

Survey Methodology and Results

APPENDIX

As a part of evaluating how the state helps communities recover from natural disasters, we wanted a better understanding of the role local governments play in disaster recovery. To collect information, we conducted a survey of the emergency-management directors who are required by law in each county and cities around the state. We received assistance with names and contact information from the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers and the League of Minnesota Cities.

We sent requests to complete a survey to 820 emergency directors, which included those in all 87 counties, 306 cities that had applied for recovery aid for a natural disaster in the last five years, all cities with a population of at least 5,000, a sample of smaller cities, and 11 tribal nations. Among cities that had not applied for recovery aid from disasters in the last five years, 456 had populations of less than 5,000. We selected a stratified random sample of these cities based on four geographic regions of the state. A total of 324 were in the sample.

To administer the survey, we opted to use an electronic questionnaire accessed through a secure Web site. We developed a questionnaire instrument and asked six emergency managers from different parts of the state to test it. The testers offered feedback on the survey instrument as well as the process used to access it. Among our list of 820 emergency directors, we did not have e-mail information for 41. To members of that group we mailed the survey instrument along with a cover letter, background information on the evaluation, and a postage-paid return envelope.

We sent the survey request September 7, 2011 and gave respondents a deadline of September 21. (Those receiving a request through the U.S. mail had a bit later deadline of September 28.) We knew that some emergency-management directors would have authority for more than one emergency-management organization, such as a director for both a county and a large city within that county. Accordingly, we asked such directors to fill out multiple surveys, for example, one each for the county and the large city a director may have represented. On September 20, 2011 we e-mailed a reminder to those emergency managers from whom we had not yet received a response. We were especially interested in opinions of emergency managers from cities where disasters had occurred and took an extra step to increase the response rate from that group. To urge members of that group to complete a survey, we phoned emergency directors in those cities if we had not received a response from them by the end of September.

From among our surveyed groups, we received 498 responses for a 61-percent response rate. Among our subgroups, the response rates were: 86 percent of emergency directors from counties, 68 percent from cities with disasters since 2006, 72percent from cities with at least

5,000 in population but no disaster since 2006, 45 percent from smaller cities with no disaster since 2006, and 36 percent from tribal nations.



OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR

STATE OF MINNESOTA • James Nobles, Legislative Auditor

Disaster Recovery Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of an evaluation of the state’s approach for helping communities recover from natural disasters, such as floods and tornadoes. The evaluation’s focus is on disaster *recovery*—restoring a community as much as possible to how it existed prior to the disaster—excluding the immediate emergency response.

Recipients of this questionnaire include: all county emergency management directors, cities that have had to recover from natural disasters in the last five years, cities over 5,000 population, a representative sample of remaining cities, and tribal nations. **If you serve as emergency management director in more than one jurisdiction, please respond for the county or city specified in the e-mail you received.** For those that have not had a recent natural disaster, the questionnaire has ten questions. Others, however, have an additional eight questions. You may leave the questionnaire and return to it later, but **your responses will be final when you click on the “DONE” button** at the end.

We will report only summary results from this questionnaire. We will not report individual responses that include identifying information.

Please enter your questionnaire I.D. number. ____

Enter your name. _____

1. Please indicate which description best fits your role as an emergency management director. (*In this questionnaire, we refer to “emergency management directors” even though actual titles may differ. Please mark one.*)

	(N=498)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. County emergency management director or deputy director		78	16
b. Other county employee who has been assigned emergency management responsibilities		9	2
c. City mayor or city council member with emergency management responsibilities (<i>Skip to Question 3.</i>)		81	16
d. City police, fire, public works or other employee who has been appointed emergency management director (<i>Skip to Question 3.</i>)		230	46
e. Tribal nation emergency management director (<i>Skip to Question 3.</i>)		4	1
f. Other (<i>Please specify.</i>) _____ _____ (<i>Skip to Question 3.</i>)		51	10
g. No emergency manager has been appointed for this local jurisdiction. (<i>If no one has been appointed, you may now submit this questionnaire. Thank you.</i>)		45	9

2. For roughly what share of the cities in your county do you serve as those cities' official emergency director? *(Mark one. Include only those cities without their own emergency director and where you provide the bulk of emergency-management services; exclude townships.)*

	(N=73)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. None		38	52
b. One city		8	11
c. More than one but fewer than 10 percent		6	8
d. Between 10 and 49 percent		2	3
e. Between 50 and 99 percent		13	18
f. All cities		6	8

3. About how much of your time at work is spent on emergency management responsibilities? *(Mark "full time" if you spend all of your work hours on emergency management—preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation—even if you are employed for fewer than 40 hours per week.)*

	(N=450)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Full time on emergency management		32	7
b. More than half-time on emergency management, but less than full time		30	7
c. Between 10 percent time and half time on emergency management		72	16
d. Less than 10 percent time (e.g., fewer than 4 hours in a 40-hour work week, on the average)		316	70

4. In your view, how adequately prepared is your jurisdiction for the following steps related to recovery from potential natural disasters? *(Mark one in each row. Note that the first six steps are done in preparation for a natural disaster—prior to a disaster occurring and the need for actual recovery efforts.)*

	<u>Adequately or Somewhat Adequately</u>		<u>Neither Adequately nor Inadequately</u>		<u>Inadequately or Somewhat Inadequately</u>		<u>Not Applicable or Don't Know</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>STEPS BEFORE A DISASTER</u>								
a. Developed plans to guide recovery activities following the initial emergency response and identify vulnerabilities that could disrupt the community's recovery (N=441)	326	74	60	14	46	10	9	2
b. Identified staff who would take the lead in recovery efforts (N=442)	377	85	26	6	30	7	9	2
c. Determined how and when to declare an emergency (N=440)	372	85	40	9	22	5	6	1
d. Developed mutual aid arrangements with nearby jurisdictions (N=443)	393	89	29	7	16	4	5	1
e. Prepared plans to work with voluntary organizations on long-term recovery, such as awarding contributions to families with ongoing needs (N=441)	232	53	107	24	89	20	13	3
f. Prepared plans on how to assess initial damages as well as unmet needs of the community following the initial emergency response (N=442)	278	63	93	21	61	14	10	2

STEPS AFTER A DISASTER

	<u>Somewhat Adequately</u>		<u>Neither Adequately nor Inadequately</u>		<u>Somewhat Inadequately</u>		<u>Not Applicable or Don't Know</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
g. Can develop the recovery plans, budgets, and implementation program needed to apply for state funds through the Minnesota Recovers Task Force (N=441)	260	59	94	21	69	16	18	4
h. Can initiate and oversee long-term communitywide disaster recovery (N=443)	277	63	81	18	66	15	19	4

5. Think about the most recent natural disaster affecting your jurisdiction, if one has occurred. How sufficient were your jurisdiction's resources to manage recovery efforts after the initial emergency response? *(Mark one for each row. If a natural disaster has not occurred, mark the first column.)*

	<u>Natural Disaster Has Not Occurred</u>		<u>Sufficient or Somewhat Sufficient</u>		<u>Neither Sufficient nor Insufficient</u>		<u>Insufficient or Somewhat Insufficient</u>		<u>Not Applicable or Don't Know</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Number of staff for recovery (N=441)	135	31	210	48	27	6	44	10	25	6
b. Expertise and know-how on recovery (N=441)	131	30	223	51	33	7	30	7	24	5
c. Equipment and facilities needed for recovery (N=440)	130	30	207	47	27	6	52	12	24	5
d. Funding for recovery (N=439)	129	29	117	27	48	11	110	25	35	8

6. Overall, how adequately prepared (in terms of personnel, equipment, know-how, and other resources), do you feel your jurisdiction is to manage recovery after the initial response following natural disasters? *(Mark one.)*

	(N=445)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Adequately			
b. Somewhat adequately		303	68
c. Neither adequately nor inadequately		66	15
d. Somewhat inadequately			
e. Inadequately		61	14
f. Don't know		15	3

7. In your opinion, how well does the Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and its regional offices provide the following for disaster recovery and preparation for recovery? *(Mark one in each row.)*

	Well or Somewhat <u>Well</u>		Neither Well Nor <u>Not Well</u>		Not Well or Somewhat <u>Not Well</u>		Not Applicable or <u>Don't Know</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Guidance and information sufficient to allow your jurisdiction to request state and federal disaster assistance (N=442)	293	66	58	13	18	4	73	17
b. Coordination of local and state emergency operations plans (N=442)	269	61	66	15	27	6	80	18
c. Coordination of local and state hazard mitigation plans (N=442)	261	59	57	13	35	8	89	20
d. Coordination of a network of government agencies and private organizations for smooth coordination of donations and volunteerism during disasters (N=441)	234	53	83	19	31	7	93	21

8. State law allows political subdivisions to levy a *special tax* specifically for emergency management (including recovery activities) in excess of any tax limits. In the last five years, how frequently has your jurisdiction levied special taxes for either of the two purposes listed below? *(Mark one for each row. Consider only special taxes levied, excluding any of the general tax levy for general fund operations.)*

	Each of the last 5 <u>years</u>		4 of the last 5 <u>years</u>		3 of the last 5 <u>years</u>		2 of the last 5 <u>years</u>		1 of the last 5 <u>years</u>		Not in the last 5 <u>years</u>		Not Applicable or <u>Don't know</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. To provide money specially for emergency management purposes, including recovery (N=442)	9	2	1	0	2	0	2	0	7	2	292	66	129	29
b. To purchase emergency-management organizational equipment (typically capital expenses) paid in part by the federal government (N=440)	5	1	1	0	2	0	7	2	11	3	286	65	128	29

9. Has a natural disaster, such as a flood, tornado, or severe windstorm, occurred in your jurisdiction since 2006?

	(N=446)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Yes		243	54
b. No <i>(Skip to final question.)</i>		196	44
c. Don't Know <i>(Skip to final question.)</i>		7	2

At this point the respondents who had not had a disaster in the last 5 years were directed to the final question. Only those that experienced disasters saw Questions 10- 17.

If your jurisdiction had a natural disaster since 2006 but you personally were not involved with emergency management at the time, please consult with someone else in your jurisdiction who was. If that is not possible, respond by clicking on “Not Applicable.”

10. Depending upon the severity of the disaster and other factors, some events receive “major disaster” declarations by the president or designations by other federal agencies (U.S. secretary of agriculture or Small Business Administration).

To what extent are Minnesota’s state funding and other assistance for recovery (such as technical assistance or communications help) adequate for disasters *with* declarations and those *without*?
(Mark one in each row for disasters with declarations and one in each row for those without.)

	Adequate or Somewhat <u>Adequate</u>		Neither Adequate Nor <u>Inadequate</u>		Inadequate or Somewhat <u>Inadequate</u>		Not Applicable or <u>Don't Know</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
WITH PRESIDENTIAL DECLARATION OR OTHER DESIGNATION								
a. State funding for recovery (N=239)	137	57	17	7	26	11	59	25
b. Other state assistance for recovery (N=237)	120	51	21	9	26	11	70	30
WITHOUT DECLARATION								
c. State funding for recovery (N=237)	38	16	35	15	80	34	84	35
d. Other state assistance for recovery (N=235)	52	22	37	16	62	26	84	36

11. Considering your jurisdiction’s most recent natural disaster for which federal or state recovery funding or technical assistance was offered for damaged public infrastructure and equipment, to what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one for each statement. If federal or state funding or assistance has not been provided in your jurisdiction, mark “not applicable.”)

	Agree or Partially Agree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Disagree or Partially Disagree		Not Applicable or Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. Damages to public infrastructure and equipment were quickly determined by all those involved in assessing damages following the initial emergency response. (N=239)	161	67	15	6	13	5	50	21
b. Information was readily available on possible funding and its requirements. (N=238)	151	63	20	8	22	9	45	19
c. Applications for disaster assistance were coordinated, preventing the need to supply the same information multiple times. (N=239)	152	64	20	8	15	6	52	22
d. Applying for funding through the Minnesota Recovers Task Force was straightforward. (N=239)	74	31	27	11	25	10	113	47
e. The amount of recovery funding was sufficient to reimburse for public infrastructure’s uninsured losses. (N=239)	108	45	29	12	26	11	76	32
f. Recovery funding was provided in a timely way. (N=238)	90	38	35	15	39	16	74	31
g. Coordination among the involved state agencies was adequate. (N=238)	124	52	31	13	28	12	55	23
h. Sufficient information was available locally to track progress toward recovery for government damages. (N=239)	123	51	37	15	20	8	59	25
i. Overall, the recovery funding substantially helped the community(ies) return to conditions prior to the disaster. (N=237)	132	56	25	11	20	8	60	25

12. For your jurisdiction's most recent natural disaster in which businesses or homeowners and tenants received state or federal recovery funding, to what extent do you agree with the following? *(Mark one for each row. If recovery funding was not provided to businesses or homeowners, mark "not applicable.")*

	Agree or Partially Agree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Disagree or Partially Disagree		Not Applicable or Don't Know	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
BUSINESSES								
a. Sufficient recovery funding was available for those most in need. (N=239)	36	15	27	11	25	10	151	63
b. Recovery funding was provided in a timely way. (N=239)	35	15	33	14	22	9	149	62
HOMEOWNERS AND TENANTS								
a. Sufficient recovery funding was available for those most in need. (N=239)	23	10	18	8	44	18	154	64
b. Recovery funding was provided in a timely way. (N=239)	24	10	25	10	36	15	154	64

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the existence of a dedicated fund at the state level for reimbursing recovery expenses would have improved your jurisdiction's recovery? *(Mark one.)*

	(N=240)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Agree		168	70
b. Partially Agree			
c. Neither Agree Nor Disagree		34	14
d. Partially Disagree			
e. Disagree		5	2
f. Not Applicable or Don't Know		33	14

14. What do you see as advantages or disadvantages of establishing and funding a state dedicated fund for recovery expenses?

15. Within the last five years, has your jurisdiction or its residents received federal or state funding for recovery that required local matching dollars? *(Mark one.)*

	(N=239)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Yes		81	34
b. No <i>(Skip to Question 17.)</i>		114	48
c. Not applicable <i>(Skip to Question 17.)</i>		44	18

16. If your jurisdiction or residents did receive recovery funding requiring local matching funds, to what extent do you view the required match as fair or unfair, given the magnitude of the disaster and severity of damage? *(If you did not receive one of the funding types listed, mark “No Such Funding.”)*

	Fair or Somewhat Fair		Neither Fair Nor Unfair		Unfair or Somewhat Unfair		No Such Funding		Not Applicable or Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. Local match for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance (N=81)	59	73	10	12	6	7	0	0	6	7
b. Local match for State Flood Hazard Mitigation Grants (N=81)	44	54	9	11	9	11	4	5	15	19
c. Local match for other state funding (N=79)	35	44	9	11	5	6	4	5	26	33
d. <i>(Specify type of other funding.)</i> _____										

17. Based on your experience, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements related to insurance? *(Mark one for each statement.)*

	Agree or Partially Agree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Disagree or Partially Disagree		Not Applicable or Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. For most natural disasters, local governments' recovery efforts are adequate when paired with insurance coverage and voluntary organizations' assistance (N=239)	131	55	37	15	38	16	33	14
b. Verifying insurance coverage, when required before approval of federal or state funding for recovery, is generally easy and not overly bureaucratic (N=238)	96	40	48	20	44	18	50	21
c. Requiring insurance information is a key factor in slowing the process for obtaining federal or state funding for recovery (N=237)	87	37	64	27	31	13	55	23

18. Please feel free to offer additional comments about the state's approach for assisting communities with natural disaster recovery—or suggestions for what you would like to see changed.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!
Please submit by September 21.