

# 2021 National Household Survey

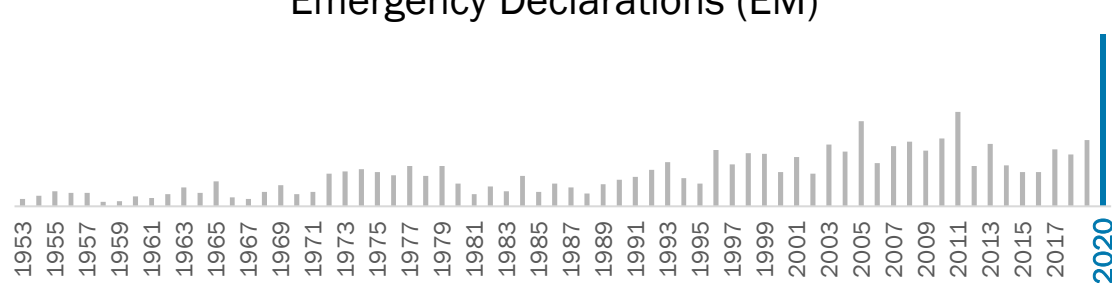
Key Findings | Individual and Community Preparedness Division



**FEMA**

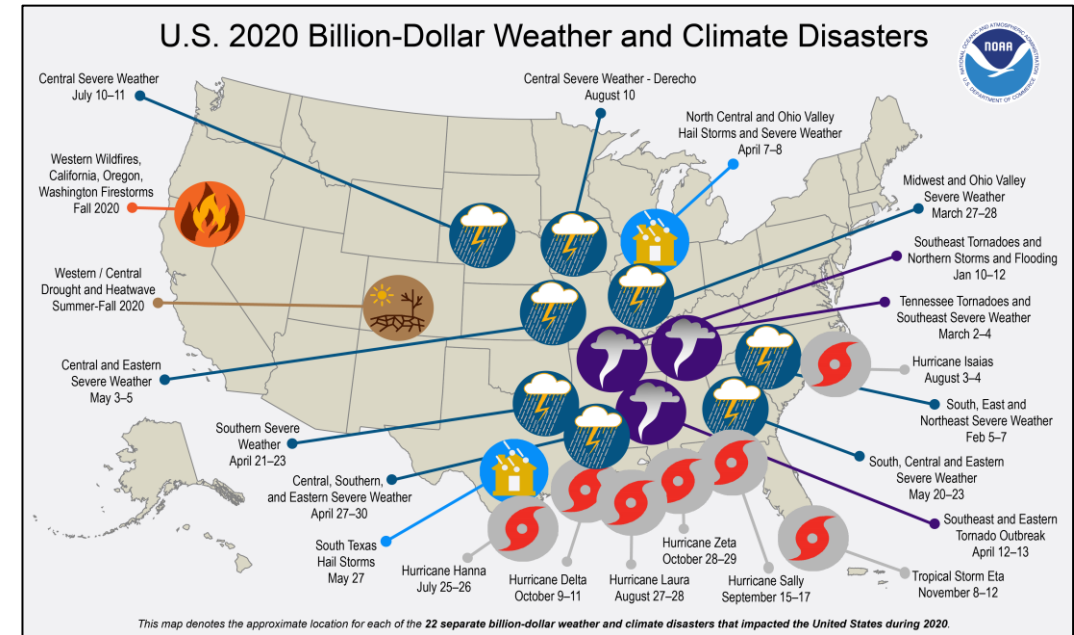
# Setting the Stage: Events Leading Up To 2021 Fielding

In 2020, there were a record **226** Major Disaster (DR) and Emergency Declarations (EM)



Including COVID-19 declarations in every State and Territory.  
At the beginning of fielding (Feb 24) there were:

- 28.5 million cumulative COVID-19 cases<sup>1</sup>
- 525,000 COVID-19 related deaths<sup>1</sup>
- Stay-at-home orders or advisories for 10 states and territories
- COVID-19 related business closures in every state and territory



- NOAA: Record-breaking 22 separate “billion-dollar” climate/weather disasters<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in the US Reported to CDC, by State/Territory, CDC (2021). [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends\\_dailytrendscases](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailytrendscases)

<sup>2</sup> NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters (2021). <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/>, DOI: 10.25921/stkw-7w73



**FEMA**







# FEMA National Household Survey (NHS)

---

- FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division (ICPD) conducts the NHS annually since 2013 to assess **preparedness actions, attitudes, and motivations in America**
- Data was collected from respondents using a mix of telephone interviews and web surveys in English and Spanish
- The NHS measures preparedness of the US public across the **whole community.**



# 2021 NHS Sample Frame Details

Six NHS Hazard Samples	
	Drought n=505
	Power Outage n=513
	Thunderstorm n=509
	Tsunami n=509
	Volcanic Eruption n=510
	Winter Storm n=510

- The 2021 NHS survey was fielded for 11 weeks from **February 24 to May 14, 2021**.
- **7,197** responses were received for the 2021 NHS (“Total Sample”).
  - All respondents were asked general disaster and pandemic preparedness questions.
  - **3,056** respondents answered additional questions on preparedness related to a hazard common to where they live (see sample sizes at left).
- Responses were **weighted** by key demographic variables to enhance the national representativeness of the data.



**FEMA**



# Strategic Plan

Helping People. Together.

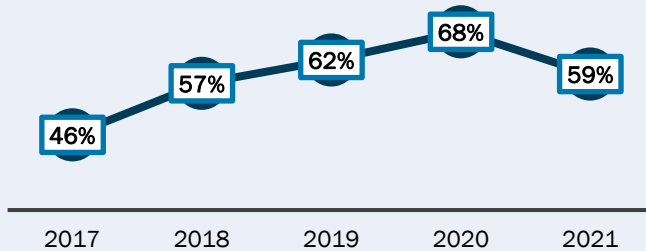


## Objective 1.3 Help People Prepare for Disasters

FEMA Mission: **Helping people before, during, and after disasters.**

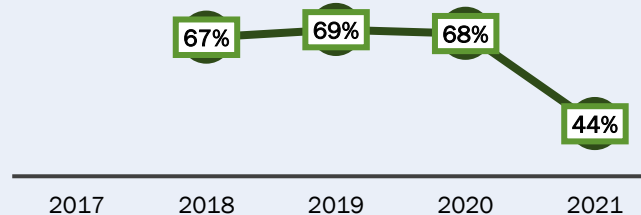
# 59%

of adults have pursued three or more of the twelve preparedness actions



# 44%

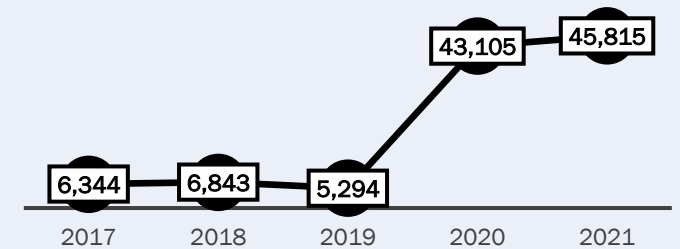
of adults have saved for a rainy day



Note: Financial resilience question first asked in 2018

# 45,815

organizations trained in continuity in FY 2021 YTD



Note: Not collected via the National Household Survey

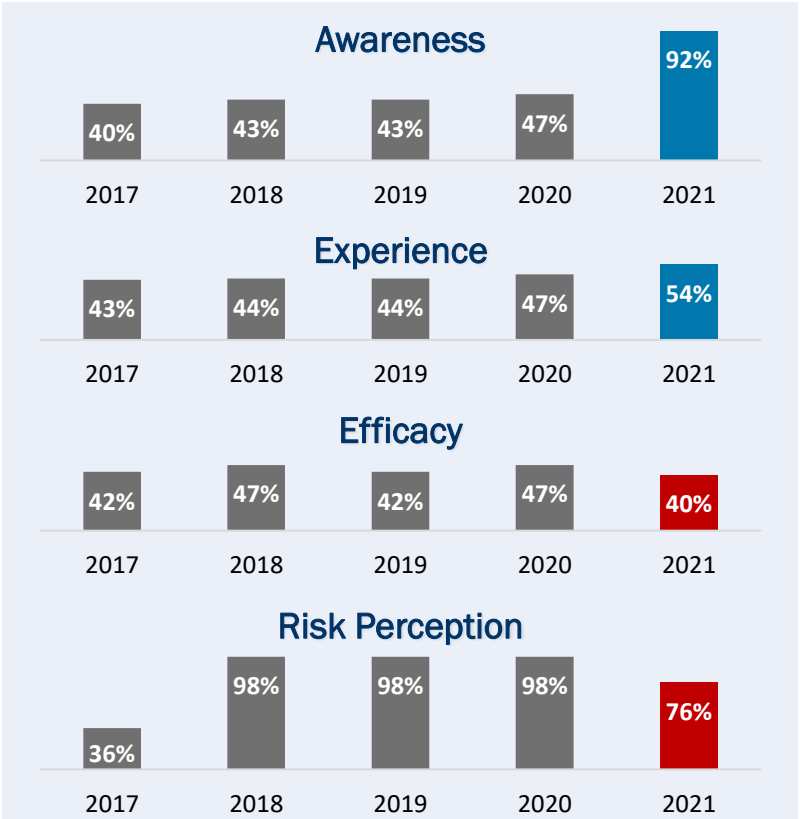
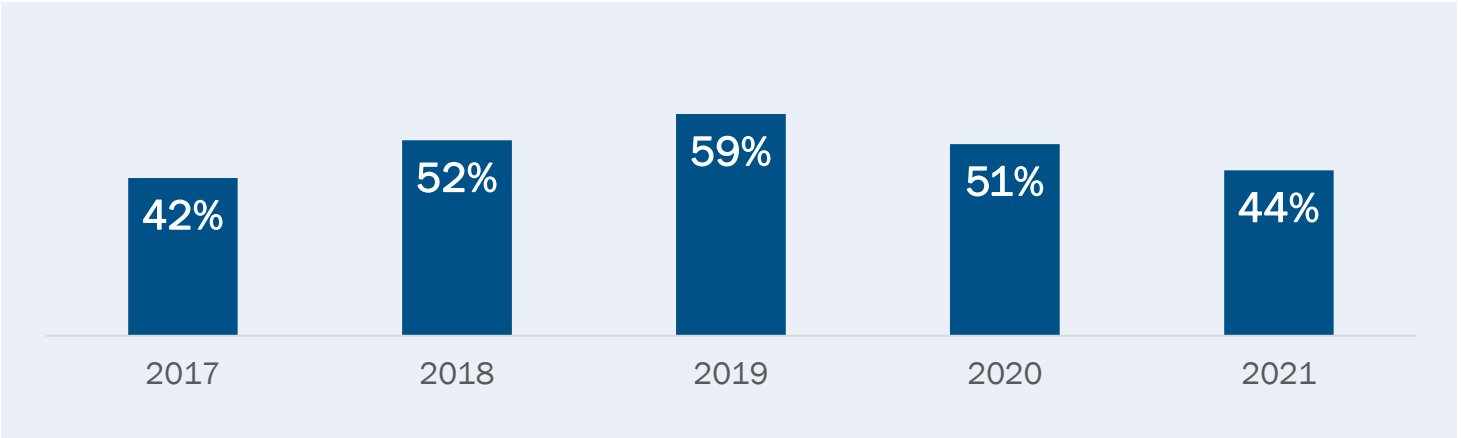


# FEMA

# Preparedness Trends in the United States Since 2017

## I Am Prepared for a Disaster

## Preparedness Influencers



**In the past 5 Years:**

- The peak of self-assessed preparedness occurred in 2019
- A substantial rise in Awareness and Experience was observed in 2021
- Efficacy and personal Risk Perception were down in 2021 compared to the past



# Key Opportunities from the 2021 NHS on the Culture of Preparedness

Fostering a culture of preparedness requires a strategy that is inclusive of the whole public and accounts for increasing risks.



## Help Build Preparedness Confidence While Awareness and Disaster Experience are High

Most respondents have awareness of how to prepare for a disaster or have experienced the impacts of a disaster, but fewer respondents are both confident that they can prepare for a disaster and believe that their preparation would be helpful. The findings encourage us to emphasize the effectiveness of preparedness methods, training opportunities, and delivery of low-cost, accessible step-by-step methods that people can take to help them feel that their preparedness efforts are impactful.



## Use Recognition of Risk to Motivate Preparedness For Climate-Driven Disasters

Climate change can make some disasters more frequent or severe. Most respondents reported that they understand the personal and household risk for the climate-driven hazards of drought, thunderstorm, winter storm, and power outage. Use this fact to confidently promote severe weather and other climate-driven disaster preparedness actions in your communities.



## Consider the Differing Needs of Historically Underserved Communities

Historically underserved communities have varying preparedness needs, and no community or demographic is fully prepared for everything. The NHS contains demographic-specific hazard information focused on historically underserved communities so that stakeholders can use the results to plan out their preparedness promotion strategies.



## Promote Low-Cost Ways to Bridge the Preparedness Gap for the Socioeconomically Disadvantaged

Respondents who are socioeconomically disadvantaged are less likely to have taken cost-driven preparedness actions like saving for a rainy day. However, they are equally likely to have taken less costly actions, such as getting involved with the community. This indicates that while people are willing to prepare, they may not always have the means. Promotion of low or no-cost ways to prepare can empower individuals of all financial circumstances to take preparedness actions.



FEMA

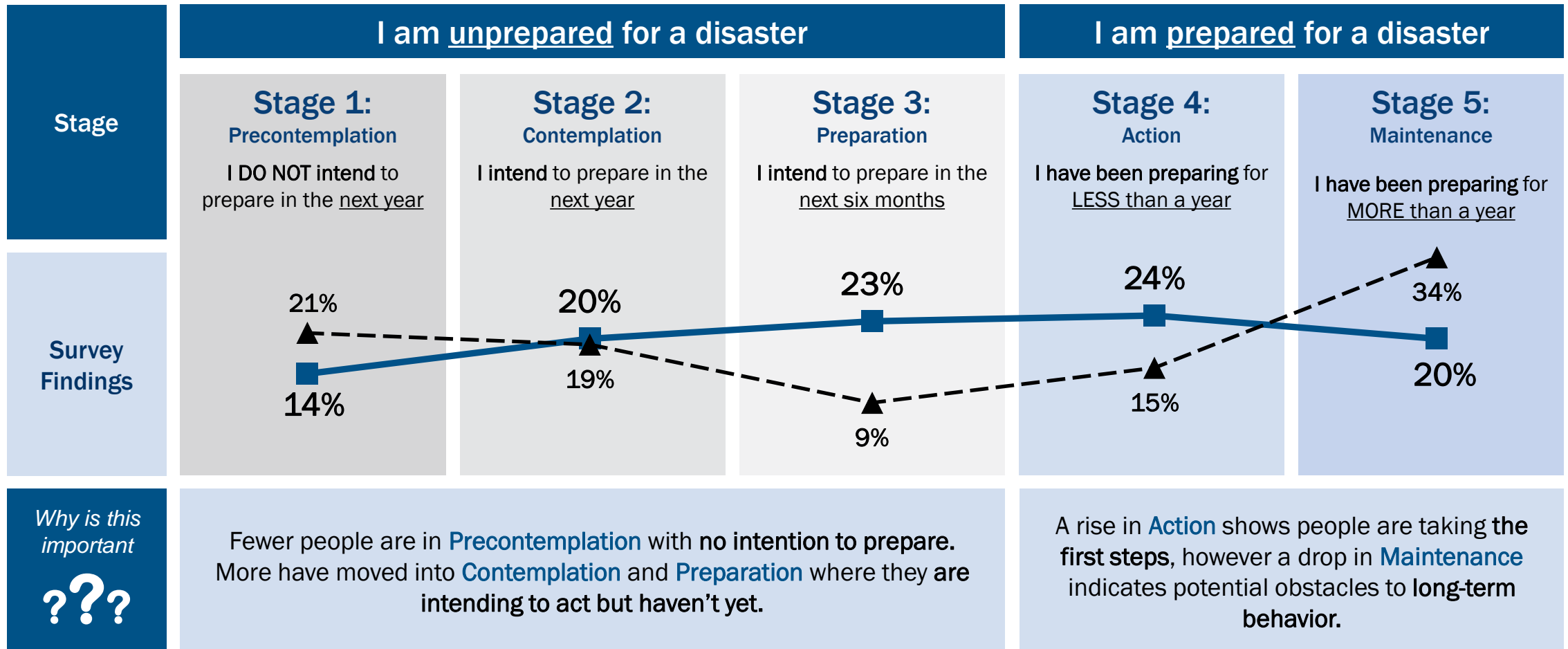
An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in New England, featuring a harbor filled with numerous sailboats. The town is built on a hillside, with a prominent church steeple visible on the right. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# National Sample Results



# Theoretical Stages of Change Model

Thinking about preparing yourself for a disaster, which of the following best represents your degree of preparedness?



Legend: ■ = 2021 Estimate ▲ = 2013 Estimate



FEMA

# Key Influencers to Disaster Preparedness

These four key influencers are standard behavior change measures that are strongly related to a higher amount of preparedness actions taken. Those who have one of these influencers are more likely to take preparedness actions.

Influencer	Awareness	Disaster Experience	Preparedness Efficacy	Risk Perception																														
<p><b>Survey Findings: past 5 years shown</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Survey Findings: past 5 years shown</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Influencer</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>2021</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Awareness</td> <td>40%</td> <td>43%</td> <td>43%</td> <td>47%</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disaster Experience</td> <td>43%</td> <td>44%</td> <td>44%</td> <td>47%</td> <td>54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Preparedness Efficacy</td> <td>42%</td> <td>47%</td> <td>42%</td> <td>47%</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Risk Perception</td> <td>36%</td> <td>98%</td> <td>98%</td> <td>98%</td> <td>76%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Influencer	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Awareness	40%	43%	43%	47%	92%	Disaster Experience	43%	44%	44%	47%	54%	Preparedness Efficacy	42%	47%	42%	47%	40%	Risk Perception	36%	98%	98%	98%	76%	<p>Has read, seen, or heard disaster preparedness information in the past year. 2021 had the highest awareness measured in any NHS.</p>	<p>Has personal or familial experience with disaster impacts. More people have had experience with disasters in 2021.</p>	<p>Is confident that preparing will help and in their abilities to prepare. Feelings of efficacy are down, potentially impacting lower preparedness actions.</p>	<p>Belief that a disaster is likely to impact them. The “can it happen to me?” factor. The overall national response was lower than in the previous 3 years.</p>
Influencer	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021																													
Awareness	40%	43%	43%	47%	92%																													
Disaster Experience	43%	44%	44%	47%	54%																													
Preparedness Efficacy	42%	47%	42%	47%	40%																													
Risk Perception	36%	98%	98%	98%	76%																													
<p><i>Why is this important</i></p>																																		

# Preparedness Actions













What have you done to prepare for a disaster or emergency in the last year?

In 2021, **59%** took three or more of these twelve preparedness actions, and **89%** took at least one.



# Preparedness Actions Across all the Hazard Areas

Those who have taken at least one preparedness action were more likely to take additional preparedness actions. Encourage the public to take the first step, and it is likely that other actions will follow.

Preparedness actions taken for 2021 NHS:	 Assembled or Updated Supplies	 Documented & Insured Property	 Got Involved in the Community	 Knew Evacuation Routes	 Made a Plan	 Made the Home Safer	 Planned with Neighbors	 Practiced Emergency Drills	 Safeguarded Documents	 Saved for a Rainy Day	 Signed up for Alerts & Warnings	 Tested a Family Comm. Plan
<b>Any Disaster (total sample)</b>	45%	27%	16%	28%	43%	45%	15%	22%	34%	44%	40%	25%
<b>Drought</b>	26%	11%	6%	6%	27%	21%	8%	12%	13%	28%	20%	8%
<b>Power Outage</b>	39%	14%	8%	17%	38%	22%	12%	14%	19%	23%	27%	18%
<b>Thunderstorm</b>	29%	19%	12%	15%	27%	30%	16%	19%	26%	23%	29%	16%
<b>Tsunami</b>	10%	8%	8%	18%	22%	13%	5%	9%	12%	14%	21%	10%
<b>Volcanic Eruption</b>	15%	10%	3%	19%	21%	14%	5%	10%	16%	13%	22%	13%
<b>Winter Storm</b>	38%	14%	10%	20%	32%	41%	14%	12%	19%	30%	31%	20%

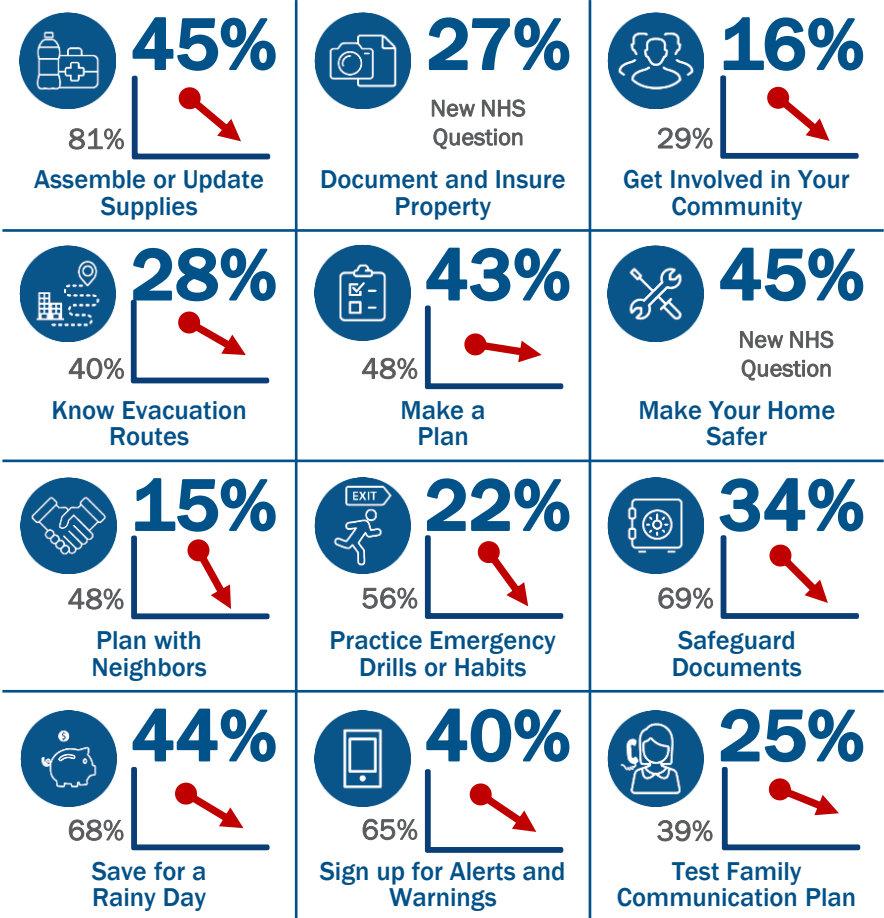


**FEMA**

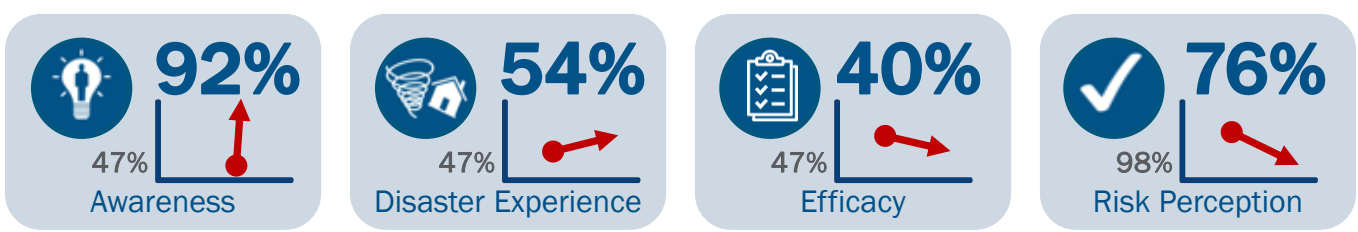
# National Preparedness Profile

Summary of general disaster preparedness across the United States and territories.

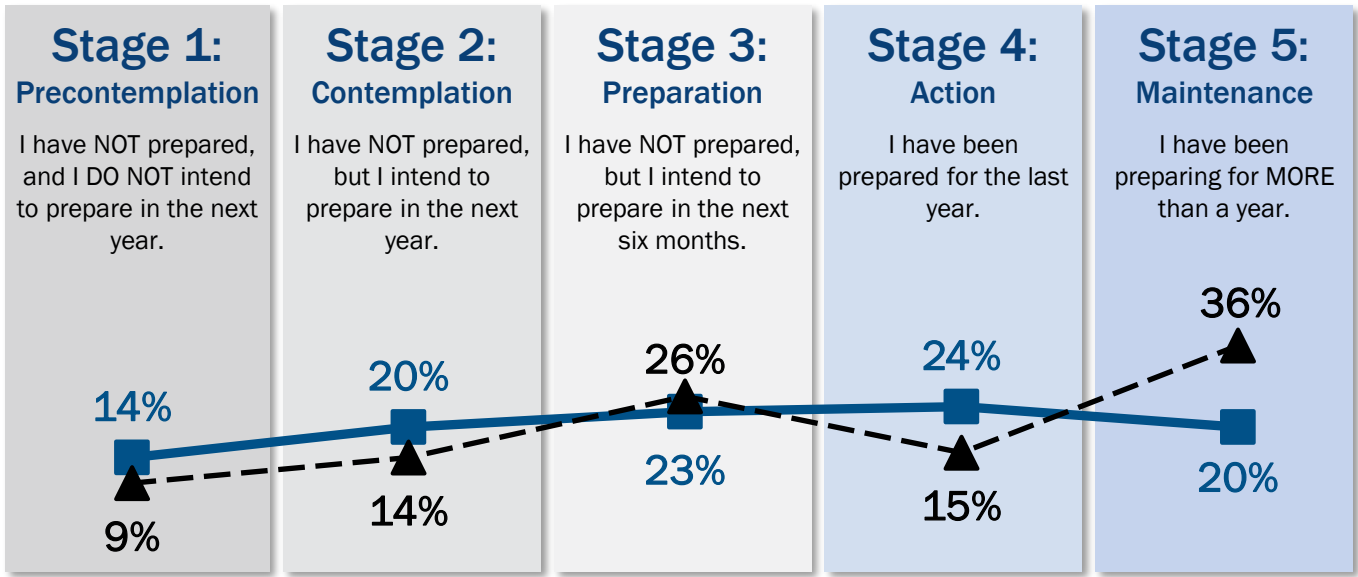
## Preparedness Actions



## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster



Legend: ■ = 2021 ▲ = 2020

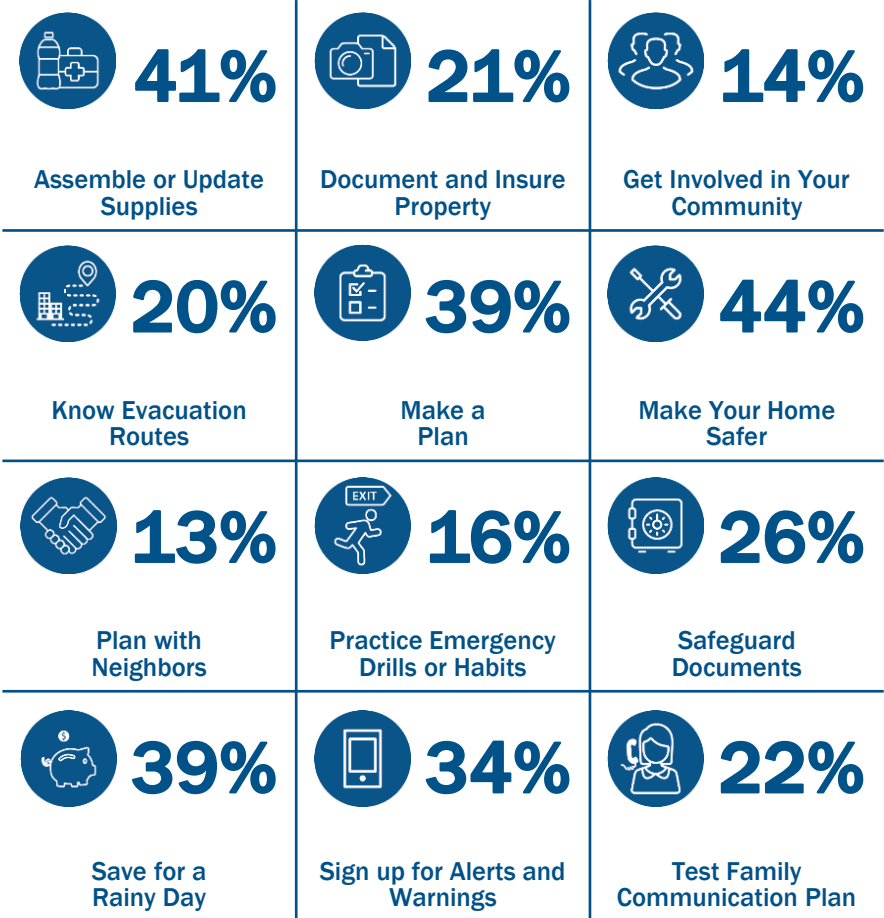
An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in New England, featuring a harbor filled with numerous sailboats and yachts. The town is built on a hillside, with a prominent church steeple visible on the right. The surrounding area is densely forested. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# Hazard Profiles

# Pandemic Preparedness Profile

Summary of pandemic preparedness across the United States and its territories. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

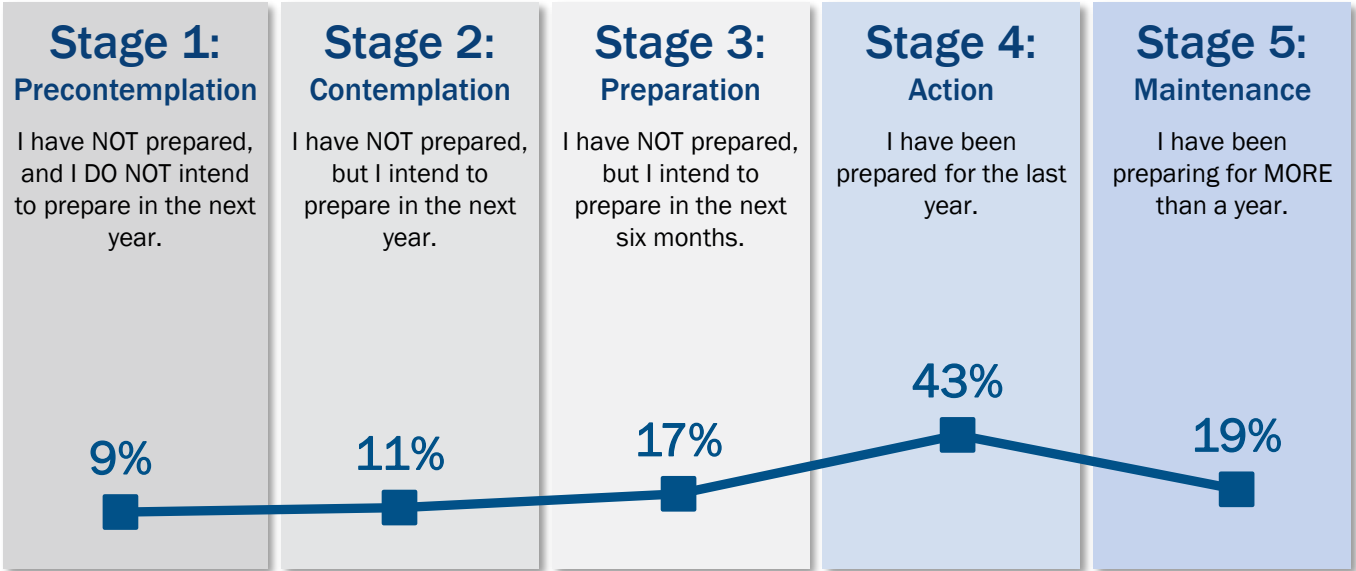
## Preparedness Actions



## Pandemic Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Pandemic















Legend: ■ = 2021

# Drought Preparedness Profile

Summary of drought preparedness among the 50 counties most prone to droughts. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

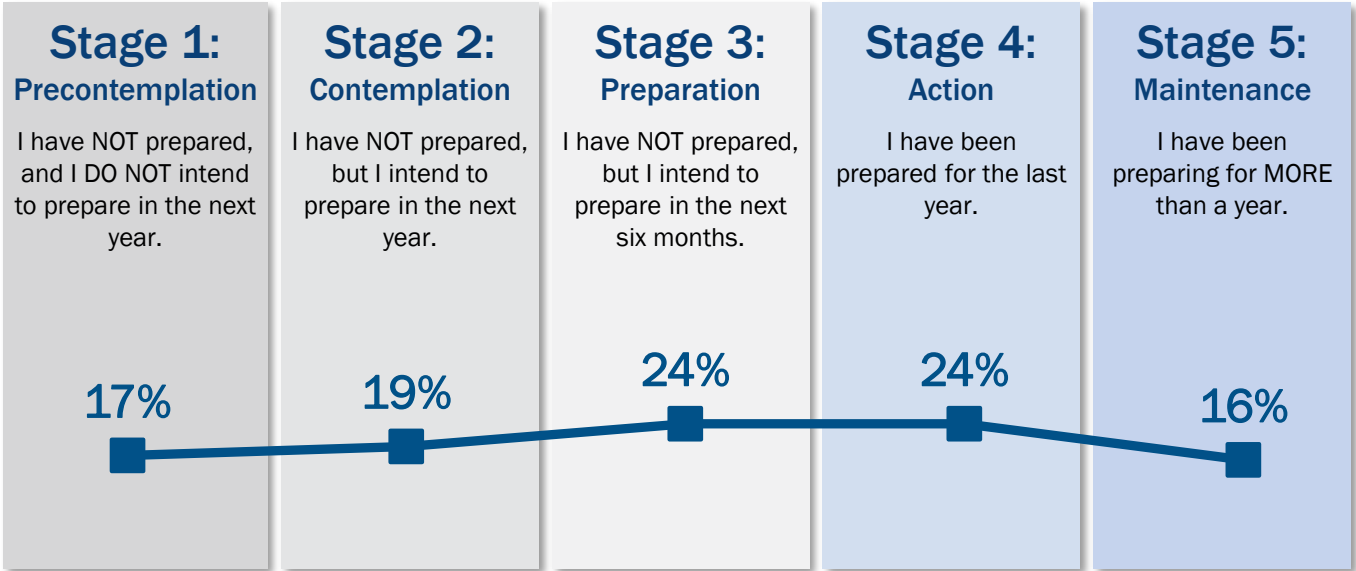
## Preparedness Actions

 <b>26%</b> Assemble or Update Supplies	 <b>11%</b> Document and Insure Property	 <b>6%</b> Get Involved in Your Community
 <b>6%</b> Know Evacuation Routes	 <b>27%</b> Make a Plan	 <b>21%</b> Make Your Home Safer
 <b>8%</b> Plan with Neighbors	 <b>12%</b> Practice Emergency Drills or Habits	 <b>13%</b> Safeguard Documents
 <b>28%</b> Save for a Rainy Day	 <b>20%</b> Sign up for Alerts and Warnings	 <b>8%</b> Test Family Communication Plan

## Drought Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Drought



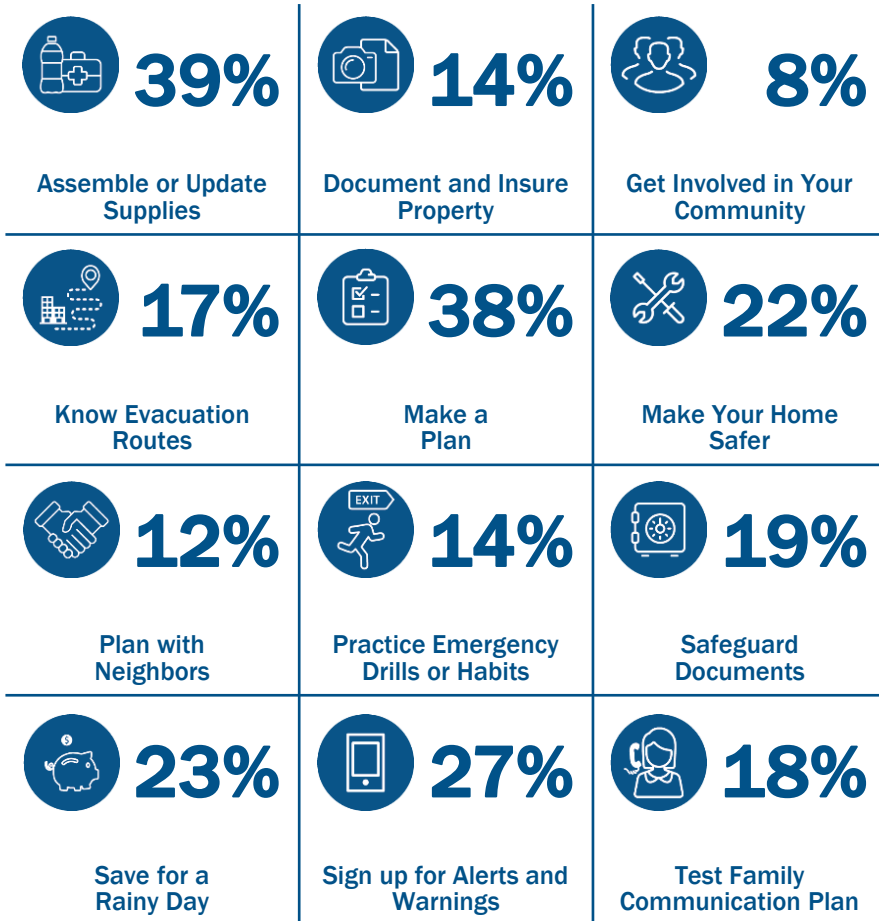
Legend: ■ = 2021



# Power Outage Preparedness Profile

Summary of power outage preparedness among the 52 counties and jurisdictions most prone to power outages as well as all municipalities in Puerto Rico. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

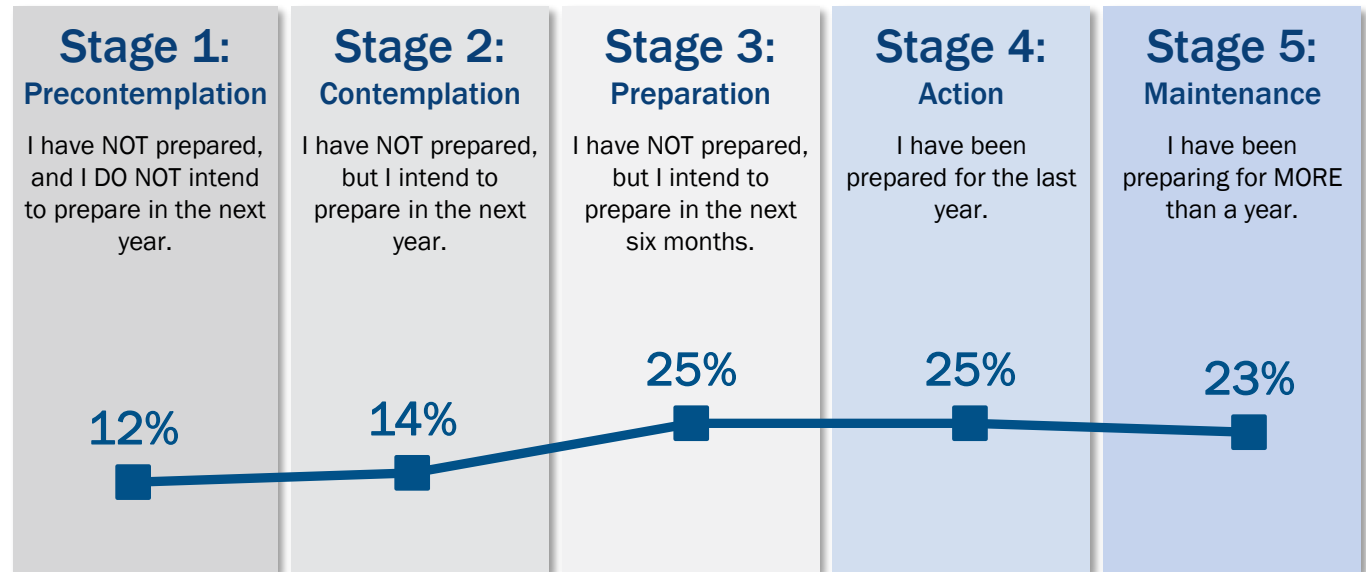
## Preparedness Actions



## Power Outage Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Power Outage

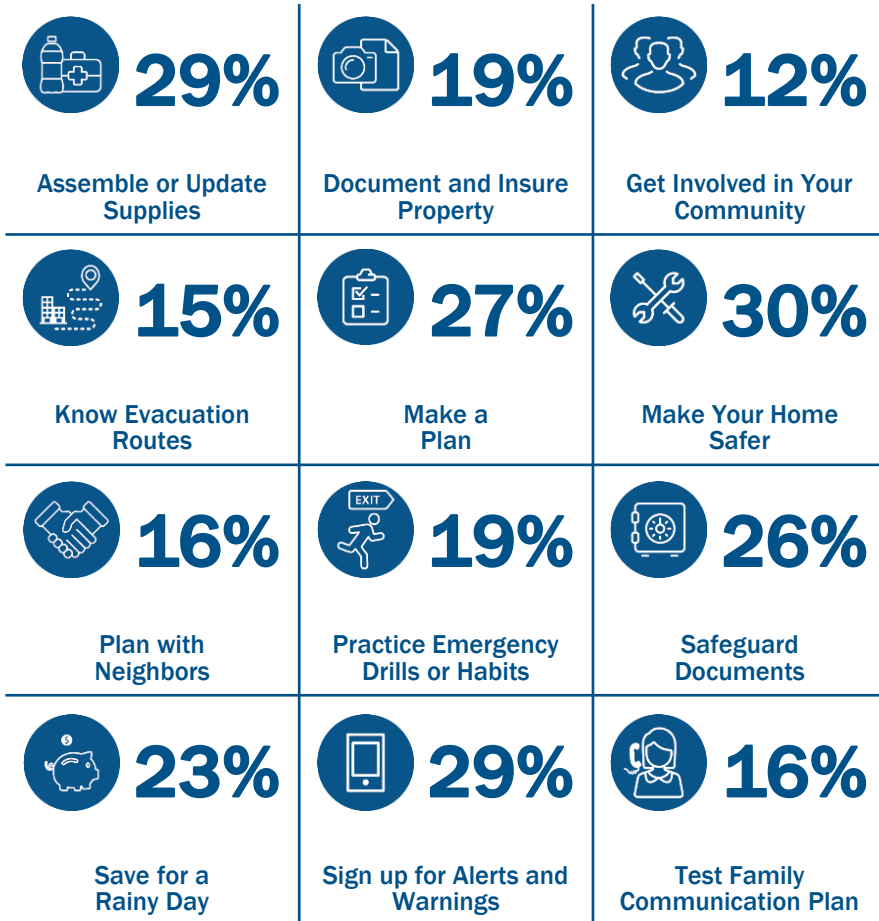


Legend: ■ = 2021

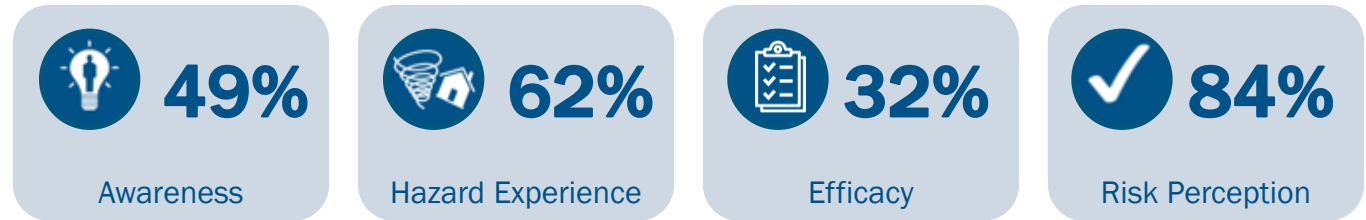
# Thunderstorm Preparedness Profile

Summary of thunderstorm preparedness among the 50 counties most prone to thunderstorms. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

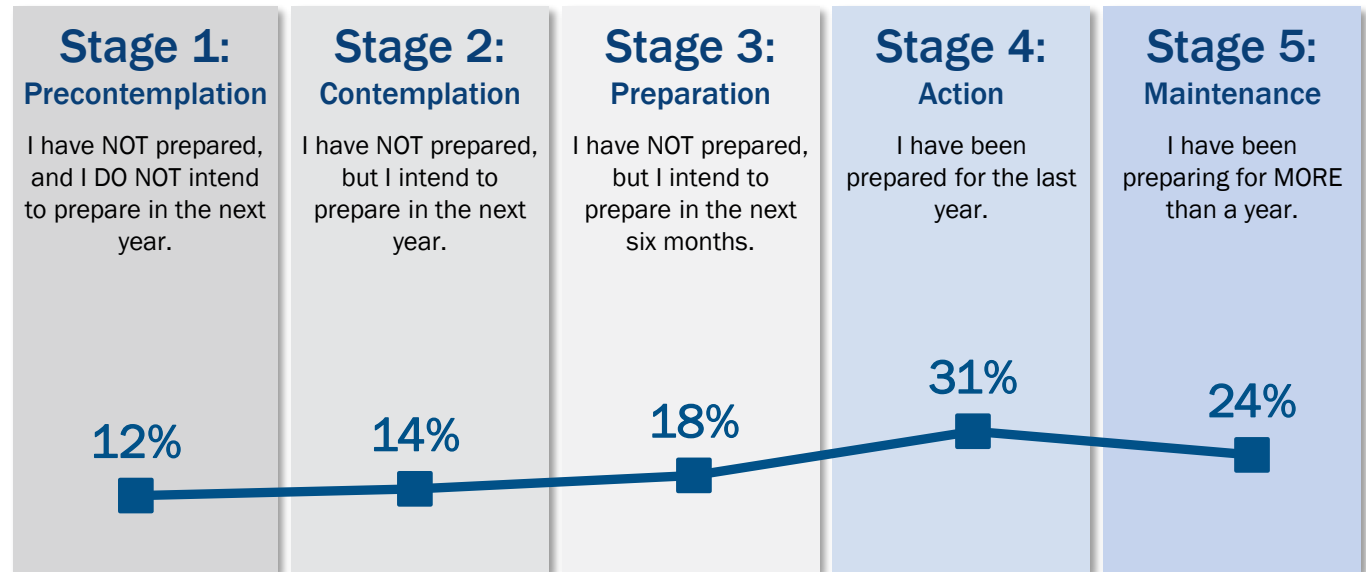
## Preparedness Actions



## Thunderstorm Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Thunderstorm

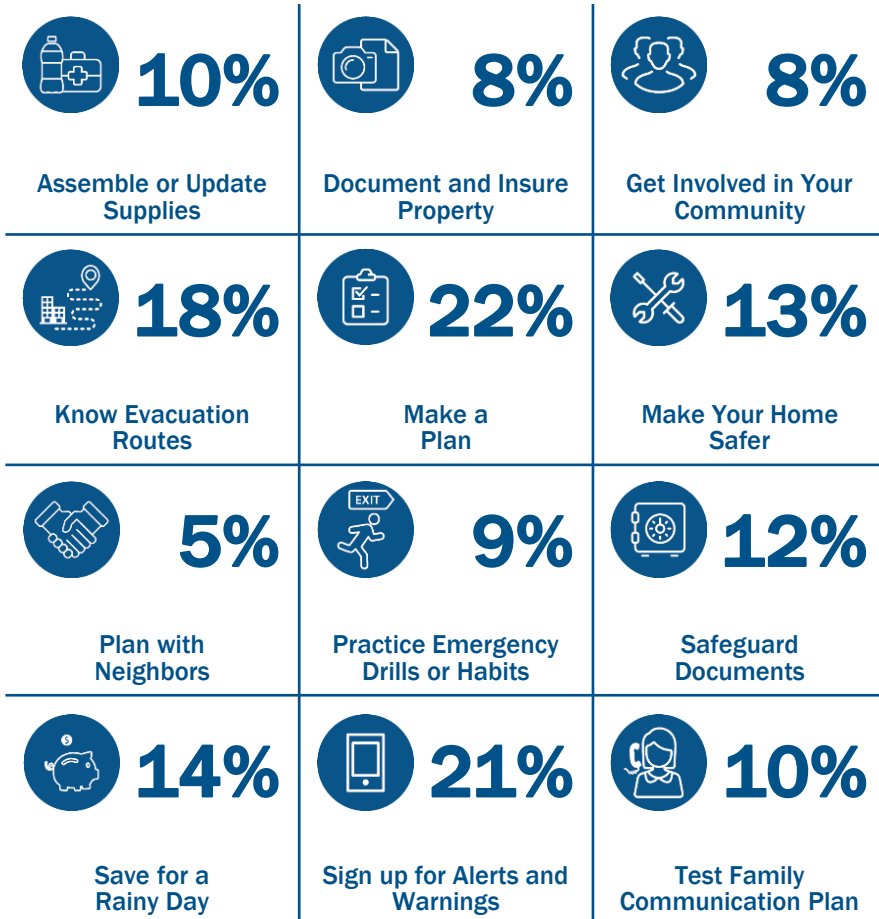


Legend: ■ = 2021

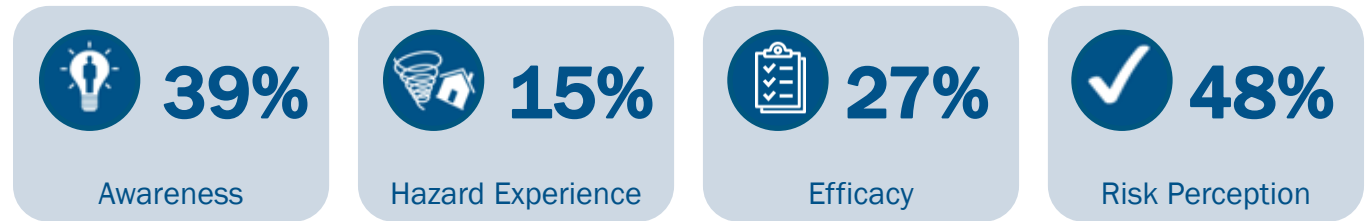
# Tsunami Preparedness Profile

Summary of tsunami preparedness among the 50 counties most prone to tsunamis. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

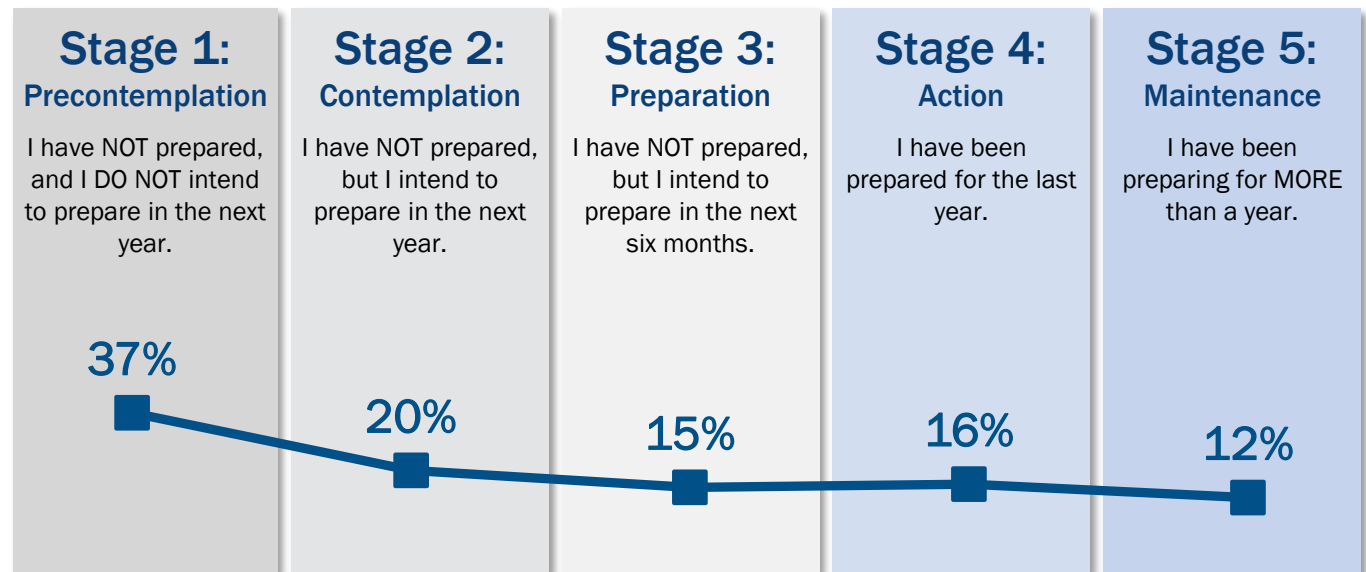
## Preparedness Actions



## Tsunami Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Tsunami

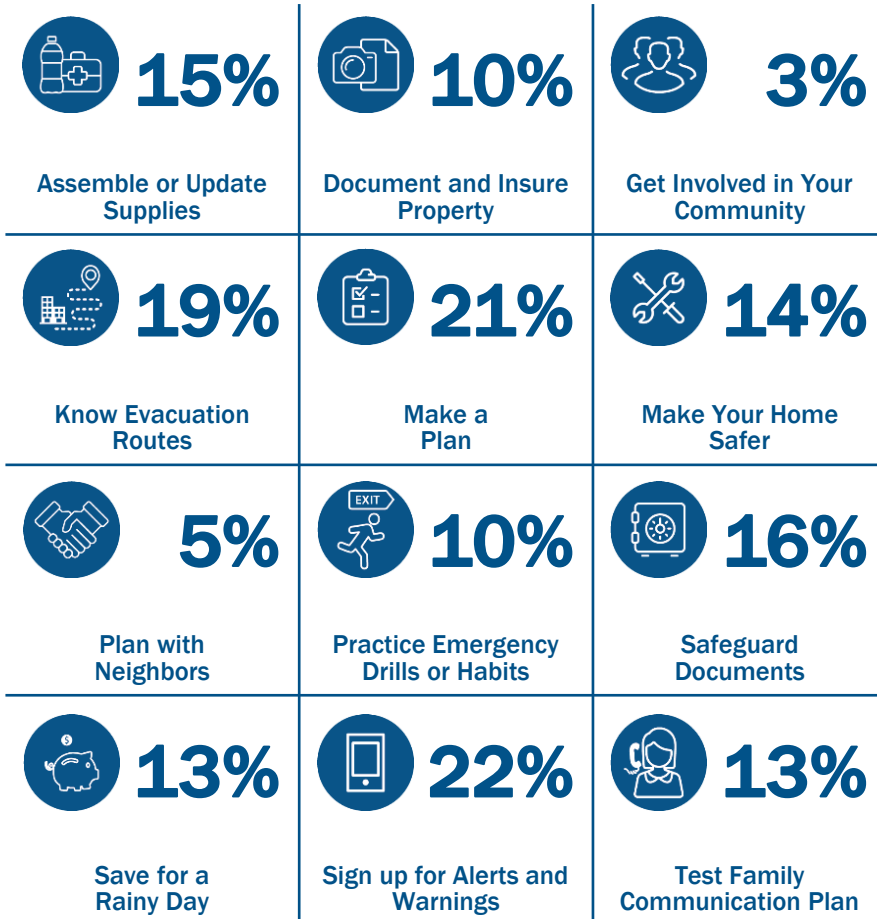


Legend: ■ = 2021

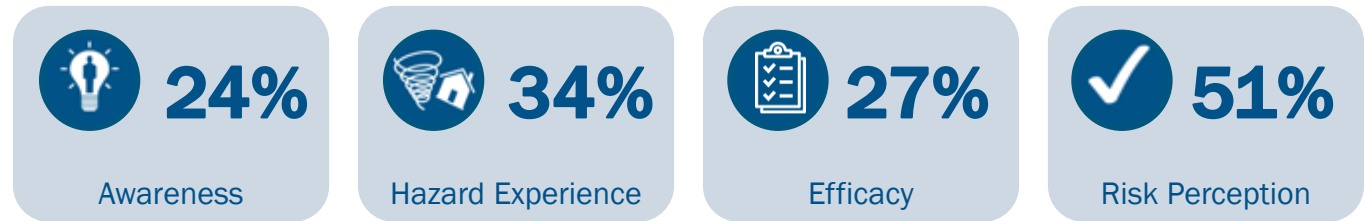
# Volcanic Eruption Preparedness Profile

Summary of volcanic eruption preparedness among the 50 counties most prone to volcanic eruptions. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

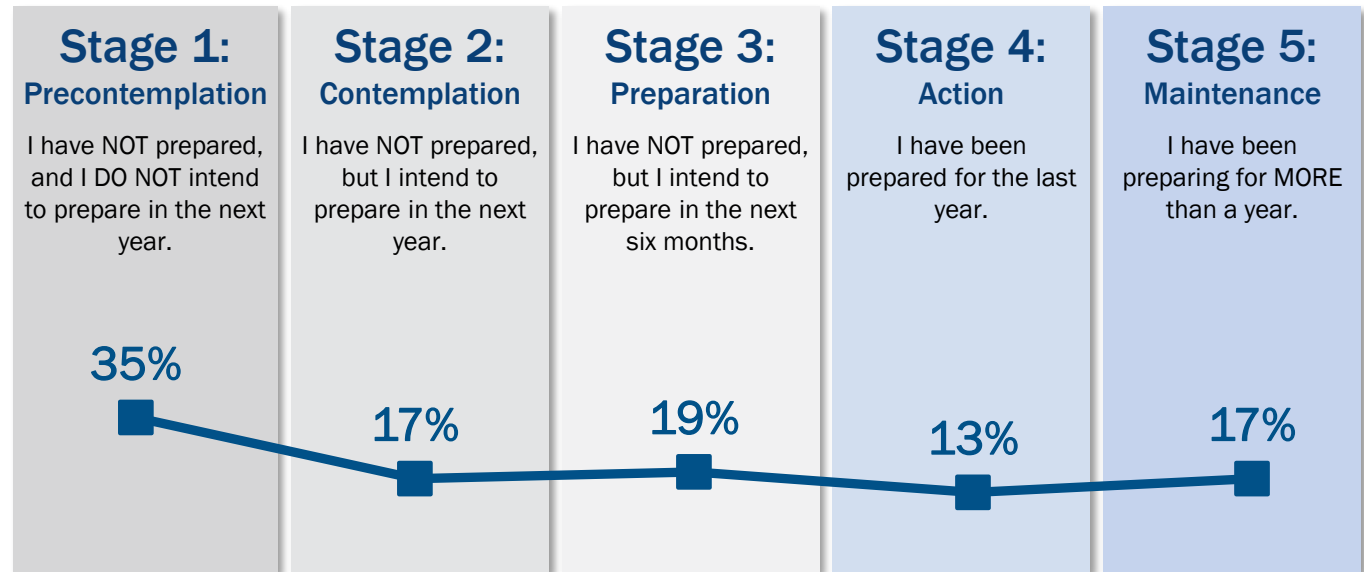
## Preparedness Actions



## Volcanic Eruption Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Volcanic Eruption

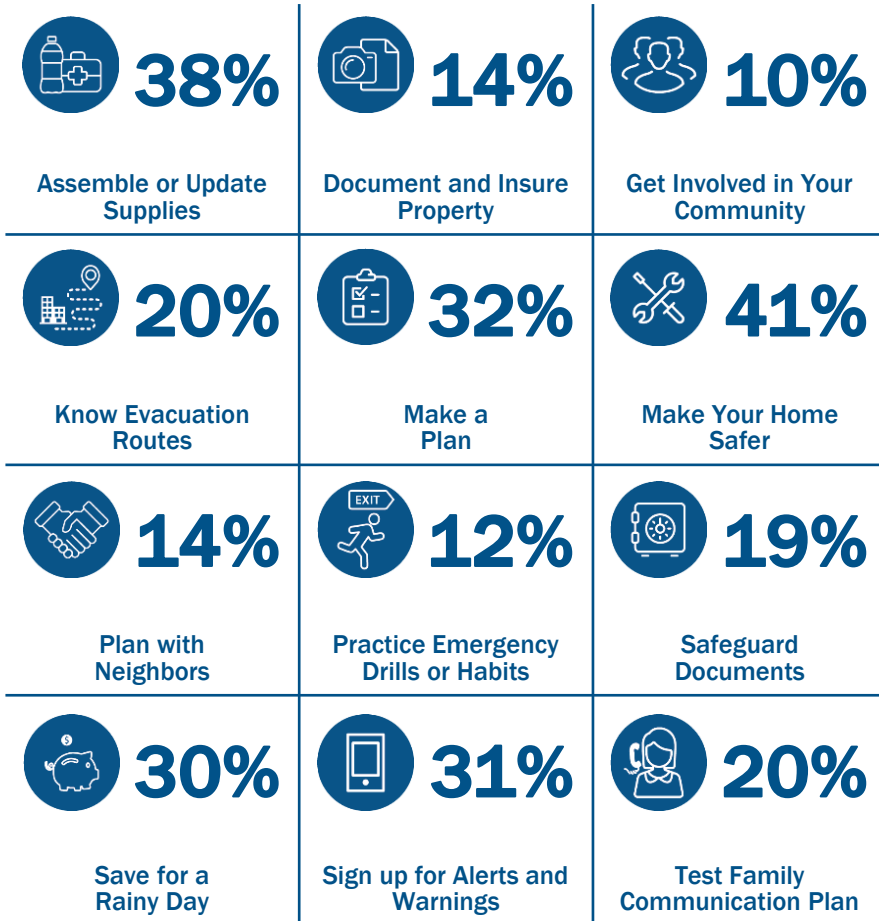


Legend: ■ = 2021

# Winter Storm Preparedness Profile

Summary of winter storm preparedness among the 50 counties most prone to winter storms. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

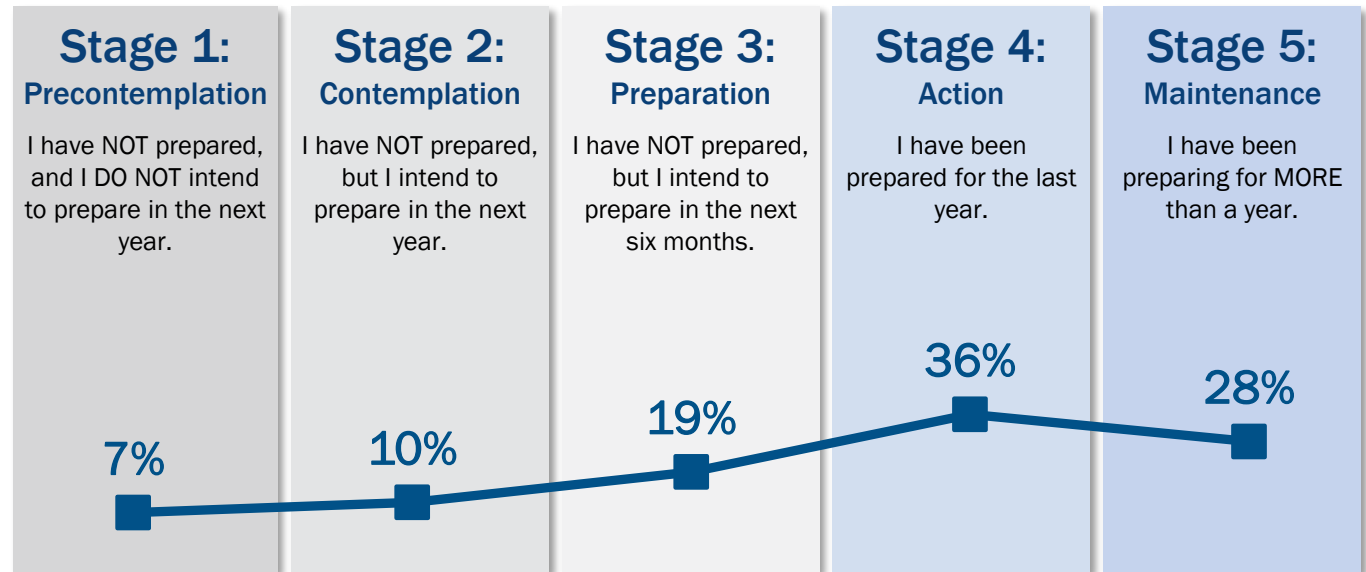
## Preparedness Actions



## Winter Storm Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Winter Storm



Legend: ■ = 2021

An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in New England, featuring a harbor filled with numerous sailboats and yachts. The town is built on a hillside, with a prominent church steeple visible on the right. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text "Community Profiles" is centered in white, bold font.

# Community Profiles

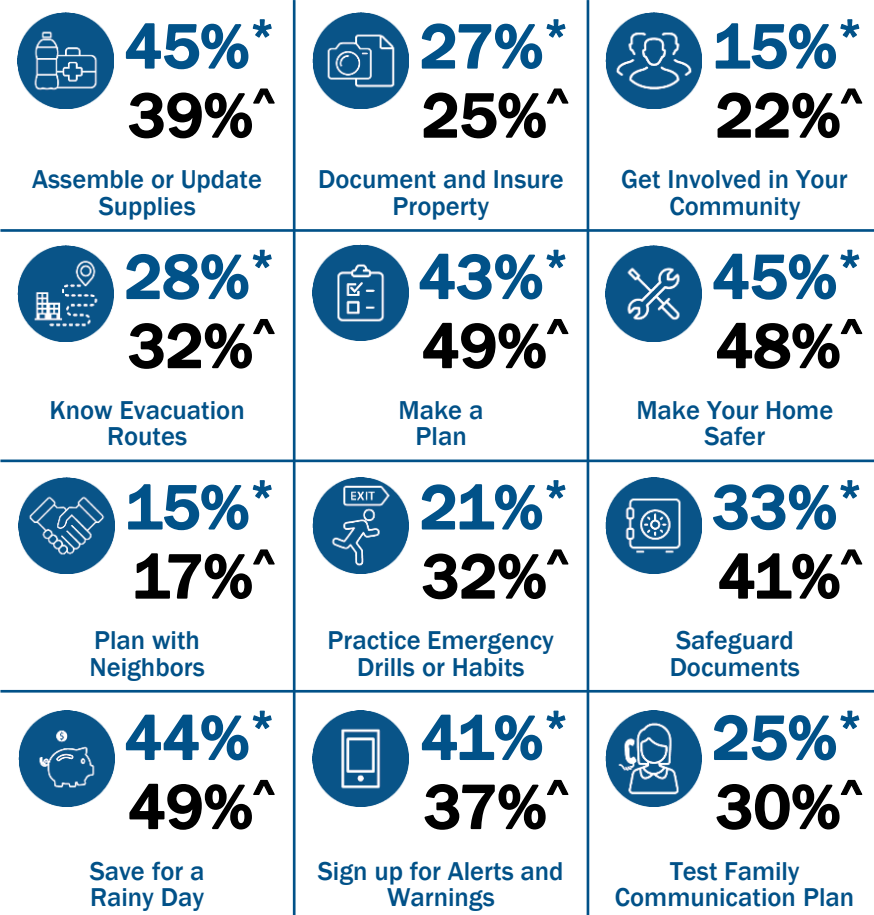
# Non-Primarily English-Speaking Households

## Community Preparedness Summary

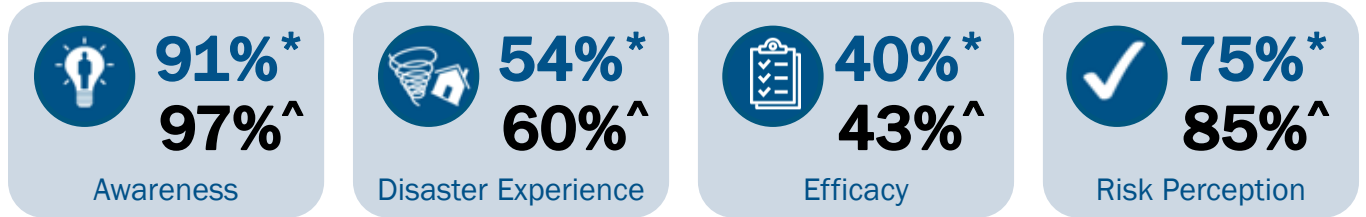
Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who live in primarily English-speaking households and those who do not live in primarily English-speaking households.

**Blue\*** = Primarily English-Speaking Household  
**Black^** = Not Primarily English-Speaking Household

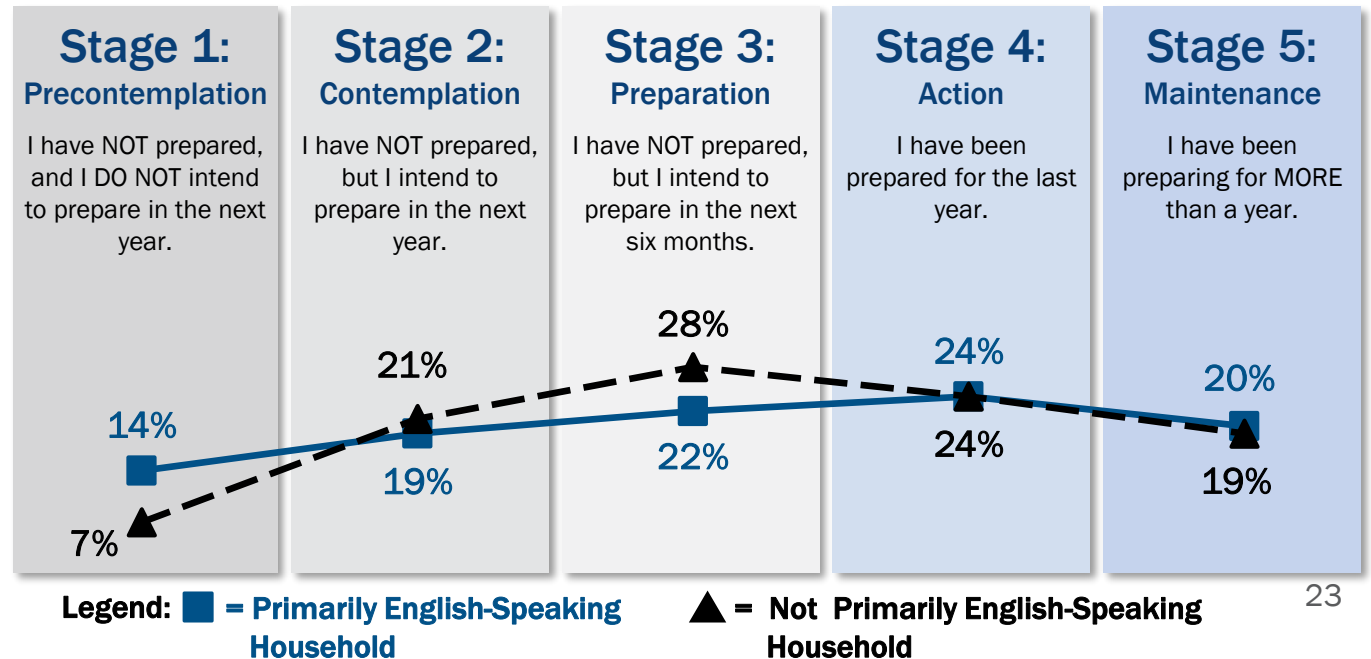
### Preparedness Actions



### Disaster Preparedness Influencers



### Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster

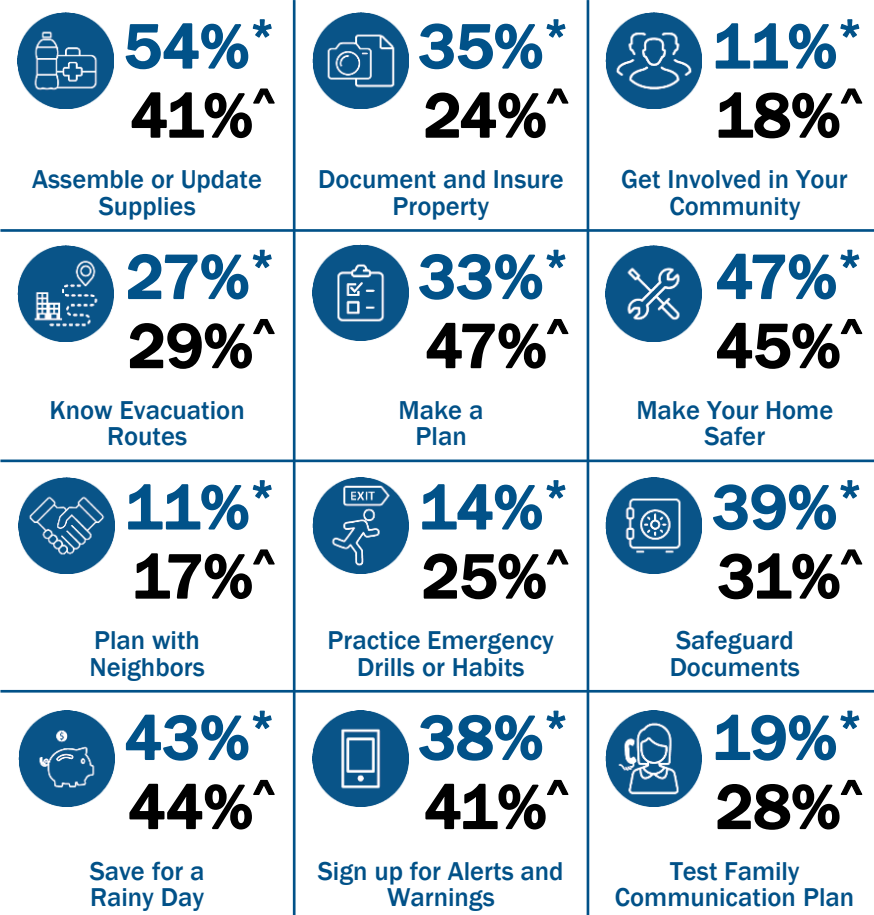


# Aging Community Preparedness Summary

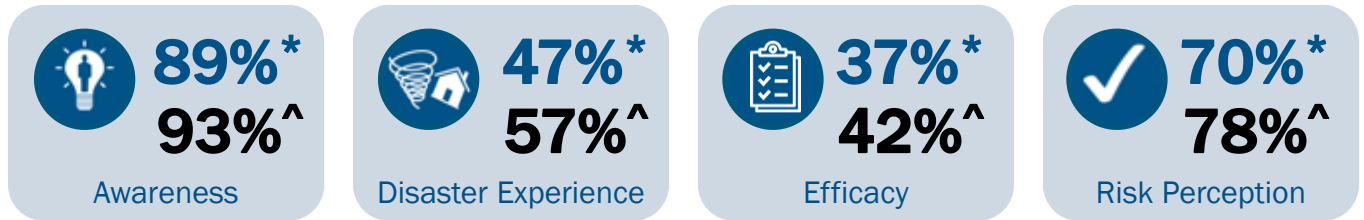
Blue\* = 60+ Years Old  
Black^ = 18-59 Years Old

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who are 18-59 years old and those 60+ years old.

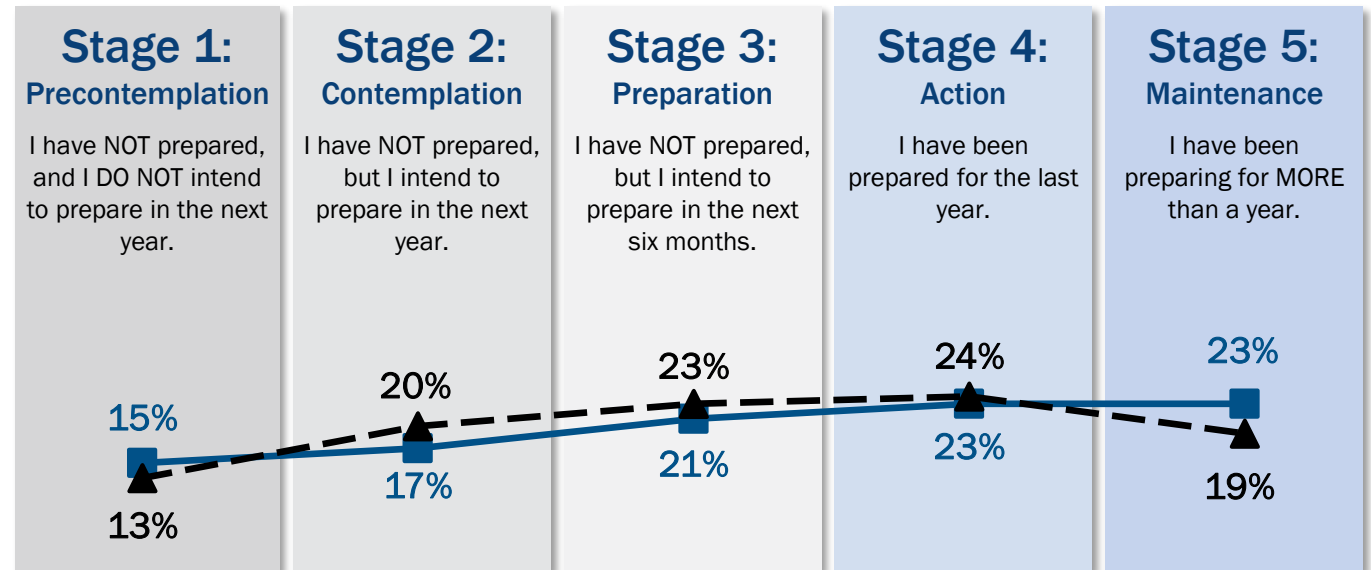
## Preparedness Actions



## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster



Legend: ■ = 60+ Years Old ▲ = 18-59 Years old















# Rurality Preparedness Summary

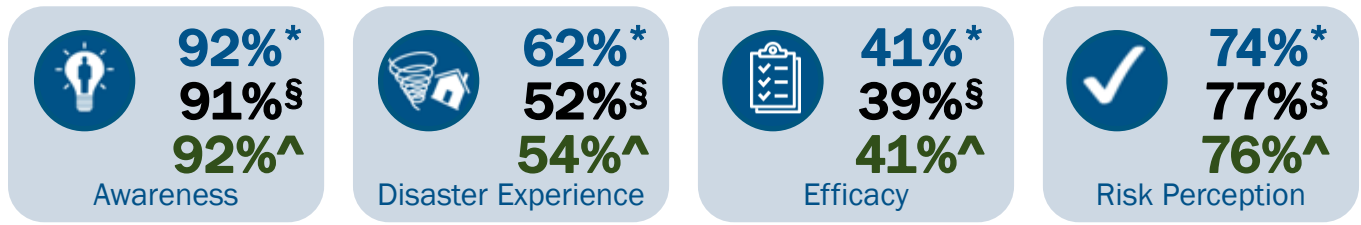
Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who live in rural, urban, and urban cluster communities. These questions are **new** to the 2021 NHS.

Blue\* = Rural  
 Black<sup>§</sup> = Urban Cluster  
 Green<sup>^</sup> = Urban

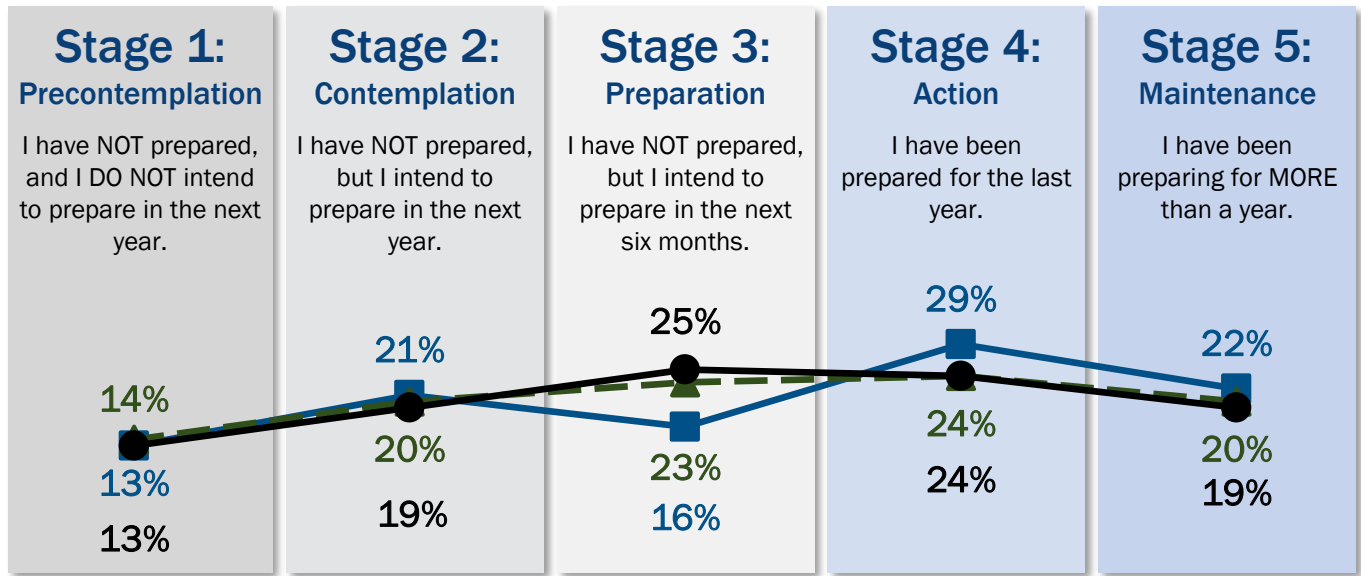
## Preparedness Actions

 <p><b>49%*</b> <b>51%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>43%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Assemble or Update Supplies</p>	 <p><b>28%*</b> <b>32%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>26%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Document and Insure Property</p>	 <p><b>17%*</b> <b>15%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>16%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Get Involved in Your Community</p>
 <p><b>30%*</b> <b>31%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>28%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Know Evacuation Routes</p>	 <p><b>45%*</b> <b>45%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>43%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Make a Plan</p>	 <p><b>49%*</b> <b>46%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>45%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Make Your Home Safer</p>
 <p><b>15%*</b> <b>17%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>15%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Plan with Neighbors</p>	 <p><b>29%*</b> <b>22%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>21%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Practice Emergency Drills or Habits</p>	 <p><b>36%*</b> <b>36%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>33%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Safeguard Documents</p>
 <p><b>48%*</b> <b>41%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>44%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Save for a Rainy Day</p>	 <p><b>43%*</b> <b>45%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>39%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Sign up for Alerts and Warnings</p>	 <p><b>23%*</b> <b>29%<sup>§</sup></b> <b>25%<sup>^</sup></b></p> <p>Test Family Communication Plan</p>

## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster



Legend: ■ = Rural ● = Urban Cluster ▲ = Urban

# Person with Disability and/or Caregiver Preparedness Summary

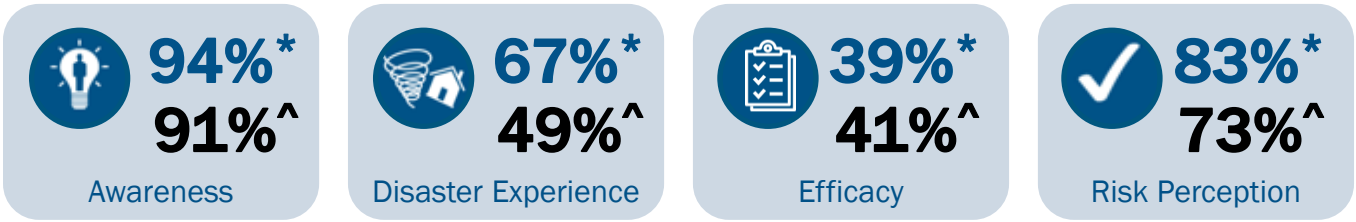
Blue\* = Person with disability and/or caregiver  
 Black^ = Not Person with disability and/or caregiver

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who have a disability or those who act as a caregiver for those with disabilities.

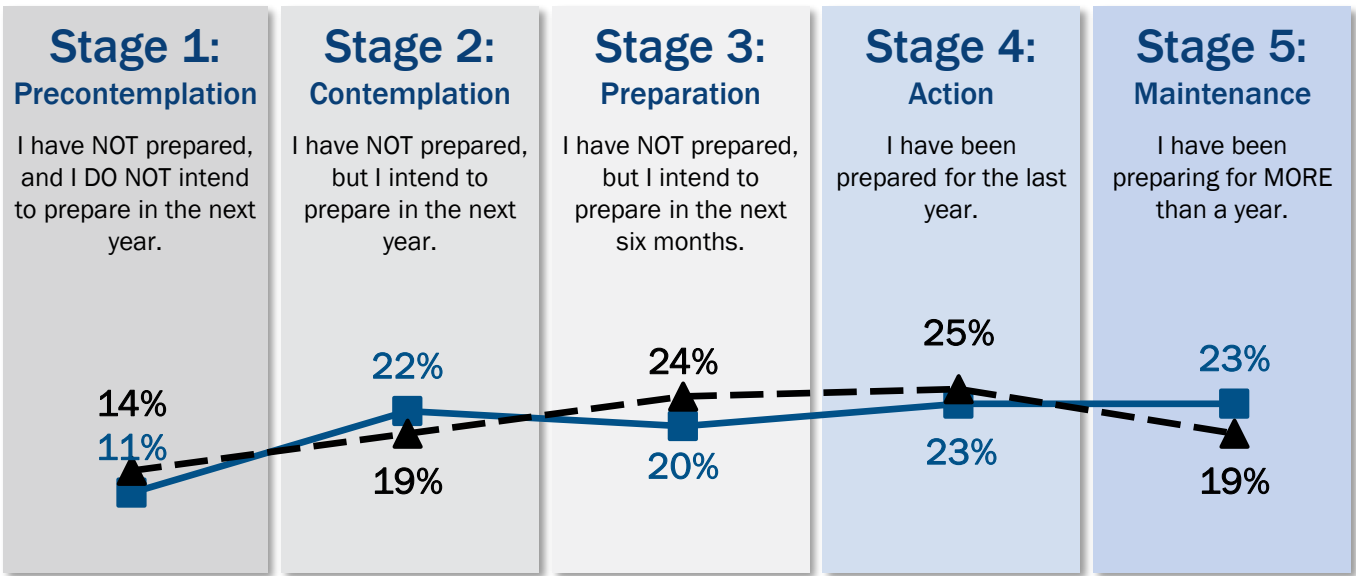
## Preparedness Actions

<b>46%*</b> <b>45%<sup>^</sup></b> Assemble or Update Supplies	<b>27%*</b> <b>28%<sup>^</sup></b> Document and Insure Property	<b>16%*</b> <b>16%<sup>^</sup></b> Get Involved in Your Community
<b>31%*</b> <b>28%<sup>^</sup></b> Know Evacuation Routes	<b>44%*</b> <b>43%<sup>^</sup></b> Make a Plan	<b>48%*</b> <b>45%<sup>^</sup></b> Make Your Home Safer
<b>17%*</b> <b>14%<sup>^</sup></b> Plan with Neighbors	<b>24%*</b> <b>21%<sup>^</sup></b> Practice Emergency Drills or Habits	<b>36%*</b> <b>33%<sup>^</sup></b> Safeguard Documents
<b>44%*</b> <b>44%<sup>^</sup></b> Save for a Rainy Day	<b>43%*</b> <b>40%<sup>^</sup></b> Sign up for Alerts and Warnings	<b>29%*</b> <b>24%<sup>^</sup></b> Test Family Communication Plan

## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster



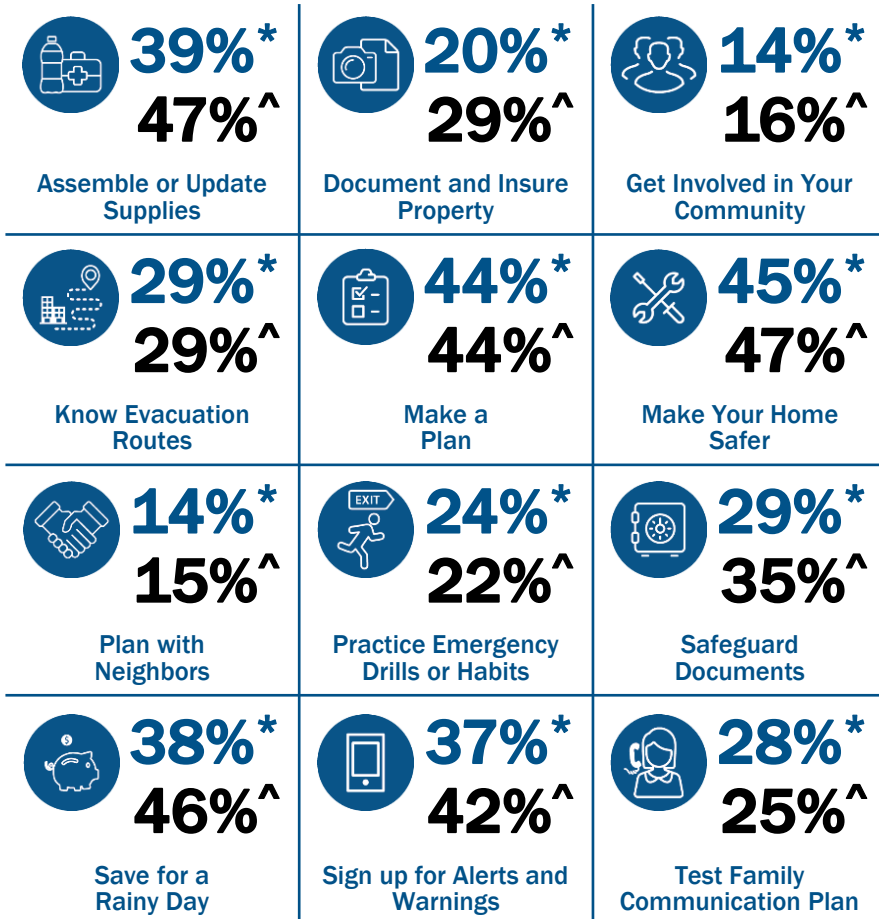
Legend: ■ = Person with disability and/or caregiver  
 ▲ = Not Person with disability and/or caregiver

# Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Preparedness Summary

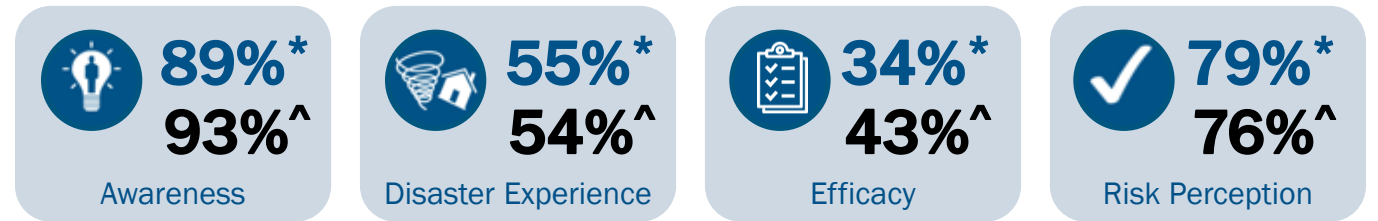
Blue\* = Disadvantaged  
Black^ = Not Disadvantaged

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those considered socioeconomically disadvantaged and those who are not.

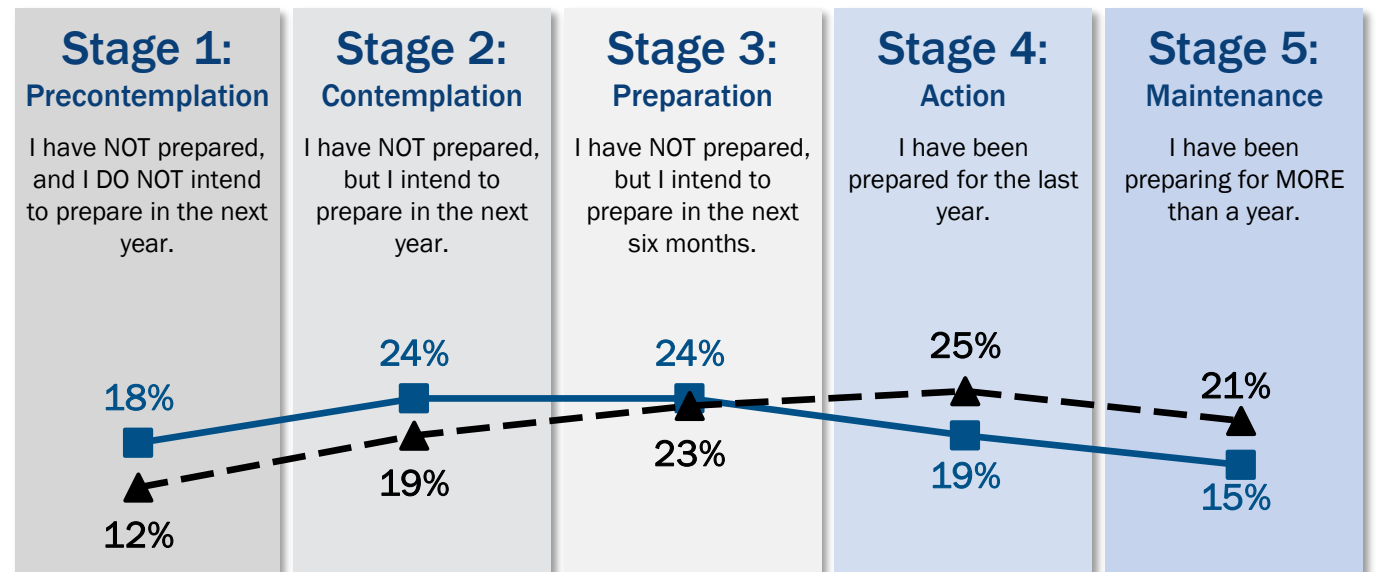
## Preparedness Actions



## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster

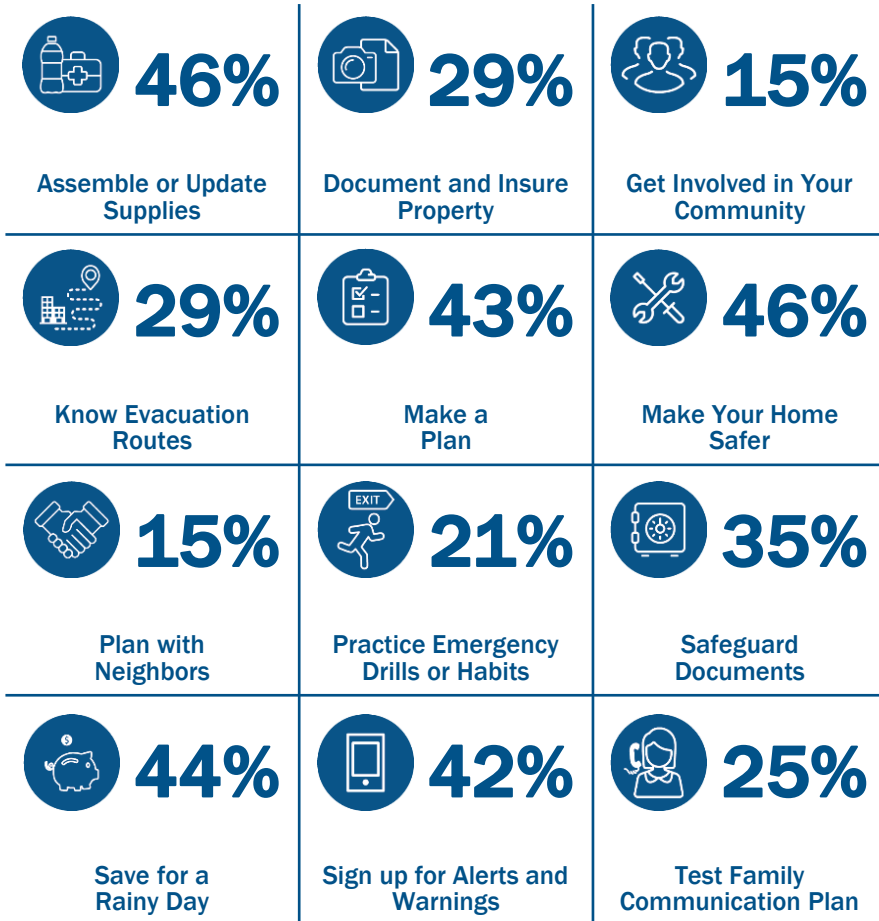


Legend: ■ = Disadvantaged ▲ = Not Disadvantaged

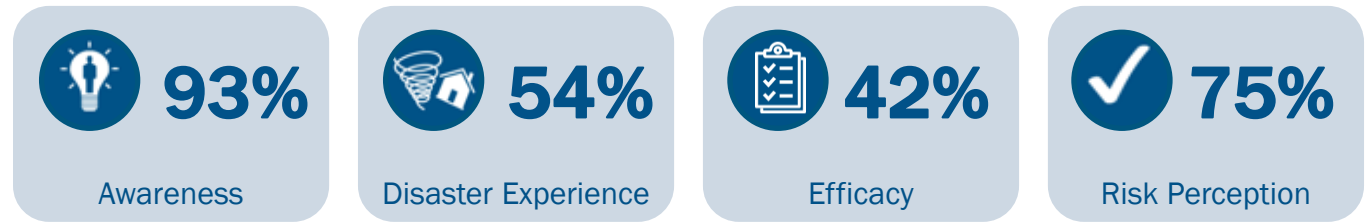
# White Preparedness Summary

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who identified as White.

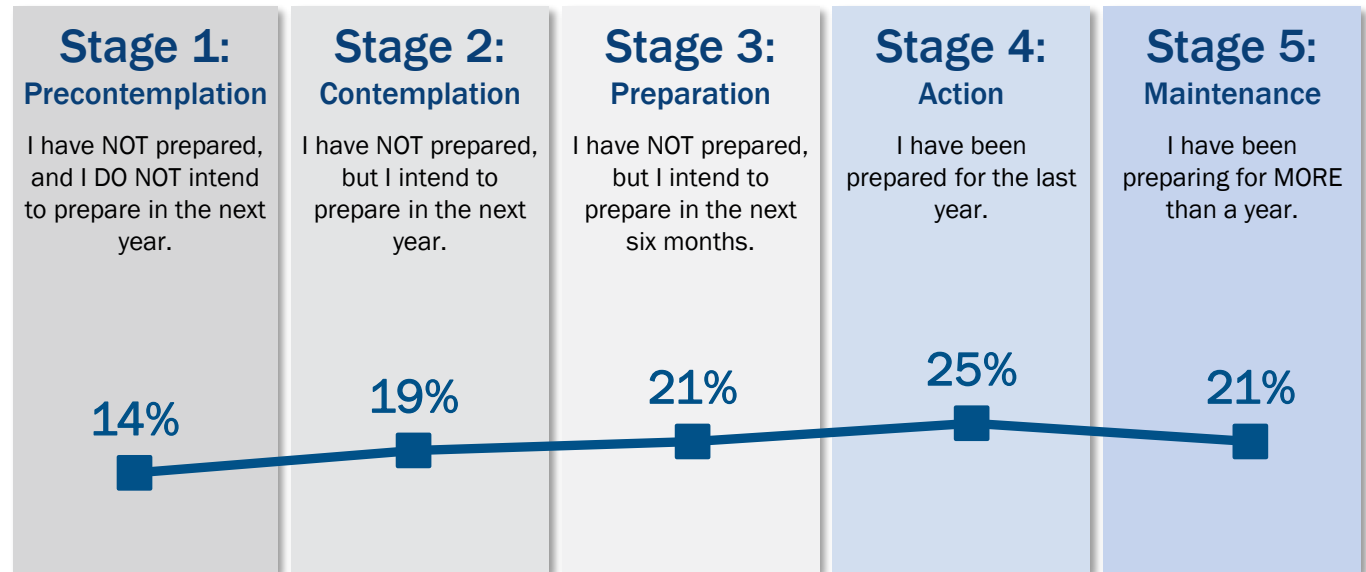
## Preparedness Actions



## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster















Legend: ■ = 2021

# Black or African American Preparedness Summary

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who identified as Black or African American.

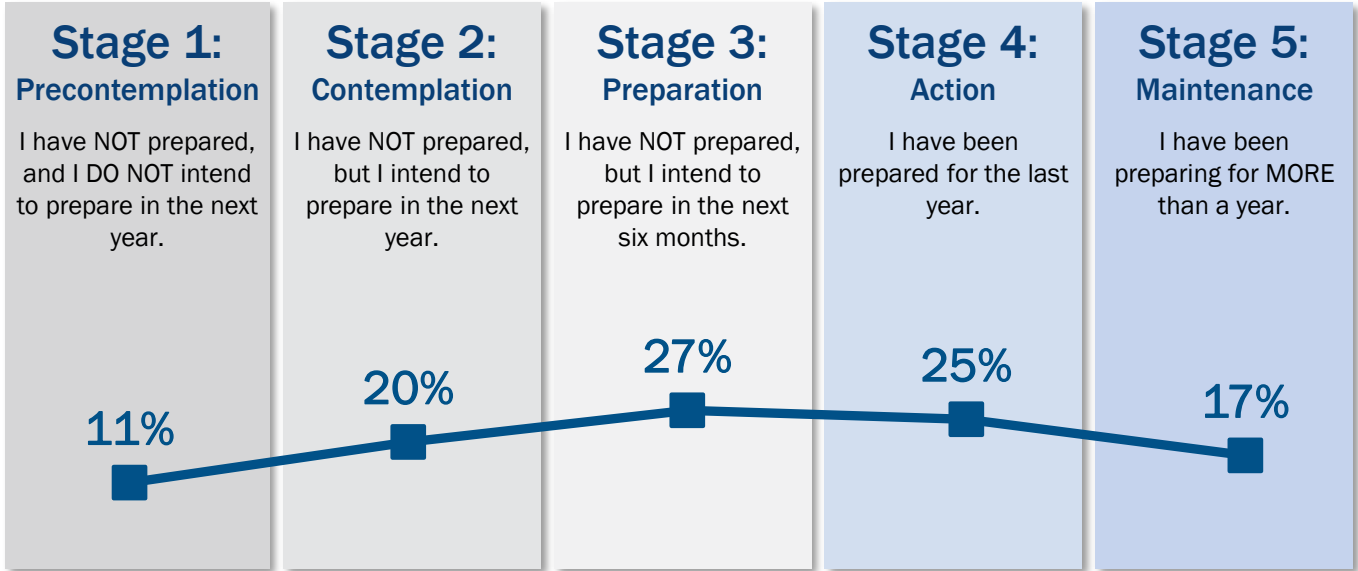
## Preparedness Actions

 <b>37%</b> Assemble or Update Supplies	 <b>21%</b> Document and Insure Property	 <b>17%</b> Get Involved in Your Community
 <b>28%</b> Know Evacuation Routes	 <b>45%</b> Make a Plan	 <b>40%</b> Make Your Home Safer
 <b>15%</b> Plan with Neighbors	 <b>27%</b> Practice Emergency Drills or Habits	 <b>27%</b> Safeguard Documents
 <b>44%</b> Save for a Rainy Day	 <b>35%</b> Sign up for Alerts and Warnings	 <b>28%</b> Test Family Communication Plan

## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster

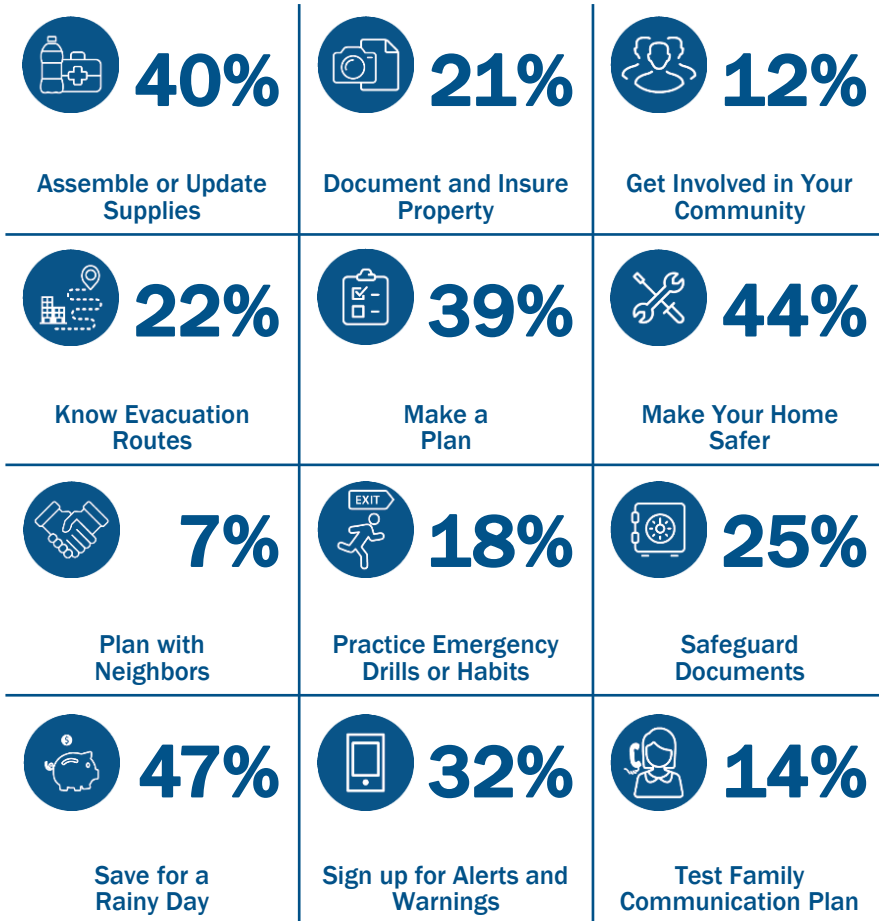


Legend: ■ = 2021

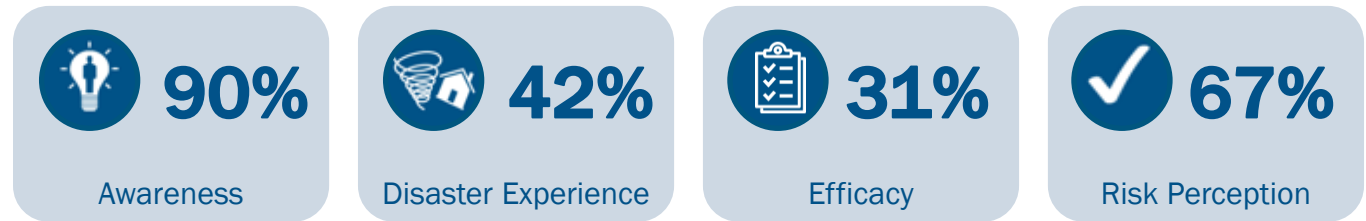
# Asian Preparedness Summary

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who identified as Asian.

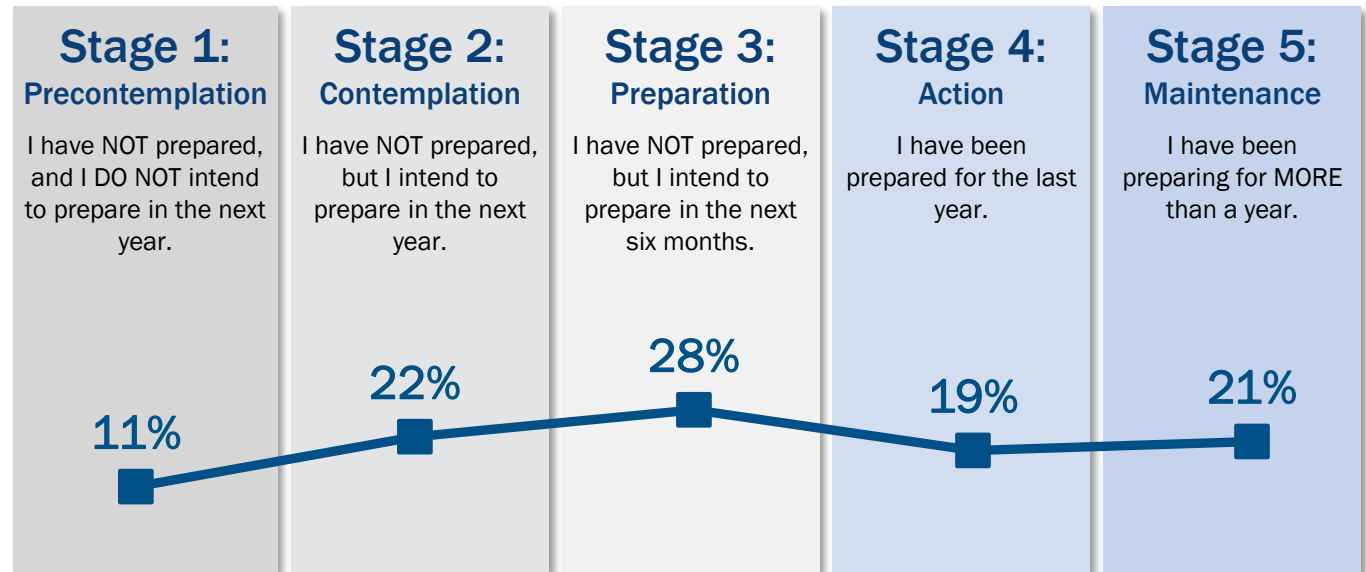
## Preparedness Actions



## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster

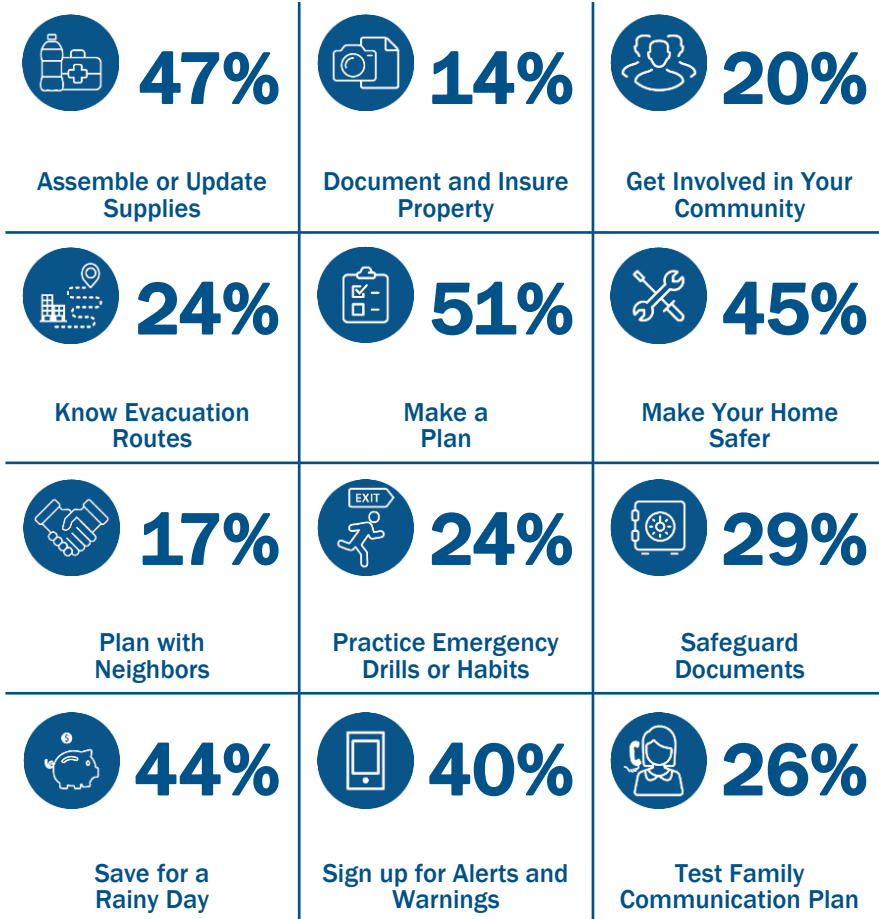


Legend: ■ = 2021

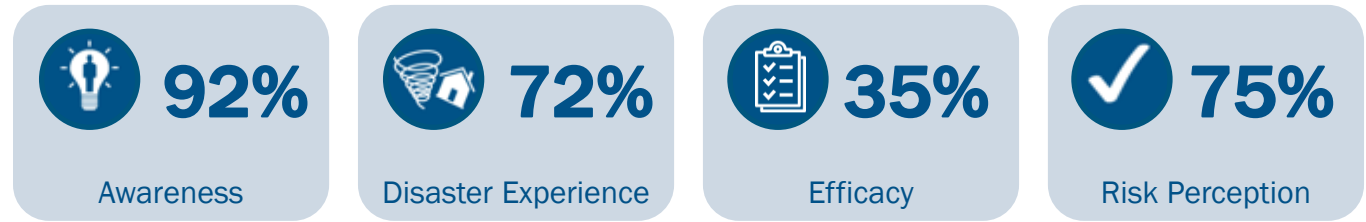
# Two or More Races Preparedness Summary

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who selected two or more races.

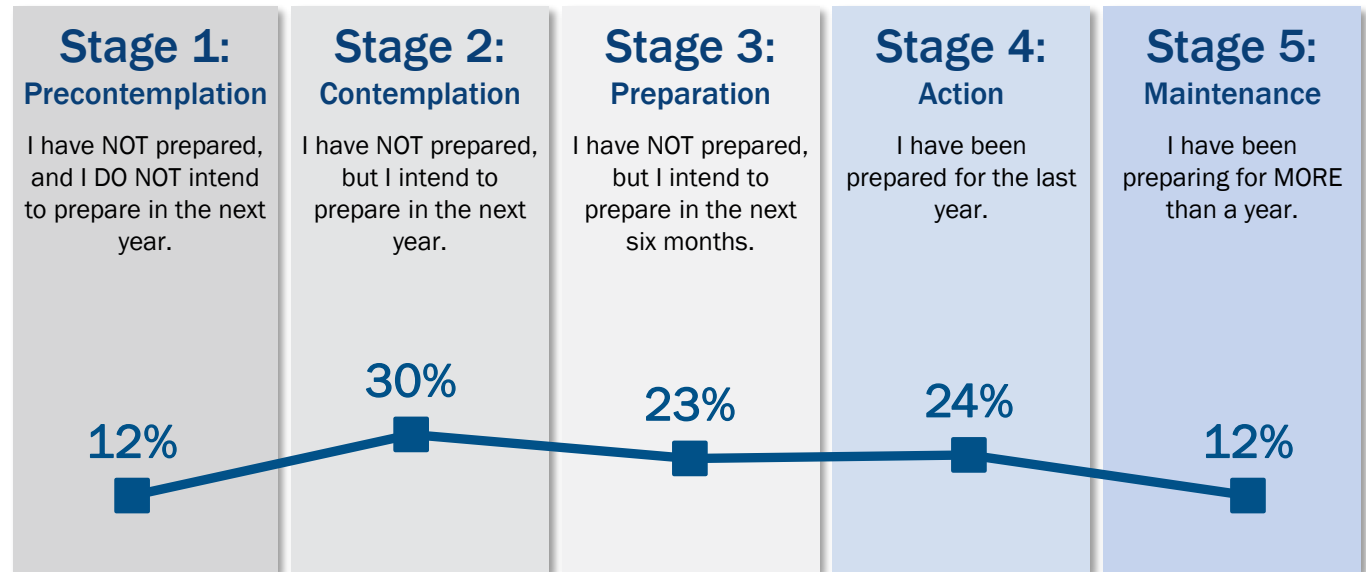
## Preparedness Actions



## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster



Legend: ■ = 2021

# Hispanic/Latino Preparedness Summary

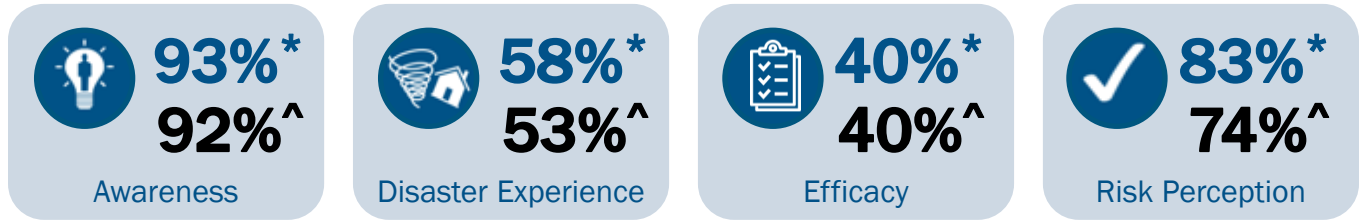
Blue\* = Hispanic/Latino  
Black^ = Not Hispanic or Latino

Summary of general disaster preparedness among those who identified as Hispanic/Latino and those who do not.

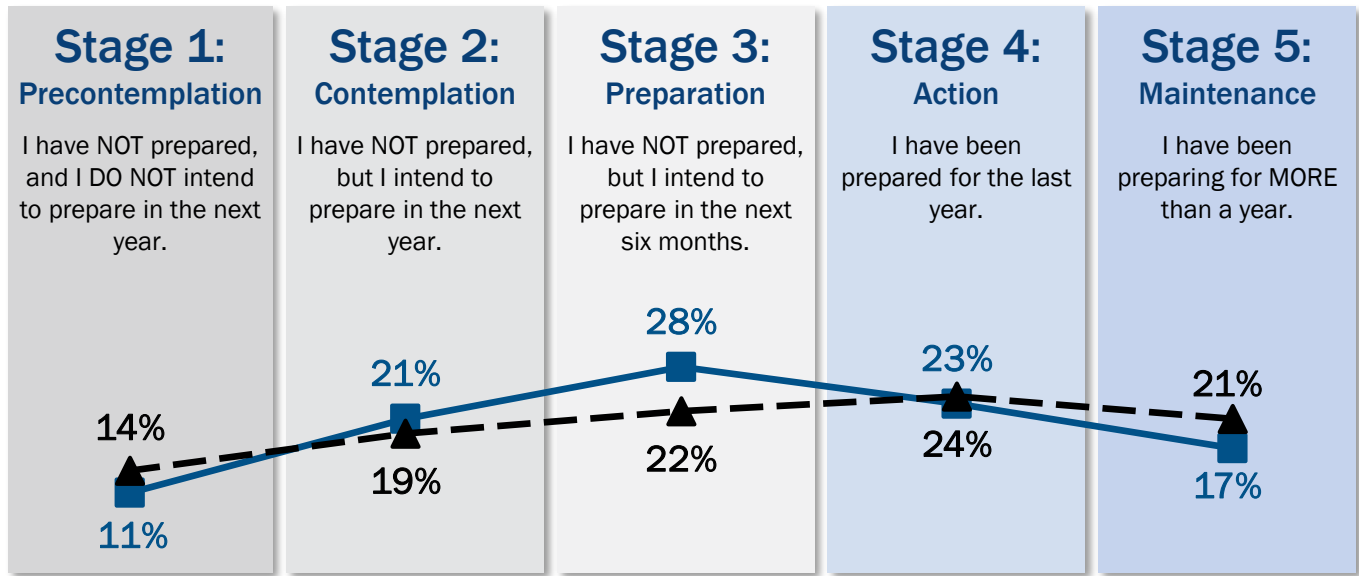
## Preparedness Actions

<b>37%*</b> <b>46%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>21%*</b> <b>28%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>16%*</b> <b>16%<sup>^</sup></b>
<b>29%*</b> <b>28%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>47%*</b> <b>43%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>44%*</b> <b>46%<sup>^</sup></b>
<b>16%*</b> <b>15%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>27%*</b> <b>21%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>35%*</b> <b>33%<sup>^</sup></b>
<b>44%*</b> <b>44%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>40%*</b> <b>41%<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>29%*</b> <b>24%<sup>^</sup></b>

## Disaster Preparedness Influencers



## Perceived Preparedness for a Disaster



Legend: ■ = Hispanic/Latino ▲ = Not Hispanic or Latino



Look for more information about  
FEMA's research at  
[ready.gov/preparedness-research](https://ready.gov/preparedness-research)

For Questions  
Please Contact:  
[FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov)



FEMA