

Wentworth Institute saves 20 buildings after flood.

Boston's "Back Bay" area is a famous cultural and residential center. It is known for its many art museums and landmarks, such as Fenway Park—the home of the Red Sox. Besides many elegant 19th Century town houses, Back Bay is also the location of three of the city's most famous colleges — Boston University, Northeastern University and The Wentworth Institute of Technology.

Though the area is internationally known for its institutions, it's called the "Back Bay" because it was reclaimed from the sea, when early residents of the city cut down many of hills and used the fill to create new land. Today, this "low country" in the heart of the city depends upon a complex city sewer system to keep it dry.

However, when intense autumn rains dumped 8–10 inches of water on the city, storm sewers were overwhelmed, and the Wentworth Institute began to take massive amounts of water.

The problem

"The sewers overflowed into our boiler room," said Jim Ammann of the Wentworth Institute of Technology's building maintenance staff. "Before long we had seven feet of water surrounding our generation equipment, which knocked out all of the school's power." Without power, the pumping systems that usually kept Wentworth's 26 buildings dry during wet weather shut down. Twenty campus buildings suffered water damage, including the student center and the huge gymnasium. "It was amazing," recalls Ammann. "I was on the sandbagging crew and the water just poured in over our dikes and flooded over the gym floor in waves. We could do nothing to stop it. It was particularly frustrating, since the school had refinished the floor earlier that summer."



Jim Ammann points to the high-water mark in Wentworth's boiler room. Munters dried the boiler room, protecting the equipment. "We didn't even have to repaint it," said Ammann.

RESTORATION SERVICES Case Study: Multi-faceted Project



THE MUNTERS ADVANTAGE

When you call in Munters, you have the world's largest, most experienced disaster recovery company working with you. Here's how Wentworth Institute benefitted from Munters help:

FAST RECOVERY

Munters reversed massive flooding and had the school back in operation in just one week.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Munters dried "old style" construction, saved a large gym floor, protected the computer center and restored documents.

LARGE FLEET

Munters was the only company that could simultaneously address the needs of 20 affected buildings. Bringing equipment and staff from around the country, Munters stepped up to this large project without difficulty.

AVOIDED BIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Using high-tech drying equipment, Munters prevented the growth of mold and other biological hazards by drying moisture trapped deep inside walls and enclosed areas.

The solution

At Wentworth, Munters faced a wide variety of water damage problems. One of the more notable situations was the Wentworth gymnasium. The largest wood floor Munters has ever dried, it contains four, full size basketball courts. As soon as standing water was removed, the floor boards started to “cup” as a massive amount of water had flowed over it and run down through the cracks. However, two things were working in the floor’s favor: 1) Munters could start immediately, and 2) the floor’s high quality construction provided air spaces underneath it.”

Munters has successfully restored many different types of wooden floors, but those constructed with air spaces underneath provide the advantage of drying from above and below simultaneously. Using desiccant dehumidifiers integrated with other equipment to create a unique system, Munters circulated dehumidified air underneath the floor on one side of the gym, drew it across the entire width of the floor, and then extracted it on the other side.

“Munters procedure worked so well that the floor was restored without the need for refinishing. Before Munters completed the project, sports teams were on the floor,” said Ammann.

The benefits

When you call Munters for post disaster drying, you have America’s largest, most experienced water damage recovery team at your disposal. Munters helped at Wentworth in many ways:

Economic Advantages

Drying after water damage will reduce recovery costs by 30 to 70%. Drying saves structural materials, greatly reducing the need to rip-out and replace studding, sheet rock, floor coverings and utilities. Only Munters could have handled the massive problem of 20 buildings flooded simultaneously. “When the project was over, it was clear that Munters’ drying activities had been essential in preventing reconstruction



Jim Ammann inspects Munters gym floor drying configuration, which pumped dry air under the wet floor.

of most of our campus,” said Jim Ammann, coordinator for Munters activities throughout the Institute’s recovery project.

Shorter Disruption

“At Wentworth, we had older construction—such as plaster and lathe walls—which take longer to give up moisture,” said Ammann. “Nonetheless, the Munters drying effort at Wentworth lasted just 15 days, and the school was closed for only one week.”

Avoid Microbiological Problems

A water-damaged building must be thoroughly dried to suppress the growth of mold and mildew. Fungi spores are found everywhere and require only the presence of moisture and warm temperatures to grow. This growth will rapidly lead to odors, unsightly stains and in many cases a health hazard. Microbiological studies have repeatedly shown that desiccant drying controls fungi growth, eliminating problems.

Experienced Professionals

With more than 30,000 water damage projects under its belt, Munters has encountered virtually every water damage problem imaginable. When you call on Munters, you call on the most knowledgeable people in the business today!



Computer centers were kept in use upstairs as drying continued downstairs.

Wentworth’s, Jim Ammann, was surprised when Munters used instrumentation to determine that masonry walls, dry to the touch, were holding water. “Munters asked us to drill holes in the walls to let trapped water out. When we did, water poured out like someone had turned on a hose! I was amazed.”

Technical Services

Munters uses proven techniques and consults with experts in electronic restoration. At Wentworth, Munters protected a student computer center from corrosion, while drying a flooded downstairs area.

Document Restoration

Munters saves over one million documents every year. Munters can dry documents at your site, allowing access throughout the process, or remove documents to a regional drying center. Books, files, drawings, x-rays, microfiche, video and audio tapes and computer media can all be saved.

Munters Joins Your Team

“I also found Munters to be extremely responsive,” said Ammann. “I could call people on a 24-hour basis. Munters never let a piece of equipment stay down. If something needed attention, they’d fix it at midnight! They were great to work with.”



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