Fact Sheet

National Risk Index and Risk Communication

The National Risk Index is an online application from FEMA that identifies communities most at risk to natural hazards.

About the National Risk Index

The Risk Index is an online mapping application that visualizes natural hazard risk metrics based on 18 natural hazards, expected annual loss, social vulnerability, and community resilience. With this tool, you can discover a holistic view of community risk to natural hazards via online maps and data.

Risk Communication and Why It Matters

Communicating potential risks can be challenging. It can be hard for communities to visualize how a disaster that has not happened yet can affect a neighborhood or business. Even if communities are aware of disaster risk, it does not always mean they will take the necessary preparatory actions. Risk communication can help bridge the gap between awareness and action by identifying and resolving barriers to understanding risk. It helps stakeholders strategically communicate natural hazard risk to target audiences and support mitigation actions.

The National Risk Index as a Natural Hazard Risk Communication Tool

The Risk Index helps illustrate how communities may be impacted by different natural hazards and how specific factors, such as community resilience and social vulnerability, affect these risks. In addition, the tool supports risk communication by providing data or proof points that support messaging about hazard risk. Because the data are available at both the county and Census tract scale, they provide a granular identification of risk, which is useful in supporting specific messaging. Additionally, the website hosts a Best Practices page, where there are examples of how the Risk Index has been used by other organizations to support hazard mitigation decision making.

Get Started

- Visit the National Risk Index's website at fema.gov/NRI.

- Explore the Map: Search different areas and learn more about your local natural hazard risk.

- Learn More: Use the interactive platform and documentation to help better understand what factors make your community at risk to natural hazards.

- Expand Your Analyses: Access and use the National Risk Index's data to create your own maps and apps.

For more information, send an email to FEMA-NRI@fema.dhs.gov.

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