

## 2. Salvage of Specific Materials

### 2.7 Stretched Hide Drums

How to dry skin that is under tension

#### SUMMARY

##### IN A NUTSHELL:

- If already completely wet, rinse as necessary.
- Slow dry.
- Monitor closely for mould.

##### SALVAGE PRIORITIES:

- Drums with painted hide
- Older drums

##### WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Drum skins are likely to split during drying.
- Older drums are at greatest risk because the hide may be brittle.
- Painted designs may be damaged or lost.

#### STEP 1

**Rinse if already wet, and dirty or contaminated (sewage water)**

- Hold drum securely but gently and pour water over the surface or use a garden sprayer to remove dirt. Use a soft brush if necessary to get into crevices on the back.
- Dried dirt can be removed later with a vacuum and soft brush.



**Caution**

*Handle wet drums gently and try not to touch the front surface.*

#### STEP 2

**Remove excess water**

- Tilt to allow excess water to run off.
- Place face down on a surface covered with absorbent materials such as plain newsprint or blotter and work from the back (if accessible).



**Caution**

*Do not wipe the surface while wet as this may cause damage.*



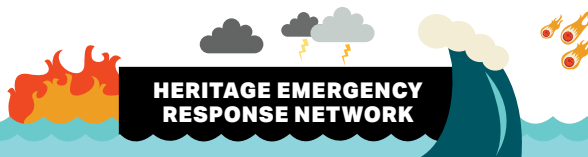
Remove excess water from back of drum



**Caution**

*Do not press down on the stretched skin from the front as this may cause it to split or deform.*

- Gently press absorbent material on the back and sides to remove excess water and move to a safe drying space.



## STEP 3

### Dry drums slowly

- Slow drying is best to prevent the drum from splitting. Salvage of drums is a fine line between drying too fast (splitting) and too slow (mould).



Splits in hides often start at the edge and move to the face of a drum

- Place the drum face down on absorbent material and loosely cover with a piece of plastic.
- You may also dry the drum face up on blocks, as long as plastic doesn't touch the surface of the skin.
- Parts that become detached may be cleaned and dried separately.



The hide on the left is dry and hard and tight. Hide on the right is wet and flexible.

- Check for mould growth as often as possible. *If mould is observed, see Sheet 3.3 Mould.*



#### Tip

*Adjusting tension on the laces may reduce the risk of the skin splitting, but this should be done by an experienced drum maker if possible.*



#### Caution

*Wet skin becomes soft and saggy. As it dries it shrinks and the tension from the frames and lashings can cause the hide to split.*



#### Tip

*You can modify a fast-drying tunnel (see Sheet 2.4.1.2 Build and Use a Tunnel to Quickly Dry Collections) to a slow drying tent by removing the fan and closing off both ends.*

## STEP 4

### Monitor the drying process

- Regularly check and take action if you see signs of mould. *See Sheet 3.3 Mould.*
- Keep air moving in the drying areas by opening windows or using fans.
- Once items are dry, move drums to a safe, dry space.



#### Tip

*Stretched hide is dry when it is stiff and tight.*

## STEP 5

### Organize salvaged drums and tidy workspaces

- Complete the documentation for your institution and for your insurance provider.
- Confirm what can be discarded.
- Depending on the situation, you may need to label and pack some dry materials for temporary storage or for conservation treatment.
- Move salvaged drums to permanent or temporary storage locations.
- Clean work areas and replenish supplies.

CONGRATULATIONS! This marks the end of the emergency for these items – they are now safe.

## STEP 6

### Tie up loose ends

Identify and manage any outstanding priorities or remaining issues such as:

- Further treatment steps such as cleaning and repairing can be scheduled.
- Contact a conservator for specific guidance and advice if needed.



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