

Minnesota State Document Depository System: The Basics

Note: This handout has been edited with notes from the focus group session, shown in a different, indented font.

What are state documents?

- Publications produced by or funded by the state for public distribution. See the definitions on the attached sheet with legal definitions.
 - No tax forms, handbooks
 - We try to collect everything produced by state government. 6 copies. Acq database: alerts us to repeat reports, legislative mandates.
 - Robbie scans the session laws each year for new mandated reports.
 - Some agencies just send us reports. Other agencies need letters, calls to remind them.
 - They think we're the police for the legislature but we have no enforcement authority.

Who produces state documents?

- Constitutional offices
- Executive branch (agencies, boards, etc.)
- Legislative branch
- Judicial branch

In each case, documents may be produced by an agency directly, or by a task force, commission, or other sponsored group.

Why are state documents published (who initiates the process)?

- Legislative mandate (Approximately 1/3 of the total)
- Agency-initiated (Approximately 2/3 of the total)

What is the state document depository system and why does it exist?

- A system that identifies new state publications, microfilms them, and distributes the fiche to selected libraries.
- Provides a way for MN citizens to identify and view publications of Minnesota's state government.
- Provides a permanent record of state publications.

How does the state depository system work?

- 1) Legislative Library staff identify and acquire documents. (Many agencies faithfully send documents. We are also alerted by legislative mandates, media coverage of new reports, and notices on Web sites.)
- 2) LRL staff catalog state documents. If documents are available on the Web, the URL is included on the PALS record.

- 3) Copies of documents are sent the Department of Administration's DocuComm service, where they are microfilmed and distributed to depository libraries.
- 4) Documents can be identified via PALS, "Docs on Fiche" list, or "Minnesota Resources". The "Docs on Fiche" list is online at: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/mndocs/docs.htm>, and the *Minnesota Resources* lists are online at: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/resource/recent.htm>. (Minnesota Resources lists are selected lists of new, high-interest documents.)
 - We receive 6 copies: 1 for microfilming, 1 to LC, catalog hardcopy, give out the remaining three to legislators and staff.
 - Documents take a while to get cataloged, filmed, distributed. (3-6 months)
 - Documents take a while to get cataloged, filmed, distributed. (3-6 months)
 - We pursue reports we don't have that we find out about from the newspaper or patron questions.
 - A problem with URLs: Often URLs will fail and we fix them on PALS, but sometimes a new report or edition is given the same URL as the older report.
 - State agencies pay for the filming (about \$17 per sheet of fiche)
 - The billing for the fiche is not connected in any way to our acquisition of the documents. Often the office producing or distributing the documents in an agency is not necessarily the one that handles billing or fiscal matters.

Items NOT included in the Depository system Neither the Minnesota Resources document nor the shipping lists of fiche reflect all of the items produced by agencies, nor all the items we have obtained from state agencies. The depository program does not currently cover all of the publication types listed in MS 3.302.

- Items from agencies that refuse to pay for microfilming are not included. Examples of these are the department in DTED that produces the guides to starting businesses in Minnesota and the State Auditor's Office. We receive between app. 200-240 State Auditor audits of cities, pension funds, counties, local agencies, etc. They are cataloged in PALS, and we keep only the most current edition. In 2000 we cataloged 189 consultant's reports; those are not filmed.
- State agency Web sites or Web documents that are cataloged by the Library are not included. In general, exclusively electronic items are not included: web sites, web documents, cd-roms, cassettes, videos, etc. However, in some cases, we have printed Web documents, and then had them filmed.
- Consultant's reports are not filmed, unless they are repackaged and published as an agency document.
- We do not catalog pamphlets or ephemera. (Years ago, Helen noted, we did catalog some unusual items as documents – including a deck of cards, balloons, posters, and games.)

How is the state depository system used?

- Libraries: reference activities, collection development, archival, etc.
- Individual users: public policy research, business research, government “watchdog”

How are state documents updated?

- Not updated (one-time report)
- Updated on a regular/irregular basis
- Continuous modification (web)
 - State Auditor reports are not filmed, because the agency will not pay. For the larger reports on combined jurisdictions (County finances, local government finances, etc., LRL pays for the cost of filming. Also, there are so many audits issued each year on local jurisdictions, that LRL only keeps the current edition of any audit. There was interest in whether the State Archives keeps all the versions of the State Auditor reports. Bob Horton will check into what happens, how many years are kept.
 - Reports are often mandated from small, one-time task forces that don't even have an office to bill. LRL picks up the costs.
 - Do not film consultants reports nor Metropolitan Council publications. (A discussion ensued: Is the Met Council a state body or not? We pursue all of their reports, but they are not filmed. Would that mean ALL of the RDCs would be considered state agencies? The U?)
 - Do we ILL the reports that aren't filmed? Basically, yes. We have some restrictions during session on lending items with recent copyright dates, but the recent items are probably still available from the agency or on the Web.
 - Does the mandate for 6 copies include an electronic address if available? There is nothing in the Statutes at this time, but when we send letters requesting documents, we ask for a URL as well.
 - Agencies are reluctant to pay for filming printouts of items on the web. We consider on a case-by-case basis whether to print out web only reports. Sometimes we get notice: no report done, here's the web address.
 - Many libraries seek print state documents: Some stuff just comes. Some stuff requires contacting agencies, order them off of monthly list. Without phone numbers it's hard to figure out which part of an agency published the report, takes 3-4 phone calls. Would a list of general contacts within agencies help? Yes! It was suggested that e-mail addresses for contacts would also be useful.
 - Aren't there several large public libraries in the depository system? No, just cities of the first class. The Dakota County Library purchases the fiche. How many libraries purchase the fiche? Robbie: Although I did not know on the day of the meeting, I have

since discovered that Dakota County Library is the only purchasing library.

- Smaller technical colleges probably don't care if they have state documents or not, maybe public libraries would be a better place.
- URLs in catalog records: catalogers add if available on the document, and we do a systematic search for URLs when Minnesota Resources is produced. LRL would like to know of any URLs that have been missed for cataloged items.
- Do not catalog pamphlets like fish consumption advisories.
- Does LRL like it when other libraries catalog things first? (Sure, that's great.) If other libraries are cataloging it first, they don't know if we know about the document. LRL generally catalogs things first. (Note: LRL will establish an easy way to notify us about state documents you may have received and/or cataloged first.)