

Electronic Government Publications: Acquisition and Access Policies

Federal Selective Depository 0306-A
A. C. Clark Library, Bemidji State University
Bemidji, Minnesota, U.S.A.

1.0 SCOPE

- 1.1 This policy addresses electronic resources associated with the A. C. Clark Library's status as a depository of federal and State of Minnesota documents. *Electronic resources* encompasses information resources delivered through electronic services and those which are shipped to the library as electronic media.
- 1.2 *Electronic services* includes those services which are delivered over the World Wide Web and through other Internet avenues (FTP, Telnet, etc.). While many of electronic resources are from sites which offer open, uncontrolled access, others manage their access through technologies such as defined IP ranges and user validation (typically username/password).
- 1.3 The A. C. Clark Library (hereafter, the Library) receives many electronic resources as *electronic media*. Typical of these media types are CD ROM and floppy disks, and new media types are likely, such as DVD.

2.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The Library's circulation policies for items in its government publications collection are defined in the various relevant item classes which are part of the MnSCU/PALS database. In general, most items may circulate for a period of three weeks to anyone in good standing who holds a card which entitles him or her to check out library materials from the A. C. Clark Library. Some items, however, are available for in-library-use only and do not circulate. Appropriate equipment will be made available in-house for the use of any electronic resource which does not circulate.
- 2.2 Many information resources are made available over the Internet by units of the U. S. Government and the State of Minnesota. Any person who abides by the Code of Behavior for Library Users and Access to and Use Policies of A. C. Clark Library Computers may use these resources and any of the on-site electronic resources mentioned above. There is no charge for access to any of these resources nor is there any charge to download any of this information to disk. Users wishing to download information will need to provide their own disks, such as a 3.5" high-density diskette or a ZIP disk. While it may be possible to make prints from these various resources, a user will be charged the same fee as established for any other similar quality prints which can be made in the Library.
- 2.3 Because electronic media provided through the Federal Depository Library Program and the State of Minnesota are produced in a variety of formats, require a variety of hardware configurations and operating systems, utilize an undefined range of ancillary software, have uneven qualities of operation and varying levels of complexity of use, and may be more appropriate for circulating rather than in-building use, not all electronic resources associated with this depository may be usable within the library. In such cases where an item cannot be used in the Library, it will circulate as would circulating paper items belonging to the Government Publications Collection.

- 2.4 The Library will maintain no record of who uses its resources except to keep track of who currently has an item checked out or who currently owes any damage or fees associated with an item. This information is regarded as confidential and will not be released by library personnel.

3.0 ACQUISITION

- 3.1 So long as a specific Internet-based resource is determined by the Government Publications Librarian to meet the general content and usage needs of the Depository's patrons, he or she will generally favor the selection of this form of the electronic resource over that of other electronic media with the same title or scope.
- 3.2 Additional factors which he or she will consider when making this decision are management complexities associated with accessing a particular resource (*e.g.*, site requires certain usage guarantees which cannot be easily managed), costs associated with using the online resources (*e.g.*, subscription costs), and performance issues (*e.g.*, speed and stability of online resource).

4.0 ELECTRONIC MEDIA

- 4.1 Electronic media items are normally selected by the Government Publications Librarian because:
- 4.1.1 their content is not freely and readily available online;
- 4.1.2 he or she feels the physical media offers certain advantages over an online version; or
- 4.1.3 because he or she has concerns about the longevity and stability of the online archives of the item.
- 4.2 The Government Publications Librarian also selects items of electronic media when he or she determines that an item is likely to be needed by users who have computer access but who do not have Internet access at their home or office.

5.0 ACCESS

- 5.1 Unless an Internet-based resource has specific access restrictions, the Library will make available federal Internet-based resources on all of its public-access computers which offer general Internet access. The following methods will be used, as appropriate, to facilitate user access to these resources:
- 5.1.1 Linking to these resources from the Library's web pages
- 5.1.2 Linking to guides to these resources which are provided by other organizations or individuals
- 5.1.3 Incorporation of cataloging records for these resources into the Library's online catalog
- 5.2 Electronic media which circulate are generally available in the electronic media cabinet (open stacks) of the Government Publications Collection. In the case of an item being requested for course reserve or being especially susceptible to damage or abuse, an item may be located at the Circulation Desk for circulation.

- 5.3 Electronic media which may not be removed from the library may be located in one of several locations, depending upon the item s use patterns.
- 5.3.1 Server or Disc Changer. These are heavy use items which can be installed on dedicated or networked computers, depending upon their software requirements and restrictions.
- 5.3.2 Open Stacks. These are stored, typically in disc cartridges, in the electronic media cabinet (open stacks) of the Government Publications Collection. They are labeled non-circulating so that users can distinguish them from circulating items.
- 5.3.3 Circulation Desk. An in-library-use-only item may be located in closed stacks at the Circulation Desk if an instructor has requested that it be used for course reserve. On infrequent occasions in-library-use-only electronic media may also be stored at the Circulation Desk if it is deemed by the Government Publications Librarian, along with the Circulation Librarian, that the item is at risk if it remains in the open stacks.

6.0 FACILITIES

- 6.1 The Government Publications Area has several computer workstations dedicated to the use of government electronic resources, especially electronic media. Though many of the government-sponsored electronic resources are available using other computers located throughout the library, these stations are intended to guarantee access to government information resources by making these resources the highest priority use of these stations. Anyone using one of these stations for other purposes may be asked to relinquish use of the station if someone needing to access a government information resource is awaiting use of the station. A reference librarian or evening supervisor should be contacted in the event of dispute of use. Most stations incorporate adjustable height work surfaces so that the equipment can be more easily used by people in wheelchairs or those having from certain back disabilities. Every effort is made to keep these in conformance with the Federal Depository Library Program s Recommended Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries.
- 6.2 Users with visual impairments should be made aware that many of the Library s electronic resources can also be accessed at special computer workstations (Room 317) which are configured with various assistive software and devices for people with visual impairments.