

## **Tennessee Division of Archaeology CURATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Tennessee Division of Archaeology (TDOA) is authorized by Tennessee Code Annotated 11-6-104 to curate artifacts and other materials originating from lands owned or controlled by the state. The State Archaeologist reviews requests to curate collections from private or federal land on a case-by-case basis. Curation requests and questions regarding packaging requirements should be directed to the TDOA's Collections Manager, Macie Orrand at [Macie.Orrand@tn.gov](mailto:Macie.Orrand@tn.gov) or (615)-681-4782. Collection materials include but are not limited to artifacts, field notes, maps, negatives, slides, and other project documentation.

### **ARTIFACTS**

#### **Bagging Material:**

- All artifacts must be cleaned and dried completely before bagging.
- All artifacts must be bagged in 4 mm or thicker polyethylene (not polyvinylchloride), self-sealing zip-lock bags with white label panels, unless otherwise specified. Avoid using staples or rubber bands to close the bags.
- Artifacts should not be submitted in recycled bags.
- Oversized items that do not fit into self-sealing bags should be wrapped in Tyvek soft-wrap, polyethylene, Mylar sheets, or other acid-free archival quality tissue paper appropriate to material and closed with cotton string. Consult with the Collections Manager in these cases.
- Certain artifacts, such as metal, treated or fragile artifacts, organic remains, or reconstructed vessels, may require special packing materials. Consult with the Collections Manager before bagging these materials.

#### **Bagging Artifacts:**

- Artifacts within a given provenience should be grouped physically by material and, if pertinent, by common diagnostic elements and bagged separately. For a given provenience, diagnostic artifacts in each category should be bagged separately from non-diagnostic items. For example, at a minimum, all diagnostic prehistoric sherds for a provenience are contained in one bag, whereas all non-diagnostic prehistoric sherds from that same provenience are placed in a separate bag. Archaeologists are encouraged to sort and bag smaller subsets of artifacts.
- For small collections, all separately bagged artifacts from the same provenience may be grouped together in a larger bag or box.
- Choose a bag size appropriate for the size and quantity of artifacts to be packaged. Do not overstuff bags, as this can damage the artifacts or the bag itself.

- A large quantity of glass artifacts must be either double-bagged or contained in bags > 4 mm thickness.
- Untreated and treated metal artifacts must be completely dry, separated from the other materials, and double-bagged (unless using a > 4 mm bag) in polyethylene bags.
- Wrap human bone in acid-free tissue paper, Tyvek soft-wrap, or other archival quality soft-wrap and box separately in rigid (polyethylene plastic boxes) or acid-free boxes lined with some form of inert, padded liner (such as Ethafoam). Completely dry bone may be placed in polyethylene bags so long as the bag is able to be closed. Each bone does not have to be wrapped separately; however, take care to cushion the bones and keep them from rubbing together or shifting during transportation by using wads of acid-free tissue paper.
- Organic materials must be thoroughly dried before placed in bags to prevent mold, mildew, and deterioration.
- Carbon samples shall be stored in aluminum foil, and pollen samples in sterile Whirl-Pak bags.
- The TDOA will not accept unprocessed flotation or soil samples unless prior arrangements have been made.
- For large collections and certain special collections, it is acceptable to box by material or artifact class rather than by provenience. However, materials from each provenience must be bagged separately within these divisions.
- Labels on larger collections must include the box or bag number in relation to the total number of boxes and/or bags (e.g., Bag 2 of 5 or Box 3 of 4) comprising a collection.

**Bag and Artifact Tag Labeling:**

- Label the outside of the bags with permanent marker, within the white panel or self- adhesive label with the following information:
  - a. state site number;*
  - b. site name (if applicable)*
  - c. state accession number (available from the Collections Manager)*
  - d. appropriate provenience information (i.e. unit, shovel test, etc.)*
  - e. catalog number(s) (accession number + object number-, e.g. 72.1.3 where 72.1 is the accession number as assigned by the TDOA and 3 is the object number as assigned by the depositor. If more than one catalogue number, write all of them on the bag).*
  - f. object name/type and count*
  - g. collection date*
  - h. archaeologist's name and organization*

- All bags should also have enclosed an acid-free card with the same information as recorded on the bag. Use a permanent, archival quality black pen to record this information on the tag. This tag should be placed within its own polyethylene bag, and then placed in the bag with the artifacts. If artifacts from the same provenience are sorted and bagged separately within a larger bag (i.e., there are several smaller bags within a large bag), only one card needs to be included in the largest bag.
- It is important that no writing or physical labeling be applied directly to the artifacts themselves. Writing or marking artifacts can damage them or alter their integrity. Instead, all identifying information should be recorded on the artifact bag or an attached tag, which can then be linked to the artifact through catalog numbers or other identifiers. This method preserves the artifact's original condition and ensures that the necessary context is maintained throughout analysis and storage.

**Boxing the Collection:**

- Collections must be boxed in a uniform manner with no more than 20 pounds of material within a single box.
- Provide adequate support for objects when assembling artifact bags into boxes. Do not pack light or fragile items alongside heavy items.
- All materials must be placed in acid-free, lignen-free boxes with removable lids measuring approximating L15.5 in. x W12.5 in. x H10 in.
- If the collection is small (15lbs. or less), half sized acid-free, lignen -free boxes may be used (L15 in. x W6 in. x H 10 in.)
- Multiple site collections from the same project may be boxed together. Projects, such as surveys with multiple small site collections, should be organized numerically by the site number with all sites from a single county organized together.
- Please do not box multiple projects together unless permission is obtained from the Collections Manager.
- Boxes will not be returned to the depositor.
- It is preferable that processed flotation, shell, soil, and matrix samples collected during a single project be boxed separately from the artifacts and labeled as processed flotation samples.
- Human remains must be boxed in acid-free, lignen-free boxes or in clear, polyethylene tote boxes. The size of the box should be appropriate to the size and quantity of remains being stored. Additional cushioning and tissue may be needed. Consult with the Collections Manager if you have questions about packing human remains.
- An inventory of the contents of each box must be completed and enclosed inside the box. The inventory consists of the project name, Archaeologist in General and Direct

Charge, organization, lead agency or firm sponsoring work, dates of recovery, site number(s), box number (#3 of 9, for example), catalog number(s), artifact type (e.g. ceramic, faunal, etc.), number of bags or containers for each catalog number, and any special conservation treatment used or other notes. A sample inventory sheet can be found on the TDOA Collections page. Please place the inventory in a clear plastic, polyethylene, acid-free, sheet protector(s).

- Artifact catalogue(s) and photographs must also be submitted, preferably in an electronic format (see Digital Documents/Images for guidelines). If submitted in paper format, please place in acid-free, clear plastic, polyethylene sheet protector(s) and include in folder with other project documents (see the following section for more information). See the Negatives and Slides section for how to label and package these.
- Label boxes clearly on one end by attaching a 4" X 6" piece of acid-free paper that is housed in a polypropylene, adhesive backed, clear pocket below the box handle.

**Do Not Write on the Box.** For different sized boxes, contact the Collections Manager for instructions on labeling. The following information must be printed in this label:

- a. state site number(s)*
- b. site name and project name*
- c. state accession number(s)*
- d. name of Archaeologist in General and Direct Charge and organization*
- e. month(s) and year(s) project took place*
- f. box number (e.g., Box 1 of 5)*

**NOTE:** For artifacts such as fire cracked rock, unmodified chert cobbles, limestone fragments, or brick, retain a sample, then weigh, record, and discard the remainder. Tabulate, describe and discard late 20th century materials, such as aluminum cans or bottle glass, that have no bearing on site interpretation. Do not include unprocessed soil samples. Questions regarding curation should be directed to the Collections Manager.

## FIELD NOTES, MAPS, AND OTHER PRINTED DOCUMENTS

- Package field notes in a secure, consolidated format. Label each document package/folder and map with state site and accession numbers. Do not package documents from multiple sites together.
- Use archival materials: Remove paper clips, staples, and rubber bands. Use archival quality folders to group materials and place documents in polypropylene sheet protectors.
- Over-sized maps should be rolled or wrapped in acid-free paper or other archival quality wrapping and placed in an acid-free tube. Label the tube with the state site and accession numbers.

- Copies of these files must also be submitted in digital format unless prior arrangements have been made. Please see Digital Documents/Images for guidelines.

## **NEGATIVES AND SLIDES**

- Submit photographic negatives and slides in archival quality (polyethylene) negative sleeves for a three-ring or four-ring binder. Label each photo sleeve with the site number and accession number.
- Submit a photographic record/log sheet with basic information, by negative number, for each negative. This sheet must include the photographer's name, the date the image was taken, a description of the image, site number, accession number (and catalogue number if of an artifact), sleeve page number, and a unique identification number.
- Label each slide with the state site number and provenience description. Also submit a photo log with all slide collections containing the same information as above.

## **DIGITAL DOCUMENTS/IMAGES**

- All digital documents and images must be submitted on either Archival Gold CDs/DVDs and placed in archival sleeves or jewel cases. USB flash drives may also be submitted. CDs/DVDs and/or USB flash drives must be accompanied by a printed inventory of the contents on each disk/drive. Label each disk or flash drive with the site number, accession number, and date of photography (if it contains photos).
- If digital document/images are stored in an online, cloud-based file sharing program (e.g. Google Drive, Drop Box, etc.), please contact the Collections Manager for further instructions.
- Submit all digital documents as .PDF files. All pages of the document must be labeled with the site number, accession number, and page number as a header or footer. The file name of each document should include a short phrase denoting the file type, site number, and accession number (without periods or dashes), with each part separated by underscores and with no spaces.
  - o For example:
    - PhotoLog\_40SU317\_1510
    - ArtifactCatalogue\_40SU317\_1510
    - SiteMap\_40PM77\_87174
- Submit digital images as .jpg files with at least 600 dpi resolution (uncompressed)

.tiff files are also acceptable). The file name for each image should include the site number and be cross-referenced with a unique number on an accompanying photographic record sheet. The site number and photo number should be separated by an underscore with no spaces (for example: 40PM24\_1 or 40SU317\_1001). Each page of the photographic record sheet should include the site number, accession number (and catalogue number if of an artifact), photographer's name, the date the image was taken, a description of the image, and a unique identification number for each image. This same information should also be added to the image file metadata.

## MATERIALS

| <i>Approved Material</i>                                                              | <i>Materials NOT to be Used</i>        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Acid-free, Lignin free boxes                                                          | Cigar boxes or regular cardboard boxes |
| Acid-free paper                                                                       | PVC or unidentified plastic containers |
| Acid-free poster board                                                                | Styrofoam                              |
| Acid-free tissue paper                                                                | Sandwich bags                          |
| Polypropylene containers                                                              | Unidentified plastic bags              |
| Polyethylene foam                                                                     | Polyurethane chips                     |
| Polyethylene bags with zip closure (2-4mm thickness)                                  | Toilet paper, facial tissue, newspaper |
| Polyethylene sheeting and chips                                                       | Acidic paper                           |
| Polyester batting                                                                     | Brown paper bags                       |
| Tyvek® for labels                                                                     | Cellophane tape                        |
| Aluminum foil (C14 samples only)                                                      | Cotton wool                            |
| Metal containers (limited uses)                                                       | Masking tape                           |
| Glass containers (limited uses & insulated against breakage)                          | Foam rubber, urethane foam             |
| Cotton or Muslin fabric                                                               | Duco household cement                  |
| Melinex®                                                                              |                                        |
| Ethafoam®                                                                             |                                        |
| Acrylic thermoplastic resins (like B-72) are the only glues approved for conservation |                                        |

### TRANSFER OF MATERIAL TO TDOA

- To make arrangements for delivery contact the TDOA's Collections Manager. Contact information is available above and on the TDOA's website [Archaeology \(tn.gov\)](http://www.tennessee.gov/archaeology). A letter of transmittal addressed to the State Archaeologist should also accompany delivered material.

## **COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVAL SUPPLIERS LIST**

Gaylord Bros. <http://www.gaylord.com>

Hollinger Metal Edge  
<http://www.hollingermetaledge.com>

Uline <http://www.uline.com>

Conservation Resources, Inc.  
<http://www.conservationresources.com>

Light Impressions Archival Supplies  
<http://www.lightimpressionsdirect.com>

U.S. Plastic Corporation  
<http://www.usplastic.com>

Consolidated Plastics  
<http://www.consolidatedplastics.com>

University Products, Inc.  
<http://www.universityproducts.com>