

Boxes sent to contracted offsite storage facilities for government records need to meet the following specifications.

Box Packing Specifications (see page 2 for rules for boxes, labels, and ordering; also see RIM 422B Specifications for File Lists)

Pack each box carefully to avoid damage and deterioration, as follows:

1. **Don't over-pack** – box should close easily, sides should not bulge, weight must not exceed 11.25 kg (25 lb).
2. **Don't under-pack** - if records do not completely fill a box, fill the balance of the box with inert packing material (e.g., crumpled paper) to support the records and prevent the box from collapsing.
3. **Keep files upright with labels visible** – place records so that their labels are easily read or – for standard paper files, this means folders should be upright and all facing the same way.
4. **Don't mix schedules within a box** – Pack ARCS records separate from ORCS records and any other schedules your office may be using.
5. **Don't mix final dispositions** – Box DE, SR, and FR records separately. If this causes difficulty, consult your Records Officer team.
6. **Box similar records together, if possible** – Records in the same box should be ready for disposition within 1-3 years of one another. Also, group together records covered by the same ARCS/ORCS secondary. (In other words, box by lifespan and file code.) *Grouping records this way allows them to be disposed of more efficiently.*
7. **Arrange files in order** - within each box, arrange files in the same order they appear in the file list (i.e., the same arrangement as the automatically generated list in TRIM, CRMS, or whatever electronic

system you use; if not using a system, follow the same arrangement they would have in the office).

8. **Arrange boxes logically** – group together boxes that will be eligible for final disposition on the same dates.
9. **Pack special media/formats appropriately:**
 - **Rolled maps/plans:** pack in a manner that permits items to be removed, returned, unrolled and re-rolled to their original diameter without subjecting the item to undue strain or friction. In other words, do not pack too tightly. Use appropriate boxes (see page 2)
 - **Flat maps/plans:** DO NOT FOLD; place these in folders in an oversize box, or if too large, carefully roll them instead. Use appropriate boxes (see page 2).
 - **Audio/video tapes:** Place most tapes vertically with labels up, after winding at uniform speed to ensure even tension throughout.
 - **Microfiche:** Use paper sleeves.
 - **Motion picture films:** Store in clearly labelled, properly fitted cans free of rust and corrosion, laid flat inside boxes.

VINEGAR SYNDROME: *If you detect a vinegar (acetic acid) odour on any fiche or film, consult your Records Officer. It is a sign of serious deterioration and a potential health hazard in cases of prolonged exposure.*

What NOT to send offsite:

- CD ROMs, DVDs, floppy disks, or other **portable storage media containing digital records**. These need to be stored on government servers; use TRIM or your LAN instead. For guidance on legacy records only available on digital storage devices, contact GRS.
- **WARNING: Pre-1950 35mm films** may be nitrate film subject to spontaneous combustion. These are hazardous records that require safety precautions. Consult your Records Officer.

ONLY USE APPROVED BOXES AND LABELS. Order from [Distribution Centre Victoria \(DCV\)](#) or contact GRS at RCSHELP@gov.bc.ca.

Type of box	Suitable Records Formats	Box Measurement Specifications	DCV product number
Common records storage box	Standard physical folders. Audio and video tapes in individual cases.	Bankers' boxes 40 x 32 x 25 cm (1 cubic foot)	7520121002
Map storage box	Rolled maps or plans - Length of roll must be 1 cm less than total box length.	10.2 x 10.2 x 92 or 122 cm (4 x 4 x 36" or 48")	7520121005 or 7520121006
Oversize box – type 1	Use for oversize materials such as flat or rolled maps and plans or graphic material.	20.3 x 20.3 x 102 cm (8 x 8 x 40")	n/a – contact RCS for ordering information.
Oversize box – type 2	Use for oversize materials.	X-ray (ledger) boxes in sizes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40.6 x 19 x 48.3 cm (16 x 7½ x 19") • 134.6 x 107 x 10.2 cm (53 x 42 x 4") C size • 111 x 82 x 10.2 cm (43¾ x 32¼ x 4") B size 	n/a – contact RCS
Oversize box – type 3	Use for oversize materials.	Archival storage ("Hollinger") boxes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 x 6.4 x 26 cm (15¾ x 2½ x 10¼") slim • 40 x 13 x 26 cm (15¾ x 5½ x 10¼") regular 	n/a – contact RCS
Special media storage box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio/videotape • Photographs 	Sizes conform to preservation standards	n/a – contact RCS

How to Label Boxes	1. Use the standard box labels available from DCV – product number 7520121009	2. Write the box numbers on the labels: These consist of the accession number, a dash, and the sequential box number (for numbers 1-9, best practice is to add a leading zero). E.g., 96-0067-01, 96-0067-02, 96-0067-03 ... 96-0067-10.	3. Use one label per box, and affix it to the end of the box. To maintain security and confidentiality do not put any other identifying information on the box (such as ministry/ agency name or records series title).	4. Add Destination Labels if needed: If a destination label is needed, ensure it is clearly legible and affixed to the top of each box. GRS Records Centre Services will provide any additional instructions required prior to pick-up.
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