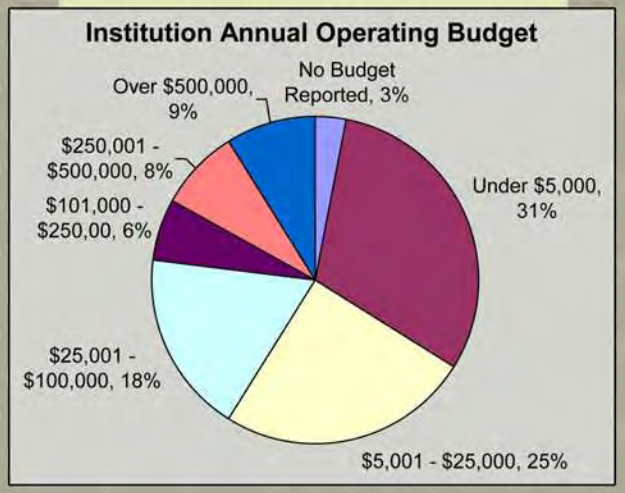
South Dakota Connects

In 2005, the Institute of Museum and Library Services created the initiative *Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action*. The South Dakota State Historical Society received a planning grant as part of this initiative that resulted in *South Dakota Connects to Collections*.

South Dakota Connects to Collections provided for a thorough assessment of the collections held by museums, historical societies, archives, and libraries throughout the state. Site visits, mail-in and electronic surveys were completed by 167 organizations.



So What?

- The majority of the state's collections are housed in small institutions, often run entirely by volunteers – and the collections need help.
- Deterioration was the highest cause of some damage or loss to historic objects in 74% of reporting institutions. Many lack the regular heating, cooling, and relative-humidity control objects need.
- Dedicated volunteers are hungry for good hands-on training opportunities to help them learn how to best care for their objects. They would also like training in emergency and disaster planning.
- More than three-quarters of the institutions surveyed do not have their collections completely cataloged. Without adequate records, what would be lost should disaster strike remains largely unknown.

Meeting the Needs

Even in these economically challenging times, South Dakota intends to address the pressing needs faced by collecting institutions in the state. Some of the proposed steps include:

- Using state distance-learning systems to provide training.
- Creating in-state regional mutual-assistance groups to share training and provide post-training help as questions and problems arise.
- Continuing efforts to obtain public and private monies for training.

What Can *You* Do?

- Provide consistent monetary support for your local historical society, museum, and library. Having a financial base to depend on can make all the difference for a small institution.

- Encourage and support volunteer/staff in getting training in collections care and disaster planning. This may take the form of an online or distance-learning course, travel and time to attend a regional workshop, or support to attend a state or regional professional conference.

South Dakota's Historic Objects Are At Risk

It's *Our* History Help Preserve It!

Project made possible by

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

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ASDM Association of South Dakota Museums, Inc.

To obtain a copy of the *South Dakota Connects to Collections* report please visit the South Dakota State Historical Society website at http://history.sd.gov or contact Project Director:

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South Dakota Connects to Collections

What Does the Future Hold for South Dakota's Historic Objects?