

Fact Sheet

Get the Facts

- Between 1900 and 2014, the United States experienced 38 earthquakes, 166 floods, and 568 storms (including tropical cyclones).¹
- In 2012, the United States was struck by 936 tornadoes, causing about \$1.6 billion in damages.²
- In 2014, there were more than 300 fatalities and more than 2,100 injuries related to the weather.³

The Cost of Being Unprepared

- In 2014, deadly weather caused more than \$5 billion in property damage.⁴
- According to the Insurance Information Institute, an estimated 25 percent of all businesses affected by a major disaster never reopen.⁵
- Failing to prepare for extreme weather events cost the United States \$1.15 trillion in economic losses between 1980 and 2010, and could cost another trillion dollars in coming years.⁶
- Investments in weather preparation cost local governments significantly less than recovery. Preparedness strategies include flood proofing, flood evacuation plans, elevating buildings, purchasing insurance, improving drainage codes, and floodplain standards.⁷

Family Preparedness Is Critical

- Based on a 2012 FEMA national survey, 54 percent of the U.S. population do not believe their community will experience a natural disaster.⁸
- Based on a 2015 FEMA national survey, less than half of the respondents have a plan they have discussed with their family members.

Preparedness Pays Off⁹

Research shows that people are more prepared for a disaster if they:

- Are aware of community alerts and warning systems;
- Talk about their preparedness plan with family and others;
- Attend trainings and meetings; and
- Participate in a drill or exercise.

¹ Number of national disasters in the United States from 1900 to 2014 by type. (2014). Statista. Retrieved from www.statista.com/statistics/236504/number-of-natural-disasters-in-the-us-by-type

² Number of national disasters in the United States from 1900 to 2014 by type. (2014). Statista. Retrieved from www.statista.com/statistics/236504/number-of-natural-disasters-in-the-us-by-type

³ National Weather Service. (2015, June 10). *Summary of natural hazard statistics for 2013 in the United States*. Retrieved from www.nws.noaa.gov/os/hazstats/sum13.pdf

⁴ National Weather Service. (2015, June 10). *Summary of natural hazard statistics for 2014 in the United States*. Retrieved from www.nws.noaa.gov/om/hazstats/sum14.pdf.

⁵ Insurance Information Institute. (2013, October 3). *Insurance lessons learned from Sandy: Steps to keep your business running following a disaster*. Retrieved from www.iii.org/press_releases/insurance-lessons-learned-from-sandy-steps-to-keep-your-business-running-following-a-disaster.html

⁶ U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2014, February 12). Extreme weather events: The costs of not being prepared. Testimony before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Senate, 113th Congress. Retrieved from <http://www.dhs.gov/news/2014/02/12/written-testimony-nppd-and-plcy-senate-committee-homeland-security-and-governmental>

⁷ Breitman, K. (2014, February 12). Failure to prepare for extreme weather costs billions. *USA Today*. Retrieved from www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/02/12/costs-unpreparedness-critical-weather-events/5417257

⁸ Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2013). *Personal preparedness in America: Findings from the 2012 FEMA National Survey*. Retrieved from www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/83190

⁹ Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2013). *Personal preparedness in America: Findings from the 2012 FEMA National Survey*. Retrieved from www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/83190