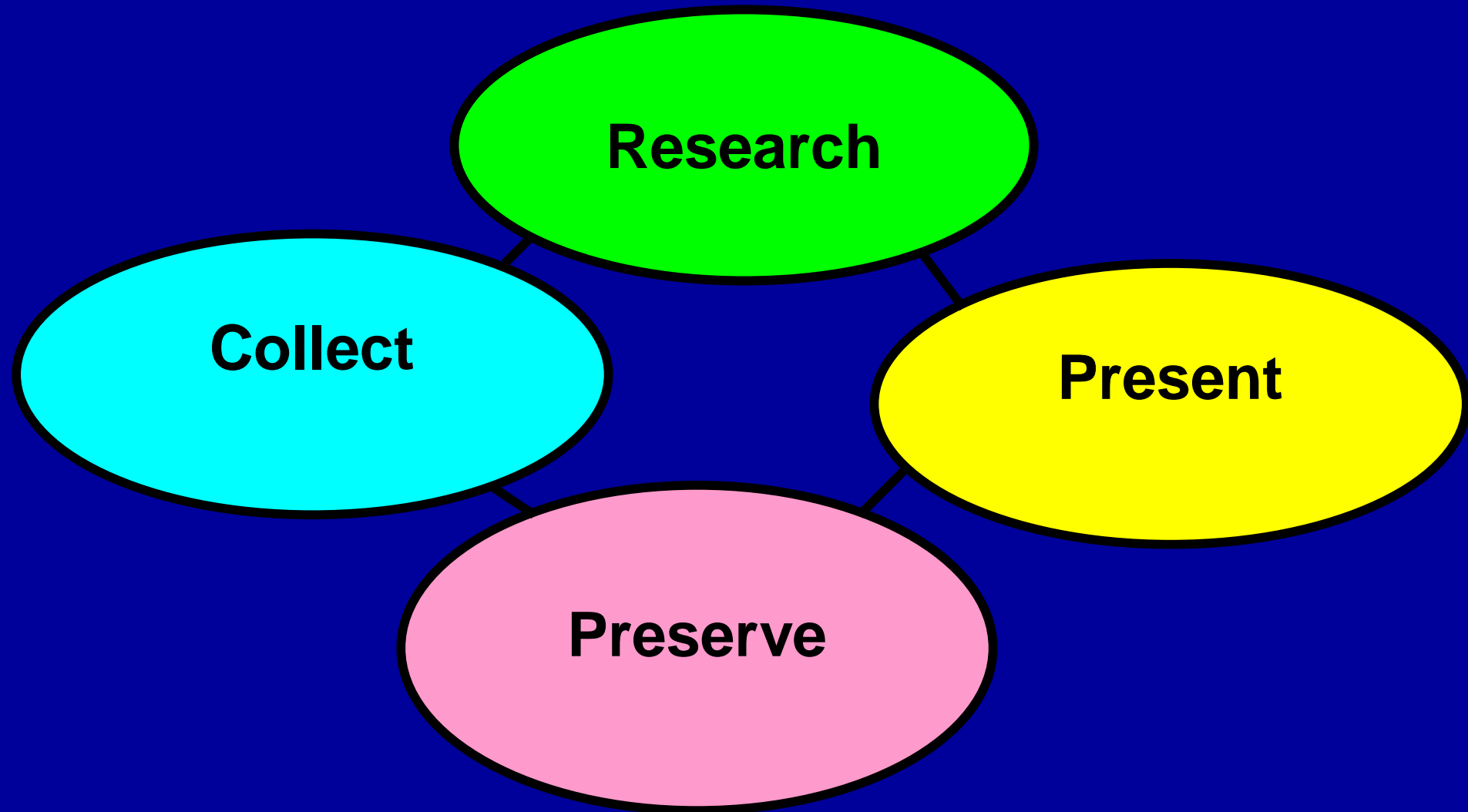


Wright County Historical Society
Buffalo, Minnesota

Storage Philosophy

- **Access:** inventory, researchers, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), collection movement
- **Preservation:** controlled environment, dust, handling ease, supports, inert materials

Four Museum Functions



Four Museum Functions

Without preservation, the other museum functions collapse.

Without preservation, there will be no collection.

A diagram illustrating the four museum functions: Present, Research, Collect, and an unlabeled pink oval. The ovals are arranged in a cluster. The yellow 'Present' oval is at the top, the green 'Research' oval is in the middle-left, the cyan 'Collect' oval is on the right, and a pink oval is at the bottom-left.

Present

Research

Collect

How can you research collections when you can't get to them?



What good is collecting
when they aren't cared for?



No Preservation =
Poor Presentation =
Low Public Opinion



Preventive Conservation

AIC Definition

“The mitigation of deterioration and damage to cultural property through the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures...”

- **environmental conditions**
- **handling, storage, exhibition, packing & transport**
- **integrated pest management**
- **emergency preparedness and response**

Philosophies

Preservation

- Prevent damage before it occurs
- Proactive
- Conservator on staff

Restoration

- Fix damaged items
- Reactive
- Contract conservators

Conservation

Profession devoted to preservation of cultural property for the future. Conservation activities, supported by research and education, include:

- Examination
- Documentation
- Treatment
 - stabilization
 - restoration
- Preventive care



Conservator

A professional whose primary occupation is the practice of conservation and who, through specialized education, knowledge, training, and experience, formulates and implements all the activities of conservation in accordance with an ethical code such as the AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice.

<http://aic.stanford.edu/geninfo/defin.html>

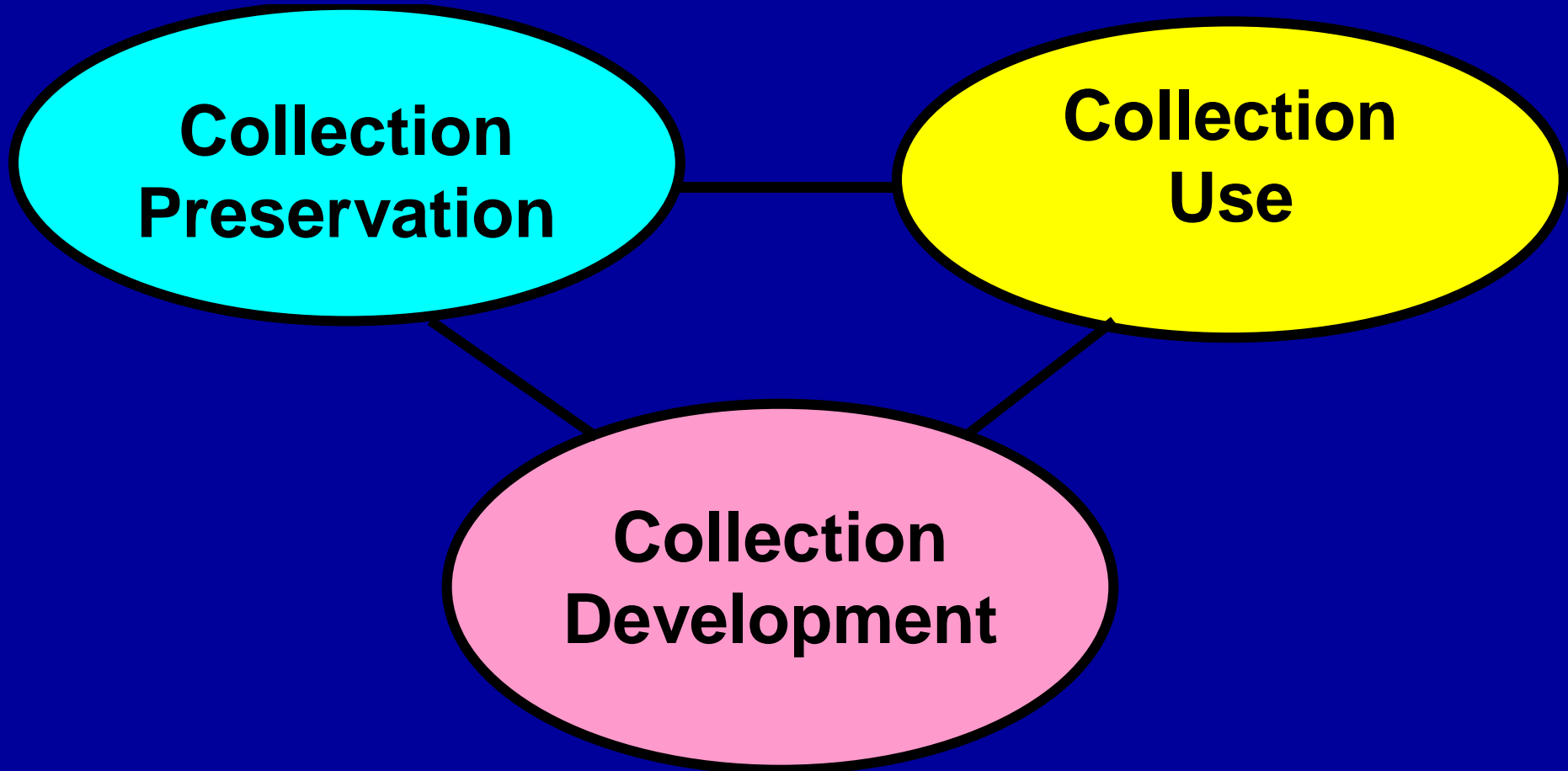
- Two training routes
 - Graduate program
 - Apprentice
- AIC member

Collection Management Divisions

**Collection
Preservation**

**Collection
Use**

**Collection
Development**



Collection Management Divisions

**Collection
Preservation**

```
graph LR; CP((Collection Preservation)) --- CE[Controlled environment]; CP --- ST[Staff training]; CP --- WP[Written policies]; CP --- SM[Support mounts]; CP --- MEM[Monitoring environment & materials]; CP --- S[Stabilization];
```

Controlled environment

Staff training

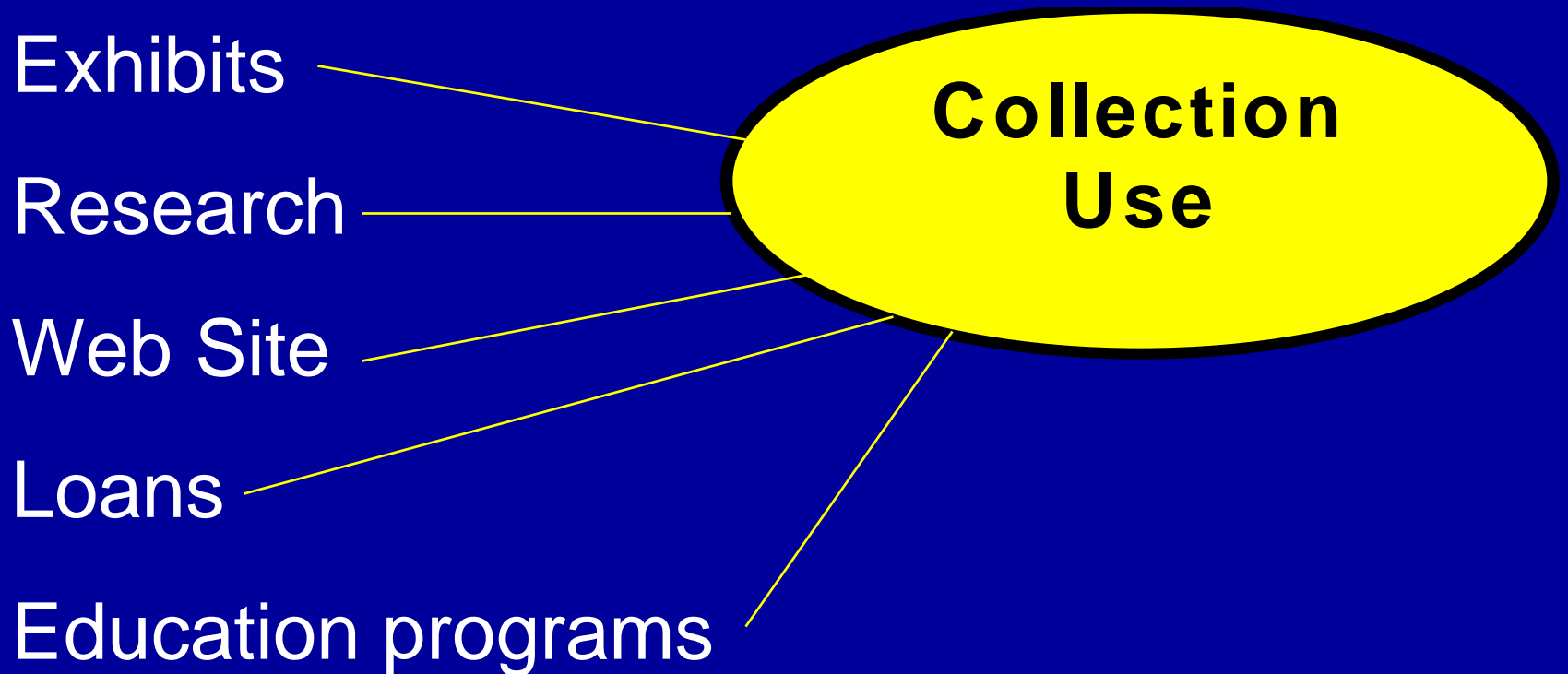
Written policies

Support mounts

Monitoring environment
& materials

Stabilization

Collection Management Divisions



Collection Management Divisions

Acquisitions

Conservation Treatment



**Collection
Development**

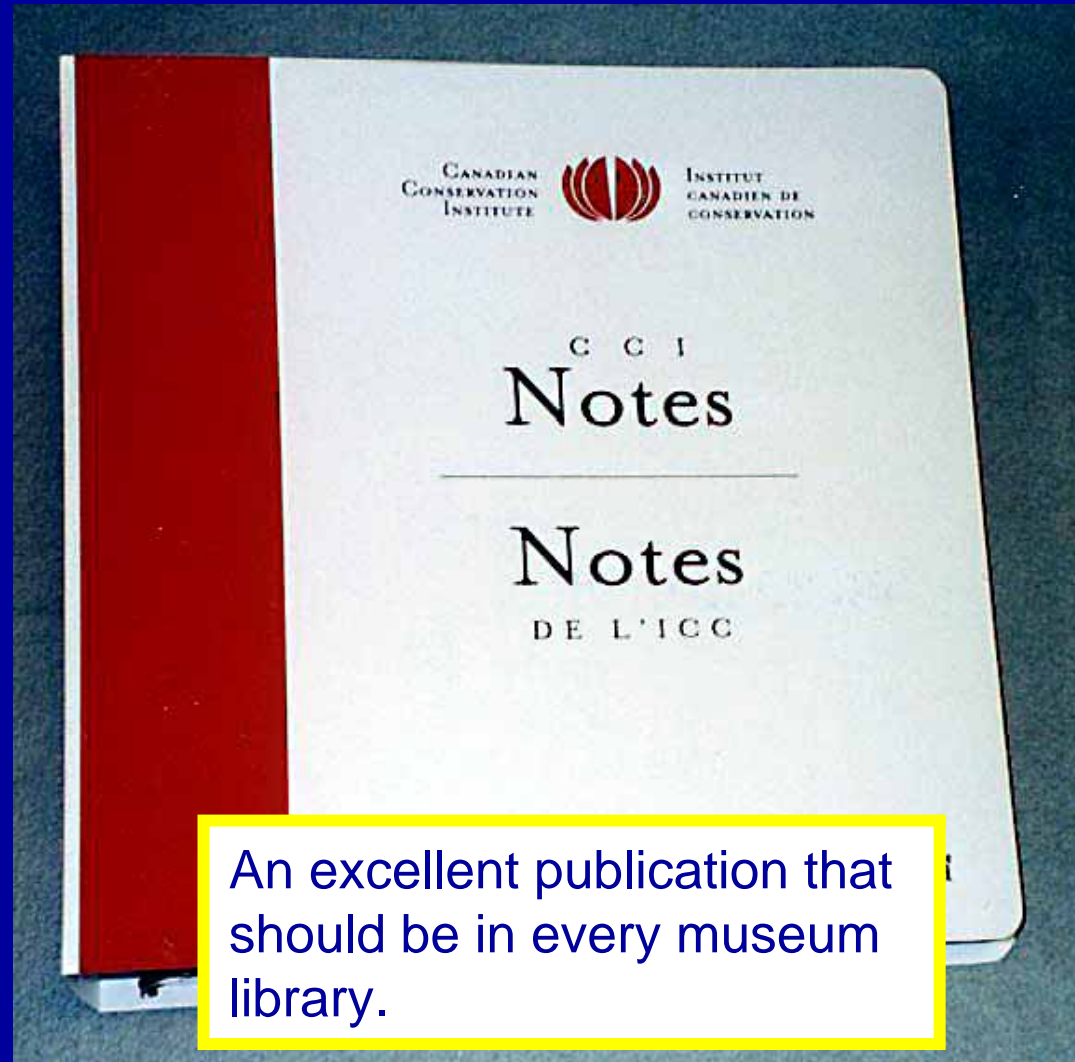
The whole staff is part of preservation



- How money allocated
- How speak to public
- How priorities set
- How work accomplished

Improve Staff Knowledge

- Regular preservation training
- Purchase publications
- Include preservation in job descriptions and reviews



Don't be penny wise and
pound foolish

Make enough room for good storage

40 : 40 : 20 Rule

- 40 percent of museum space used to exhibit 5 percent of collection
- 40 percent of museum space used to store 95 percent of collection
- 20 percent of museum space used for everything else

Storage Room Basics

- **Good air circulation**
- **Stable environment**
- **ADA accessible**
- **Secure (limit access)**
- **Easy to clean**
- **Artifacts 6 inches off floor**
- **Floor built for the load**

Collection lifted off floor



Wright County Historical Society
Buffalo, Minnesota

Not in Storage

- **Isolation of incoming materials**
- **Food, animals, dermestid colonies**
- **Freezer**
- **Non- Collection Materials:**
 - **Exhibit props, museum store items, publications, cleaning supplies, paints, lumber, trash cans, lawn mowers, gas cans**

Storage Divisions

- **Environmental requirements**
- **Security requirements**
- **Curatorial responsibilities**
- **Object size**
- **Storage systems**

Storage System

determines what is stored



Buffalo Bill Historical Center
Cody, Wyoming

Curatorial Responsibility

determines what is stored



Buffalo Bill Historical Center
Cody, Wyoming

Environmental Requirements

determines what is stored



Bronze storage
Science Museum of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota

Plan for Disasters

Stored collection should be portable

- 15 minutes to empty room
- Secure items in storage
- Disaster readiness procedures
- Cross brace shelves
- Lower centers of gravity

Portable Storage Unit



Science Museum of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota

Items Secured in Boxes



Wright County Historical Society
Buffalo, Minnesota

Boxes are Portable



Wright County Historical Society
Buffalo, Minnesota

Regularly Inspect Storage For:

- **Water leaks**
- **Pest infestations**
- **Environmental fluctuations**
- **Missing collections**
- **Unusual interactions/damage**

Potential Water Leaks Pipes in Storage



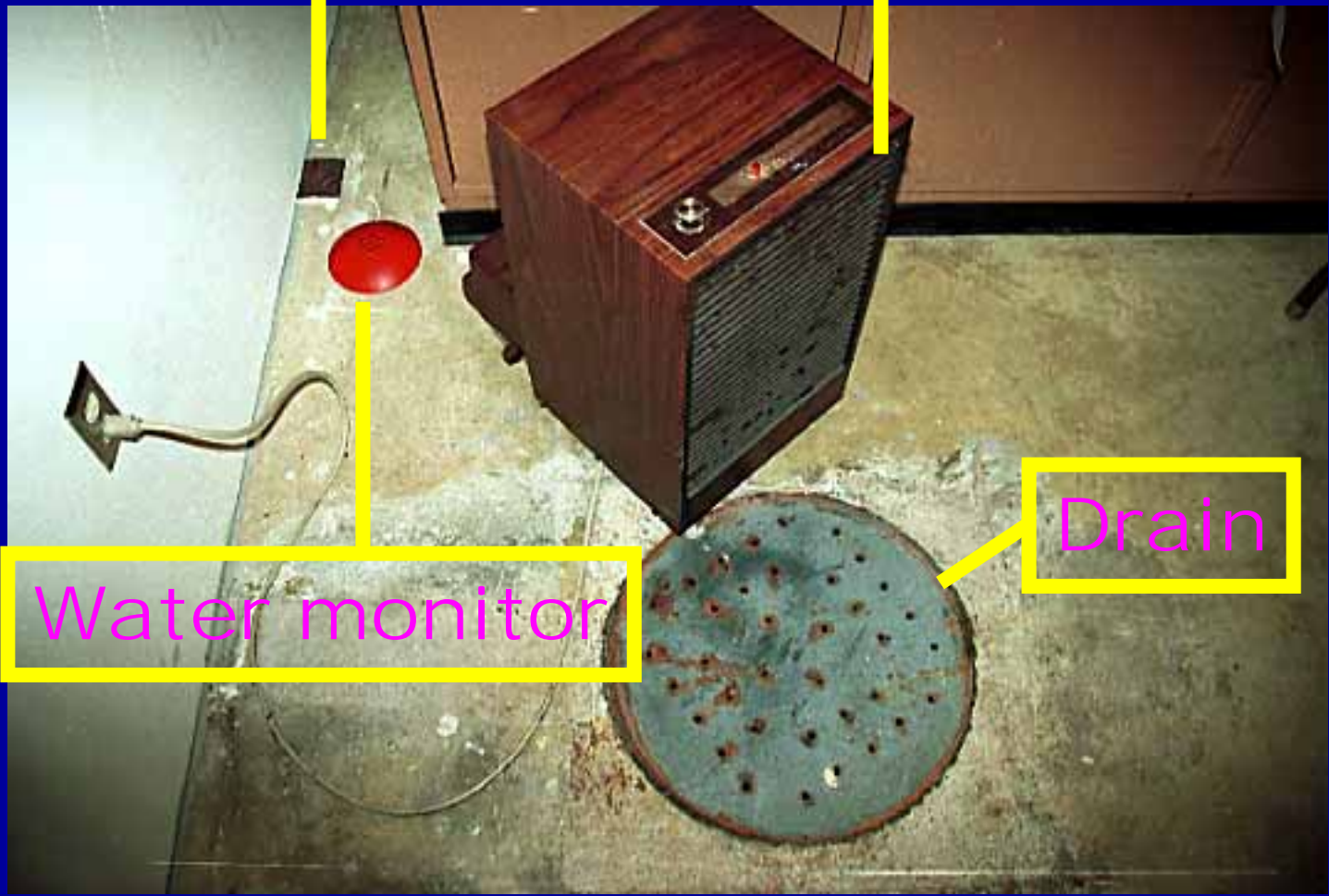
Monitoring for Problems

Insect trap

Dehumidifier

Water monitor

Drain



Storage Locations

- In the center of the building
- No exterior walls
- Far from smoking, food, outside doors and trash
- Not in basement or attic
- In planned space
- Not relegated to less desirable areas

Outside Storage

least protection to collection



Off Site Storage=
Out of Sight = Out of Mind



Climate Controlled Storage

Off-site with staff offices



McFarland Curatorial Center
Virginia City, Montana

Bye for
now!



Aurora

Brandt