



GUIDELINES FOR SALVAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

MAGNETIC MEDIA: COMPUTER DISK



- Store diskettes upright, without crowding, in cool, distilled water (max. 72 hours). If disks cannot be dried and copied within 3 days, place in plastic bags and freeze until drying and data recovery is possible.
- Remove the disk by cutting with scissors along the edge of the jacket. Carefully remove the disk and agitate in multiple baths of cool, deionized water or distilled water to remove all visible dirt.
- Dry with lint-free toweling or cheese cloth.
- Insert the dried damaged disk into a new jacket and insert into a disk drive.
- Copy and verify that the information has transferred, then discard the damaged disk.

MAGNETIC MEDIA: CASSETTES



- Air-dry within 72 hours. Pack vertically in plastic crates or cardboard boxes.
- Casings will often keep tape clean and dry. If the tape is damaged, disassemble the case and remove the tape. Rinse dirty tapes, still wound on the reel, in clean, deionized or distilled water.
- Air-dry by supporting the reels vertically or by laying the reels on sheets of clean blotter. Use fans to keep air moving without blowing directly on the items. Use dehumidifiers as needed to maintain humidity at or below 50% relative humidity.
- Once dry, the tapes can be assessed for further cleaning and duplication by a specialized recovery service.

HARD DRIVES



- Disconnect from power source. Wipe the exterior with a clean, lint-free cotton cloth. Place hard drive into a zippered plastic storage bag and seal.
- Only an experienced disaster recovery vendor should attempt to recover data housed on a water-damaged hard drive. An inexperienced person who attempts to clean and read a damaged drive will likely destroy the data it contains and damage the equipment used to read it.

COMPACT DISCS (CDS) & DVDS



- Immediately air-dry discs. Dry the paper enclosures within 48 hours.
- Do not scratch surfaces.
- Remove discs from cases. Rinse discs with distilled water. Do not rub the discs because dirt could cause scratches. If necessary, blot—do not rub—with a soft lint-free cloth.
- Case and paper enclosures may be freeze-dried. Do not freeze-dry the discs. Air-dry vertically in a rack.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

CALIFORNIA STATE ARCHIVES
1020 O STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

ARCHIVESWEB@SOS.CA.GOV
(916) 653-7715

