



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Zoe LaPointe
(850) 385-7233 ext. 304 (Office)
(407) 739-4030 (Mobile)
zoe@flash.org

For Immediate Release
April 27, 2020

Survey Reveals COVID-19 Effect on Hurricane Readiness, Experts Offer Virtual Prep Options as June 1 Nears

Nonprofit Federal Alliance for Safe Homes identifies pandemic effect on “likelihood to prepare,” adapts annual #HurricaneStrong outreach initiative to meet consumer needs

(TALLAHASSEE, FL) – In an overnight survey commissioned by the nonprofit [Federal Alliance for Safe Homes \(FLASH\)](#), 66% of respondents stated they were either extremely likely, moderately likely, or slightly more likely to “prepare for the 2020 Hurricane Season due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic” compared to 16% who reported the opposite. Another 18% reported no effect.

FLASH commissioned the survey of 500 residents in ten hurricane-prone states to gauge consumer attitudes as they balance CDC COVID guidelines with the need to prepare before the June 1 beginning of hurricane season. The nonprofit partnership expanded its annual consumer outreach initiative, [#HurricaneStrong](#), in response to the findings. The effort retitled, “[#AtHome and #HurricaneStrong](#),” is available in Spanish as well.

Additional findings included a 7% increase in overall intentions to prepare in 2020 vs. 2019 with offsetting changes in overall “time to prepare” as some are home with extra time while others are homeschooling children while working.

“This year presents unprecedented challenges, especially for those in hurricane-prone states as they get ready for hurricane season and continue to cope with COVID-19,” said FLASH President and CEO Leslie Chapman-Henderson. “The good news is that nearly everything they need to do to prepare can be accomplished through online planning, DIY projects, online shopping, or curbside pickup.”

The [#HurricaneStrong](#) program is presented by FEMA, FLASH, and NOAA and media partners from *The Weather Channel*. ISO/Verisk, Lowe’s, Simpson Strong-Tie, State Farm, and USAA are the national sponsors. Partners and sponsors serve as featured experts and help promote the initiative through information sharing on social media channels.

The 2020 [#AtHome and #HurricaneStrong](#) initiative begins April 27 and will continue for five weeks leading up to June 1. The effort provides free bilingual DIY checklists and information sheets on topics including building codes, evacuation zones, insurance, power outage,

(More)

protecting pets, and sandbags as well as strengthening homes against flooding, high winds, and lightning. The www.hurricanestrong.org website will also include new podcasts, activities for kids, and a downloadable [program guide](#).

Each week, FLASH will host a giveaway featuring \$50 Lowe's gift cards to generate information sharing on social media and raise awareness about hurricane preparation tips. Giveaway participation is free, and details are available on Twitter by following [@federalalliance](#) and [#HurricaneStrong](#). The weekly topics fall under five areas, including personal safety, family preparedness, financial security, damage prevention, and community service.

Consumer Survey Background

The April 21, 2020 survey included 500 U.S. respondents in Alabama (3%), Florida (23%), Georgia (10%), Louisiana (2%), Massachusetts (7%), Mississippi (2%), New York (19%), North Carolina (10%), Texas (20%), and South Carolina (4%) with a plus or minus 4% margin of error. The survey demographics reflect 54.6% female and 45.4% male respondents spread across the following ages: 18-24 (11.4%); 25-34 (20.0%); 35-44 (21.8%), 45-54 (15.2%), and > 54 (31.6%).

Key findings:

- 66% report that they are more likely to prepare in 2020 due to COVID-19
- 59% of respondents plan to prepare in 2020 vs. 52% in 2019
- 57% agree they are motivated by social distancing considerations
- Respondents cited "keeping my family safe" and "understanding what to do" as top drivers of preparation for 2019 and 2020
- Responses to the open-ended question reflect themes regarding affordability, supply availability, and time to prepare. Some were unaware that they reside in a hurricane-prone state.

About #HurricaneStrong

The [National Hurricane Resilience Initiative - #HurricaneStrong](#) is an award-winning collaboration created in 2016 to save lives and homes through public awareness and education. The effort offers information through special events, news media partnerships, outreach to schools, and social media outreach.

About FLASH

The nonprofit Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH) is the country's leading consumer advocate for strengthening homes and safeguarding families from natural and manmade disasters. The FLASH partnership includes more than 100 innovative and diverse organizations that share a vision of making America a more disaster-resilient nation including FEMA, Florida Division of Emergency Management, Huber Engineered Woods, International Code Council, ISO - Verisk Analytics, Lowe's, National Weather Service, Portland Cement Association, Simpson Strong-Tie, State Farm, and USAA. In 2008, FLASH, and Disney opened the interactive weather experience StormStruck: A Tale of Two Homes, in Lake Buena Vista, FL. Learn more about FLASH and access free consumer resources by visiting www.flash.org, calling toll-free (877) 221- SAFE (7233), following [@federalalliance](#) on Twitter, and [Facebook.com/federalalliance](https://www.facebook.com/federalalliance).