Managing Website Content

When you update a government website (whether replacing a paragraph or a page), what happens to the outdated material? This guide will help you follow best practices for managing your website content.

Recordkeeping Responsibilities

Like other types of government information, website content (i.e. data or documents published on websites) must be managed in accordance with the *Information Management Act* and relevant policies and standards.

Government bodies need to create and keep complete and accurate records sufficient to document their decision-making and work activities. This applies to all types of government records, including documents in all formats and workspaces that provide the best evidence of government business activities, transactions, policy or decisions. These records must be managed in accordance with government records management policy and standards.

Responsibilities:

Government bodies are responsible for ensuring that there are:

- recorded policies and procedures
- defined roles and responsibilities
- appropriate recordkeeping systems
- ongoing training
- compliance monitoring programs

Employees are responsible for documenting their work by ensuring key records they create or receive are filed in their recordkeeping system.

Classify Website Content

Don't forget to classify and file your web content **before** posting it! If you are removing content from a website and are not sure if this has happened, it's not too late to file it.

Before filing, find out if the website content is covered by an **information schedule**.

Consider:

- Does *ARCS secondary 340-30 Simple web site pages* apply? You can use this classification for most website content. (e.g. webpages, online search forms, image files, PDFs)

- Do you have an *ORCS* or other ongoing records schedule that covers the **operational records** on the website?

## Why do I need to file a copy if the content is already on a website?

Websites are not recordkeeping systems; information can disappear when websites change or are shut down. You also may need to save content for legal, fiscal, audit and historical purposes.

Does your office need to retain metadata documenting when information (e.g. health alerts, course offerings, policy statements, funding deadlines, etc.) was posted online and when it was removed? Filing content and/or metadata in an appropriate recordkeeping system ensures that the information will be available when needed.

Removed Website Content: Delete or Save?

It's okay to delete content removed from a website if:

- ☑ It fits the description of simple website pages under *ARCS* 340-30, and the information in them has been filed elsewhere; OR

- ☑ It is covered by an *ORCS* secondary that allows it to be destroyed.
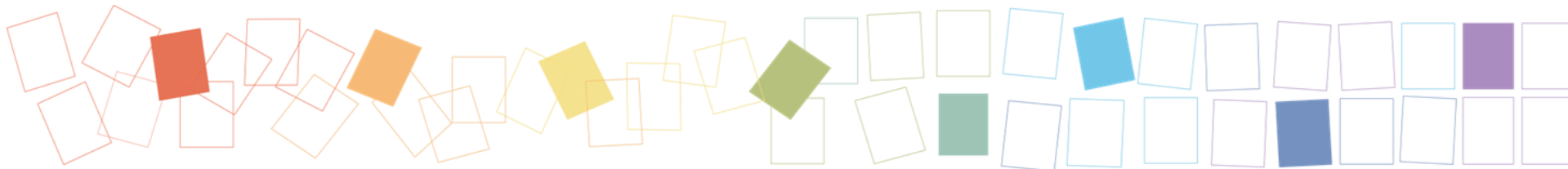
Check with your Records Team if:

- *ARCS* 340-30 does **not apply**, and there is no relevant *ORCS* secondary; OR

- *ARCS* 340-20 *Dormant web sites* does apply (i.e. the website covers a discontinued program or a completed project that is NOT documented in an appropriate recordkeeping system); OR

- The relevant ORCS requires the information to be retained for a period of time (e.g. CY+1y), or reviewed by a Records Officer or Archivist.

Save website content if:

- Required by the applicable information schedule; OR

- If the information schedule has a final disposition of selective or full retention (SR or FR). For example, an office that administers qualifying examinations for a registered profession may need to retain examination timetables, as well as metadata showing the dates the information was posted as evidence of due diligence in accordance with policy.

Not sure if *ARCS* 340-30 applies? This secondary can be used for:

- Static websites that are being replaced with more dynamic websites

- Websites that serve as information portals (e.g. citizens submit their feedback to a consultation website, which is then stored elsewhere – not on the website itself)

- Web content that will no longer be available online but will be filed in an appropriate recordkeeping system (e.g. in EDRMS or in LAN/shared drive files organized by *ARCS* and *ORCS*)

Save the removed content:

Using the appropriate schedule and classification number, save the removed content into your:

- EDRMS if your office uses this system;

- LAN with other digital files (see below); OR

- Whatever shared filing system your office uses.

Legal requirements

Also consider whether your office has legal reasons to retain metadata documenting when information was posted and remove (e.g. health alerts, avalanche warnings)

How to Save Web Pages

Here's a simple method that works. You may want to use a different approach if the appropriate skills and technology are available.

1. **Create an electronic folder** in EDRMS or on your LAN/fileshare. (see screenshot on next page)

2. Click on the **File** menu in your browser, then choose **Save As**.

3. **Save pages as web archive files, file type ".mht"** (see screenshot on next page). If this format doesn't work, use the Microsoft snipping tool, and save as a word document (however, this method does not preserve links).

Hint: to open your web archive pages, click the file name and choose the "view" menu item.

4. Click **Save** to automatically save documents to your personal drive (often known as the "H drive").

Hint: Take this opportunity to update the file title in accordance with naming conventions – see tips below.

5. Next copy **the web archive file** into the file you opened in step 1.

Hint: EDRMS users will need to add the .mht file type under the options/ viewer tab (see screenshot on next page).
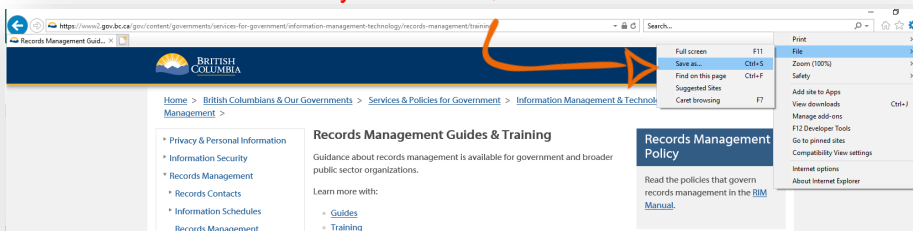
6. **Delete all the documents from your personal drive** after ensuring they have been accurately captured and named (best practice is to compare the archived documents to the website).
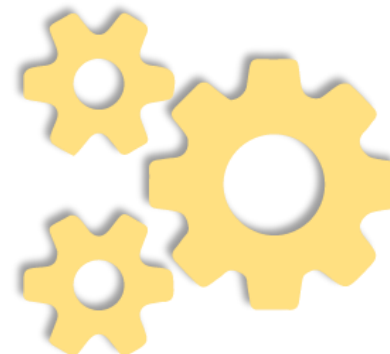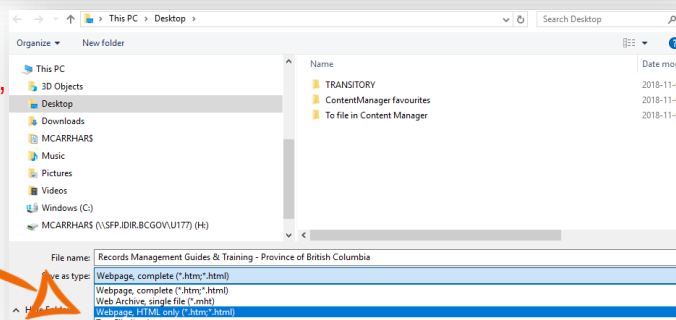
1. Create a new folder on your LAN/fireshare.
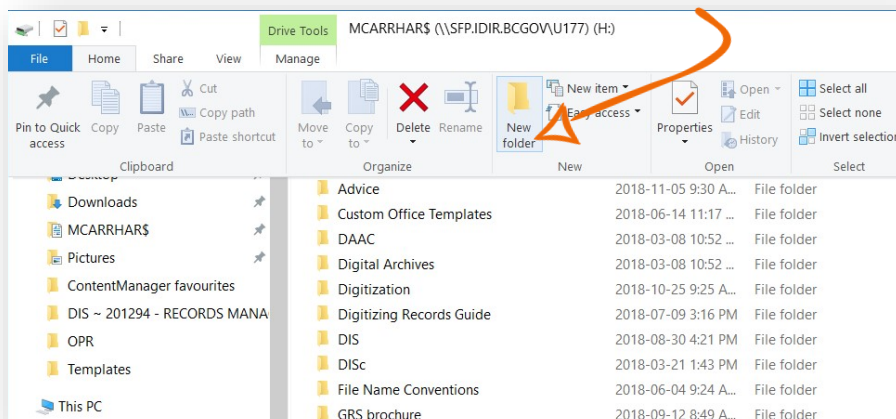
2. Click on the **File** menu in your browser, then choose **Save As**.

3. Save pages as web archive files, file type ".mht.

Using Naming Conventions for Web Archive Files

When capturing webpages as web archive files, best practice is to name them consistently. This helps to ensure that each webpage can be easily identified and distinguished from other pages and other versions.

Include the following information in your web archive file titles:

- **Page name**, based on the title that appears on the page;

- **Page owner** information, based on the ministry/agency/branch/program name or acronym (or place all pages in a single folder with the name in the folder title);

- **Date of capture** (year and month may suffice);

- **Page hierarchy**: If capturing a main page and subsidiary pages, consider indicating this in the title (e.g. "Health Match BC – main page" or "Health Match BC – Physician, Nurse, and Allied Health Recruitment"); AND

- **Date posted**: If there are legal requirements, provide metadata about dates files were posted (this does not need to be part of the title if it is captured elsewhere).

Additional Information

Contact your Records Team or check out the Records Management website.