

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERICAN PREPAREDNESS PROJECT: Where the US Public Stands

Americans express very little confidence in the government's ability to respond to a natural disaster, yet little has improved in household preparedness over the past 13 years.

NEW YORK, NY (May 12, 2016) –

The latest iteration of this national survey builds upon years of effort to understand how Americans perceive their risks to a wide range of disasters and emergencies and what actions they are or are not taking in preparation. This study has identified important insights into the lack of preparedness among American households when it comes to terrorism or natural disasters, as well as a lack of progress in integrating families and children into community disaster planning. Important to note is a lack of trust in authorities and communities and a general lack of adoption of preparedness among individuals and households. These data confirm that emergency preparedness and planning should occur and the community level and be led through a collaborative effort between government agencies, community organizations, and citizens themselves.

Key findings include:

- **American household preparedness has improved only modestly** since 2003. Nearly two thirds (65%) of households do not have adequate plans for a disaster or have no plans at all (compared to 77% without adequate plans in 2003).
- 67% of Americans expressed some level of worry that **climate change is contributing to more frequent and severe natural disasters** and 65% expressed some level of worry that **climate change will impact their community's exposure to disasters**.
- Over half of Americans are **not very confident or not confident at all** that the government will be able to protect their community from a terrorist attack. Similarly, nearly 40% of the American population is also not too confident or not confident at all in the **government's ability to respond to a natural disaster or emergency weather event**.
- Over a third of American households with children **are not familiar with their school's evacuation and emergency plans** (35%), and even more **do not know to what location their children would be evacuated** during a disaster (41%).
- There is an **upward trend in the population's expectations regarding first responders**. In the event of a disaster, over half (51%) of Americans believe that help will arrive in under an hour, an increase from 32% in 2006.
- Although Americans have a **higher confidence in their community's ability to respond to disasters**, compared with confidence in "government," 41% are not confident that their community has adequate plans in place for a disaster that occurs with no warning and 37% are not confident in their community's ability to meet the needs of children during disasters.

To read the **full report**, please go to: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7916/D84Q7TZN>