A New Object Comes In For Treatment:

(Such as one of the examples)

Indigenous Cultural Artifacts made from organic materials

Antique Mirrors

Textiles

Herbaria, botanical models

Historic Wallpaper and Book Fabrics

Taxidermy Mounts, Furs, and Natural Science Specimens

Painted Objects

Assume Every Object is Hazardous Until Proven Otherwise

Handling Guidelines

Before Handling:

Use non cotton gloves when handling the object

Cover all surfaces that may come in contact with the object with polyethylene sheeting. Examples include shelves, table tops, photographic studio spaces.

After Handling:

Dispose of gloves in appropriate hazardous waste bins. Turn gloves inward when removing.

Dispose of polyethylene sheeting in appropriate hazardous waste bins. Turn sheets inward when removing from surfaces.

Perform Analysis for the Detection and Characterization of Residual Pesticides and Other Hazardous Materials

Gas Chromatography- Mass Spectrometry
May be used for identifying organic-based pesticides such as organochlorines

Micro-Chemical Tests for Material Identification
May be used for identifying a range of organic and inorganic materials such as Arsenic, Carbamates, Organophosphates, and more.

X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF)
May be Used for identifying heavy metal pesticides such as Arsenic, Mercury, and Lead compounds

Examination Report
Past Documentation:
-Is there past treatment documentation?
-Does the treatment history account for incorporation of hazardous materials?

Condition:
-Does the Object show signs of insect damage?
-Are there signs of an active insect infestation?

Analysis:
-Has the object been analyzed for the identification of hazardous materials?
-What methods were used to analyze the object?

Considerations:
-Historically, object susceptible to insect damage may have been treated with pesticides. When conducting an initial examination, look out for insect remains. The presence of dead insects or the lack of insects may indicate pesticides are present.
-Examine surfaces for fine powders that may be indicative of past pesticide application.
-Be especially wary of any object made of containing fat, hair, or other animal-based materials.

Photo Documentation
Important Considerations:
-When performing photo documentation make sure all surfaces in contact with the object are covered with a protective layer.
-After positioning the object while wearing gloves, make sure to remove any corner of the gloves before touching any photographic equipment.

Tips:
Consider which photographic techniques might help characterize or quantify the presence of hazardous materials.

Considerations During Treatment of Objects with Hazardous Materials

Use Tools Designated for the Treatment of Hazardous Materials

Properly Separate and Dispose of Hazardous Waste

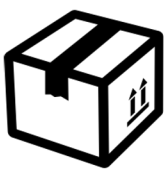
Always wear appropriate PPE

Clearly Label Hazardous Objects and Keep in Designated Storage

Treatment Report and Post Treatment Documentation
Important Considerations
Consider the use of the object after treatment and include considerations that will address those specific concerns, such as the following:
Ownership:
-Is the object owned by an institution or by a private collector?
-How does the owner intend to use the object?
-What considerations must be taken into account for the safety of the owner?

Use/Display:
-Will the object be displayed openly or in an enclosed case?
-Will the object be used for educational purposes such as visiting researchers?
-How will hazard information be communicated to those who will come in contact with the object?
-Will the object remain in storage?
-Is the object intended for repatriation under NAGPRA?
-Is the object intended for reburial or ceremonial use?

Photo Documentation
Important Considerations:
-Follow same procedures as directed for pre-treatment documentation.



Storage and Transport
-Use appropriate materials when creating storage boxes
-Provide clear hazard labels for the outside of the box
-Enclose handling instructions inside the box

Compiled by Liatte Dotan for the purpose of Masters in Conservation Science research project- Garman Art Conservation Department, SUNY Buffalo State