

Finding answers:

IS COLORADO

READY?



Background

READYColorado, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and the American Red Cross-Mile High Chapter collaborated in 2009 to investigate the level of emergency preparedness among Coloradans. The concept of emergency preparedness reflects an individual's or a community's knowledge of emergency preparedness **resources** and the **actions** taken to prepare for an emergency. Emergencies include natural disasters, man-made attacks and public health emergencies (such as pandemics and epidemics).

The study was funded by the Denver Urban Area Security Initiative and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security.

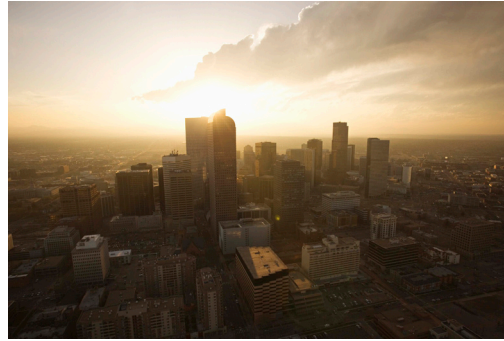
Purpose

The purpose of the survey was to assess the readiness of Coloradans at both the state and regional levels using a telephone survey of households to collect baseline readiness data.

Results

Data can be used by agencies that are involved in emergency management response, citizen training, and communication to more effectively target messages and resources.

Data can also be used to create internal benchmarks at the regional and state level to monitor trends in emergency preparedness among those respective populations.



Sample

From June 18 to July 1, 2009 a random digit dial telephone survey was conducted, with a cell phone supplement, of **651** adults (age 18 or older) throughout Colorado including **144** adults in the North Central Region.

Method

The study used the **Readiness Quotient (RQ) Index** to assess Coloradans' emergency preparedness knowledge and behavior. The RQ Index uses a scale of 0 to 10 to generate a "**Readiness Quotient**" Score or "**RQ**" based on responses to ten questions that examine key elements of emergency preparedness knowledge and behavior. The results were weighted to adjust for the stratified sample design and to represent the Colorado population.

The Readiness Quotient Index is a valid and reliable survey instrument that was developed for the Council for Excellence in Government. The Council for Excellence in Government gave the state of Colorado permission to use the instrument.

Results from a 2009 baseline survey to assess the Readiness Quotient of Colorado citizens statewide and in Colorado's North Central All-hazard Region.

Why?

Quantifying Colorado's "*state of emergency preparedness*" is an important first step in identifying areas in which most Coloradans **are prepared** and areas where **more emergency preparedness needs to be done**.

Knowing where we are, and what we still need to do, will help all to ensure that we achieve the vision:

*Every Coloradan
ready to respond to,
and recover from,
any disaster.*



**American
Red Cross**
Mile High Chapter



Governor's Office of
Homeland Security

The complete survey report can be downloaded at readycolorado.com/news.php

Summary of RESULTS

Colorado's RQ = 3.73



The READY Reality

- Colorado had an RQ Score of **3.73** (out of 10), which is higher than national RQ of 3.57 reported in 2008 (but substantial variability in preparedness existed at that time).
- **7%** of Coloradans had taken **no steps** towards emergency preparedness and have **no knowledge** of emergency preparedness messaging or resources.

An additional **15%** of Coloradans had only taken one step or were aware of only one resource/message.

- Almost **25%** of Coloradans were unknowledgeable about community emergency plans and resources, and had taken minimal or no steps to prepare themselves for emergencies.
- **50%** of Coloradans had RQ Scores of four or higher.
- Less than half of Coloradans, or **46%** knew whether their local government had an emergency or disaster plan for their community.
- More than half of Coloradans, or **55%** were unsure or did not know how to find the emergency broadcasting channel on the radio.

Work to Be Done

Much work needs to be done in order to increase the level of emergency preparedness among Coloradans. The level of emergency preparedness among Coloradans can be improved. Coloradans on average have taken only **two of the seven** behavior-based steps to prepare for emergencies. **76%** percent of Coloradans reported taking at least one step to prepare for emergencies, but only **2%** had taken all ten steps.

Filtering by Demographics

Colorado's RQ scores varied by age, education, income, employment and having school-age children, information that can assist preparedness partners

The **most frequently** reported action taken by Coloradans was receiving **first-aid training** in the past five years. The action reported **least frequently** by Coloradans was volunteering to help prepare or respond to a major emergency.

around the state to target preparedness activities and resources:

- 18-34 year olds and 65+ year olds were significantly less prepared than the other age groups.
- Coloradans with high school diplomas/GEDs or less education were significantly less prepared than those with more education.
- Households with annual incomes less than \$20,000 were significantly less prepared than households earning more.
- Coloradans who were employed full-time, part-time or self-employed were significantly more prepared than Coloradans who were unemployed.
- Households with school aged children were significantly more prepared than those without school aged children.

Most & Least Prepared

Data also suggested that among Colorado's Nine All Hazard Regions, the population in the **Northeast All Hazard Region was most prepared** while the population in the **West All Hazard Region was the least prepared**.

Next Steps

Quantifying Colorado's state of emergency preparedness has helped to identify opportunities for strategically reaching Coloradans to be ready. Now armed with solid foundational data, partners in readiness across Colorado can target resources, audiences, and activities to raise the Colorado quotient to new levels.

Survey Questions

(Best RQ Score = 10)

Knowledge Elements (Q's 1-3)

1. Does your local government have an emergency or disaster plan for your community?
2. Do you know how to find the emergency broadcasting channel on the radio?
3. In the past 30 days, have you seen or heard any messages that encourage people to take steps to be prepared for emergency situations in your community?

Behavior Elements (Q's 4-10)

4. Have you actually prepared a disaster supply kit with emergency supplies like water, food and medicine that is kept in a designated place in your home?
5. Have you actually prepared a small kit with emergency supplies that you keep at home, in your car or where you work to take with you if you had to leave quickly?
6. Have you actually made a specific plan for how you and your family would communicate in an emergency situation if you were separated?
7. Have you actually established a specific meeting place to reunite in the event you and your family cannot return home or are evacuated?
8. Have you actually practiced or drilled on what to do in an emergency at home?
9. Have you actually volunteered to help prepare for or respond to a major emergency?
10. Have you actually taken first aid training such as CPR in the past five years?

Download the complete survey report at:
readycolorado.com/news.php