

Organizing and Inventorying: Benefits of Using Washington State Archives' Boxes

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local government agencies on the advantages of using Washington State Archives boxes for the storage of records rather than other types of boxes (such as banker boxes, etc.)

Washington State Archives recommends storing agency records in our boxes, which are manufactured specifically for long-term records storage. Although these are archival-quality boxes, they can be used for both archival and non-archival records. The advantages of using these boxes include:

- **Cost-effective**

Washington State Archives' boxes will be provided at no charge for archival records that will be transferred to Washington State Archives at the time of disposition. The boxes are also free to state agencies that are storing records at the Washington State Records Center.

The boxes can be purchased for other records storage purposes through the Records Center. Please contact Washington State Archives for more information.

- **Acid-free**

Keeping paper records in acid-free boxes slows their aging and deterioration, and also limits exposure to light and airborne substances.

- **Attached lid and designated place for label**

Having the lid attached creates one less thing to worry about when managing the records inside the box. There is also a specific place for labels at one end of the box so you know where to include information about its contents.

- **Water resistant**

While not fully waterproof, the boxes are protected with a coating to help wick away liquids.

- **Structurally sound**

Whether stored at the Records Center or at agency facilities, the boxes can be stacked without collapsing. The size of the box (~1 cubic foot) limits the weight and provides standardization to records storage. This size is preferred to the larger banker boxes/drawers that can weigh in excess of 75lbs when full.

- **Easy to assemble**

The instructions on the box are easy to follow, and Washington State Archives' website has a short video tutorial on how to assemble them.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**