ENCLOSURES

General Comments: Why Use Enclosures
- Safest way to protect collections you can’t repair
- No impact on value/does not alter original
- More cost effective than modest treatment/doing nothing
- Prevent further damage; stabilize/protect from the environment
- Protect collection during storage, transport, use
- Practical and well suited to organizational environment (open stacks, circulating collections, archives, public vs. academic libraries)
- Lots out there to choose from; pricing is reasonable
- Easy to budget for; purchase is supported by most granting agencies

- Quality, minimum orders/package sizes, price, payment method, delivery time, customer service
- Choose reputable companies –
  - Archival Products
  - Archivart
  - Conservation Resources
  - Custom Manufacturing Inc.
  - Gaylord
  - Hollinger
  - Light Impressions
  - Metal Edge
  - Tallas
  - University Products

- Read the description – look for indicators of quality, materials, color, size, grain direction, etc. – if you don’t find what you want call customer service for details
- Consider if the product you are buying will be in direct contact with your collection item/s, or stored with them in a closed space (if so buy best quality)
- Avoid anything pressure sensitive (3M 415 Tape is okay for encapsulation; Filmoplast is okay for some applications). Also avoid prepared adhesives, (like Cellugel or Pregel), or commercial white glue adhesives (Elmer’s Glue, UHU Glue Sticks, etc.)
- Ask for samples or buy sample books, or buy just a little before you buy in quantity
- What is being housed? Size, number of items; shelf? Cabinet?

Paper/Board Stock
- Test paper products using your pH pen (core as well as exterior of board stock)
- Products should be both chemically stable and physically strong/durable
- Terminology:
  - pH: below 7.0 is acid; above 7 is base
  - Acid-free: no acid; pH above 7.0 (but as it ages it will become acidic)
  - Buffered: has calcium carbonate (3% by weight) to neutralize naturally forming acids; look for a pH between 7 and 8.5 (higher can damage some colors)
  - Lignin free: lignin, groundwood (think newsprint) lead to the formation of acid and should be avoided
  - Rag: cotton fiber, other fibers; usually means best quality especially for mat board, but not a guarantee

o Archival quality: I have no idea what this means, really, so look for specs

o P.A.T.: Photographic Activity Test – “passed” – ISO 18916:2007 (E); evaluates materials for archival quality and their use in photographic enclosures. Many different types of materials can be tested including, but not limited to: paper, boards, plastic, adhesives, pens, stickers, labels, paints and inks.

Uses/Examples
- Blue/grey barrier board – pams, portfolios, file boxes, phase boxes, etc.
- Folder stock (10 pt, 20 pt) – document storage, oversize file folders, portfolios
- Binders board – book binding, drop-spine boxes
- Mat board – matting/framing, exhibition cradles
- Envelopes – alone or with a pamphlet (hard) cover
- Permanent paper - for photocopies, especially replacement pages (Xerox Elite; ask the manufacturer if it meets Z39.48-1992 R1997); bookmarks, interleaving pages, etc.

Plastics
- If you don’t know what the plastic is don’t use it
- Don’t use anything that has a funny smell or seems especially slippery or sticky
- Best Quality:
  - P.A.T.: Photographic Activity Test – “passed” – as above
  - Polyester (Melinex 516, Mylar) is clear, hard/rigid and very stable
  - Polyethylene is soft, translucent – used for 3-ring binders; usually pretty stable
  - Foams – Volara, Ethafoam
  - Corrugated – Coroplast
  - “Fabrics” – Reemay, Tyvek, Hollytex
- AVOID:
  - Polypropylene: soft, milky – slippery; can have agents not bound to the polymer that can leach out over time
  - PVC – - AKA vinyl; used to make 3-ring binders

Uses
- Mylar, polyethylene - protective sleeves for documents, negatives, photographs
- Mylar, PVC - book and binder covers
- Mylar - encapsulation
- “Fabrics” - wrapping/protection for objects in storage and during transportation
- Mylar, Reemay - non-stick surfaces for use with adhesives
- Mylar, Hollytex, Reemay - support for humidification/pressing, other treatments

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