

Life in Hampton Roads 2021 Flooding, Hurricane Evacuation, &

In addition, the survey included several questions concerning how residents plan to prepare for and respond to hurricanes during the pandemic, with a special look at the role COVID may play in conditioning sheltering behavior. The 2021 hurricane season at the time of the survey had been relatively quiet for Hampton Roads. However, state and local officials have been cognizant of the potential for COVID-related fears to depress evacuation and sheltering behavior and have taken these considerations into planning assumptions about who may evacuate, seek public shelter and shelter in place.

A decrease in the propensity to either evacuate or seek public shelter is a concern because choosing to weather the storm by remaining in the primary residence may increase exposure to risk, such as wind and tidal surge. The hazards of remaining in coastal areas subject to intense winds and flooding are well-known yet concerns about exposure to COVID may lead residents to remain in high-risk areas.

The Life in Hampton Roads survey provides insight into how risk perceptions of the population may shape sheltering behavior. For example, when asked if a major hurricane were approaching Hampton Roads, a third of the population would not consider evacuating while about half (49.6%) would consider evacuation. The percentage who would consider evacuation is similar to last year (45%). Further, among those who would not evacuate, 21% stated that concerns about having enough cash or credit on hand to support the cost of evacuation weighed in the decision.





The Life in Hampton Roads Data report and press releases will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (