

TYVEK PILLOWS FOR TEXTILE STORAGE

Purpose

The Tyvek pillows were developed to provide adequate support and handling of the fabric and leather dresses of the Native American collection at the Nebraska History Museum. The dresses were stored in inert storage drawers in a mobile shelving unit and piled atop each other. This storage system led to bead loss, torn leather, and creases. The technicians created a two-pillow support system for support and space allocation.

Description

The pillows are made from soft-structure Tyvek sewn together and filled with loose polyester batting. The pillows are designed to fit in standardized textile storage boxes.

Materials, Tools, and Supplies

- Metal straight edge
- Soft-structure Tyvek, cut to size
- 100% white cotton thread
- Loose polyester batting
- Cotton twill tape
- Utility knife

Directions

- 1) Determine the inside dimensions of the storage box (length, width, height).
- 2) Cut out two pieces of Tyvek using the length and width of the box.
- 3) Place the two pieces of Tyvek with slick sides together.
- 4) Using 100% white cotton thread, sew the pieces of Tyvek together on three sides with a $\frac{1}{4}$ in seam.
- 5) Turn the pillow inside out.
- 6) Fill the pillow with loose polyester batting. Be careful to not overstuff the pillow.
- 7) Sew the fourth side together, finishing the pillow.
- 8) Repeat steps 2-7 for the second pillow.
- 9) If two objects will be stored in one box, cut out a piece of Tyvek big enough to wrap around the object. Place the long piece of Tyvek in the bottom of the box with equal amounts on each side of the box.

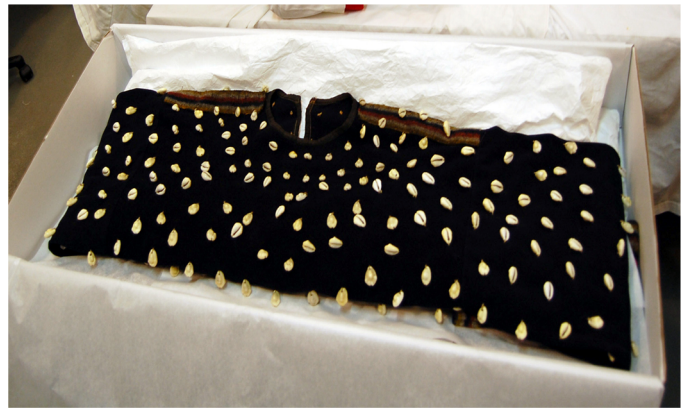


Fig. 1 Native American dress rehousing with Tyvek pillows.

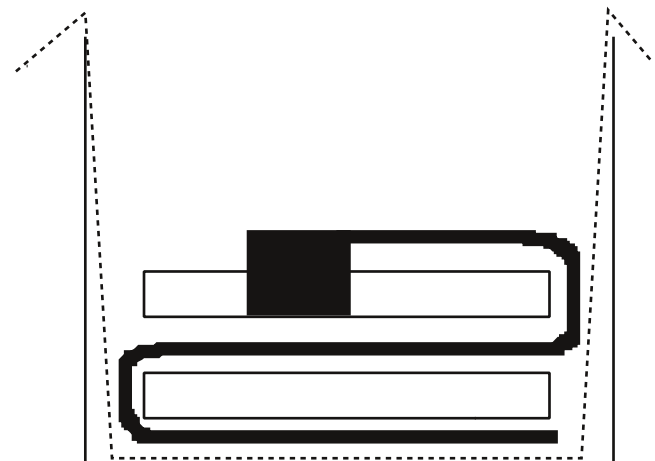


Fig. 2

- Tyvek wrapping
- ▭ Tyvek pillow

- 10) Using the diagram in Fig. 2, place the object in the box using an 'S-curve' method.
- 11) Place the bottom 1/3 of the object in the box.
- 12) Place one pillow in the box.
- 13) Carefully wrap the object along around the edge of the pillow making sure there are no folds or creases.
- 14) Place the second pillow in the box.
- 15) Carefully wrap the object around the edge of the second pillow making sure there are no folds or creases.
- 16) If the object is a dress, carefully tuck the sleeves around the edge of the second pillow.
- 18) Wrap the extra amount of Tyvek around the object. Tie the Tyvek together with cotton twill tape.

Comments

The pillows were used in the rehousing of the Native American dresses made of leather or textile and heavily decorated with pony beads, glass seed beads, elk teeth, silk ribbons, metal cones. The pillows are also used to rehouse the blankets and hides of the Nebraska History Museum's ethnographic collection. The dresses and blankets were stored in standardized textile boxes of 28in x 40in x 15in. Due to the limited availability of space, two objects were stored in the same box with the heaviest placed on the bottom. To protect the glass beads, pony beads, or other decorations, it is advised to add a third pillow between the two dresses for further protection.

The Tyvek pillows used by the Nebraska History Museum were developed by the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center, a section of the Nebraska State Historical Society.