

Burst pipe closes Bass Library for cleaning and repairs



January 31, 2021

A sprinkler line froze and burst in the upper level of Bass Library Friday evening, causing extensive water damage throughout the building. The two-story library underneath Cross Campus is closed for cleaning and repairs until further notice.

Sterling Library was not affected by the leak. Bass Library collection materials may be requested for pickup at other library locations or for delivery to home addresses or campus residences.

Over the weekend, facilities contractors pumped water out of the building and activated air movers and dehumidifiers to dry out the space. A full assessment of damage to furniture and fittings is pending.

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The impact on the library's collection was minimal, said Preservation Services Librarian Tara Kennedy, who was onsite Friday evening as part of Yale Library's Collection Emergency Response. Kennedy and Barbara Rockenbach, the Stephen F. Gates '68 University Librarian, identified about 530 damp and soggy volumes, out of a collection of more than 65,000 titles. The affected materials have been shipped to offsite experts for drying and further evaluation. No rare or difficult-to-replace materials were affected.

Image: On Jan. 30, after a broken sprinkler line flooded parts of Bass Library, Preservation Librarian Tara Kennedy (at left) and University Librarian Barbara Rockenbach sorted and scanned damaged books before shipping them offsite for drying and further evaluation. (photo by Mike Bell.

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