



Deschutes County Natural Hazards Survey – Key Insights

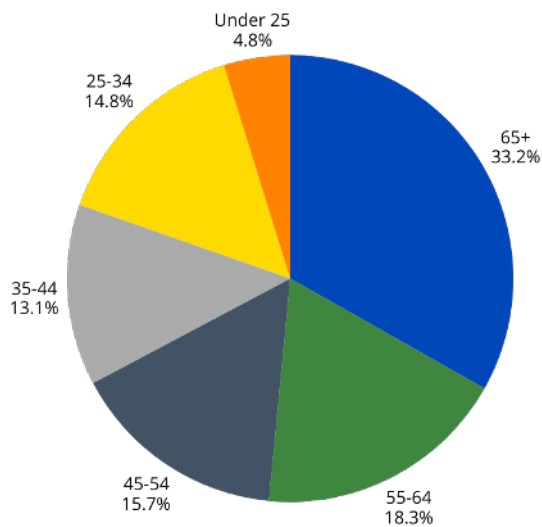
Purpose:

This survey gathered community perspectives on hazards, preparedness, and priorities to inform the 2026 Deschutes County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP).

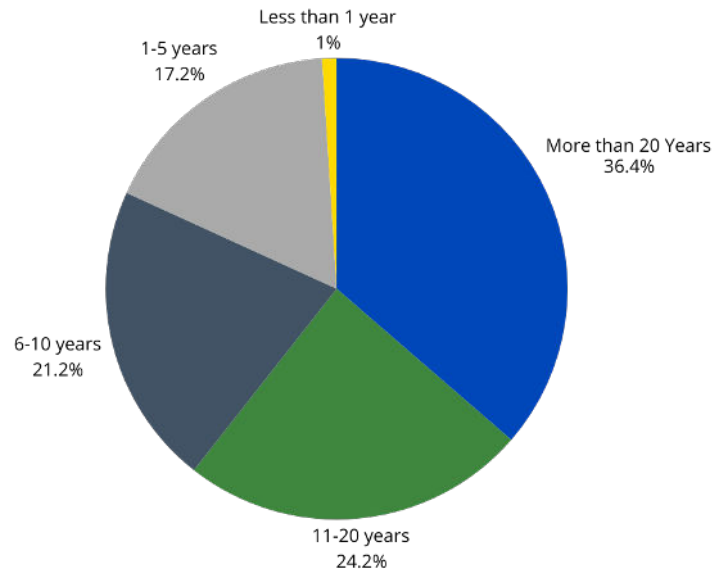
Who Responded

- **Total responses:** 768 (English), 3 (Spanish)

Age Distribution



Years in Deschutes County



Top Hazards Experienced

In the past five years, respondents most reported experiencing:

- Winter Storms (Snow/Ice) – 62%
- Wildfire – 58%
- **Extreme Heat** – 40%

Other hazards: windstorms, drought, flooding.

Community Planning Priorities

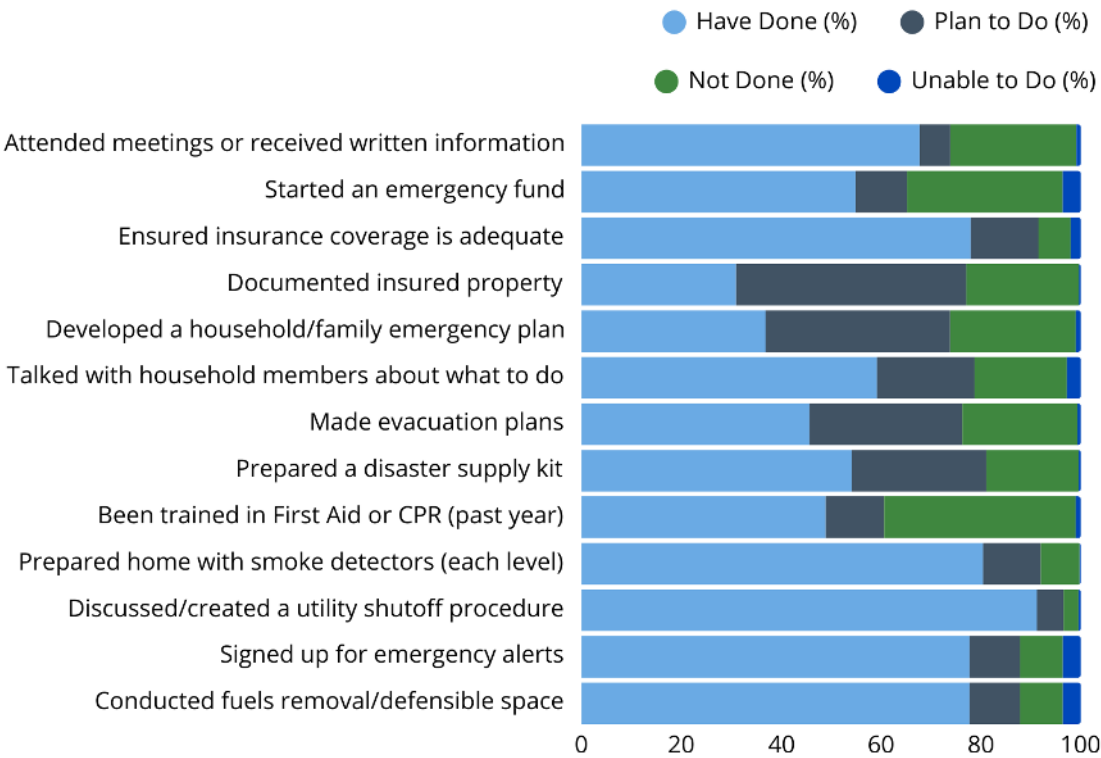
Respondents ranked these 5 considerations as most important to them when planning for disasters:

- Safe and Clean Water Supply
- Safe Evacuation Routes
- Training for Emergency Responders
- Protecting Critical Facilities
- Maintaining Reliable Power and Utilities



Preparedness Actions

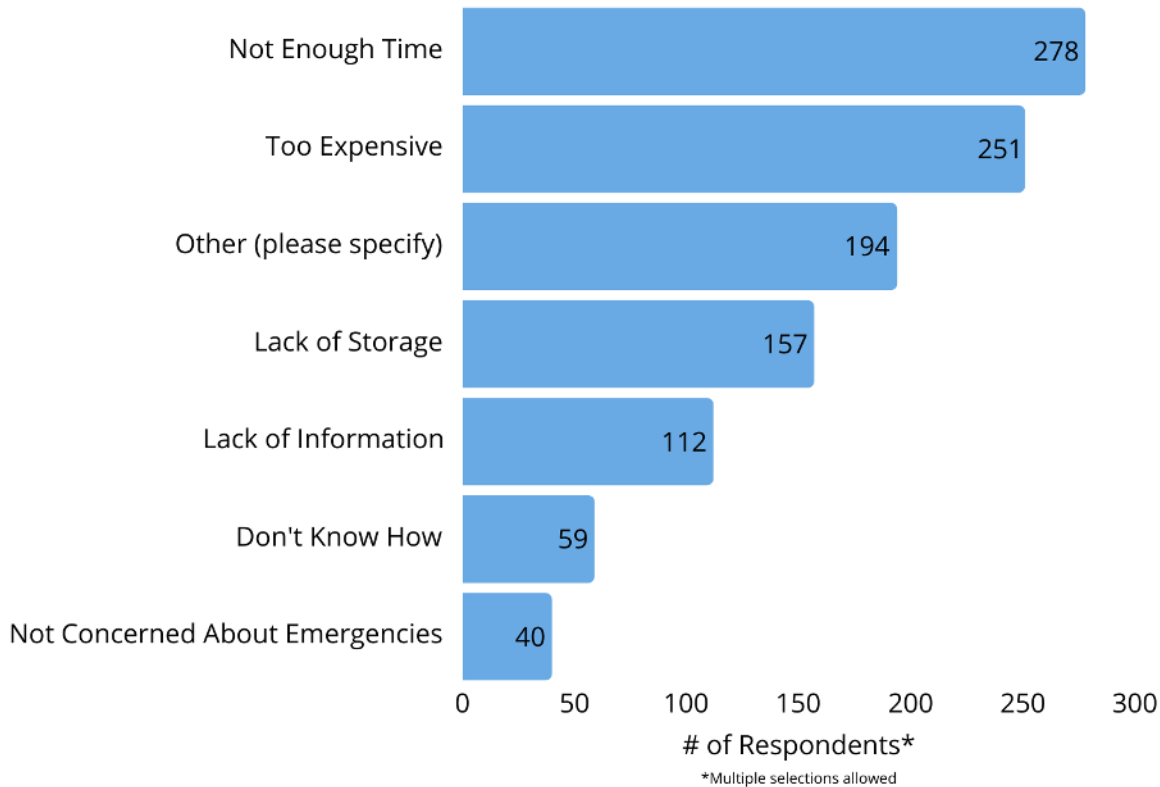
Many households have signed up for emergency alerts, prepared a disaster supply kit and/or made evacuation plans. Fewer have created emergency funds or documented property.





Barriers to Preparedness

Respondents noted a variety of reasons why they hadn't yet undertaken preparedness actions:



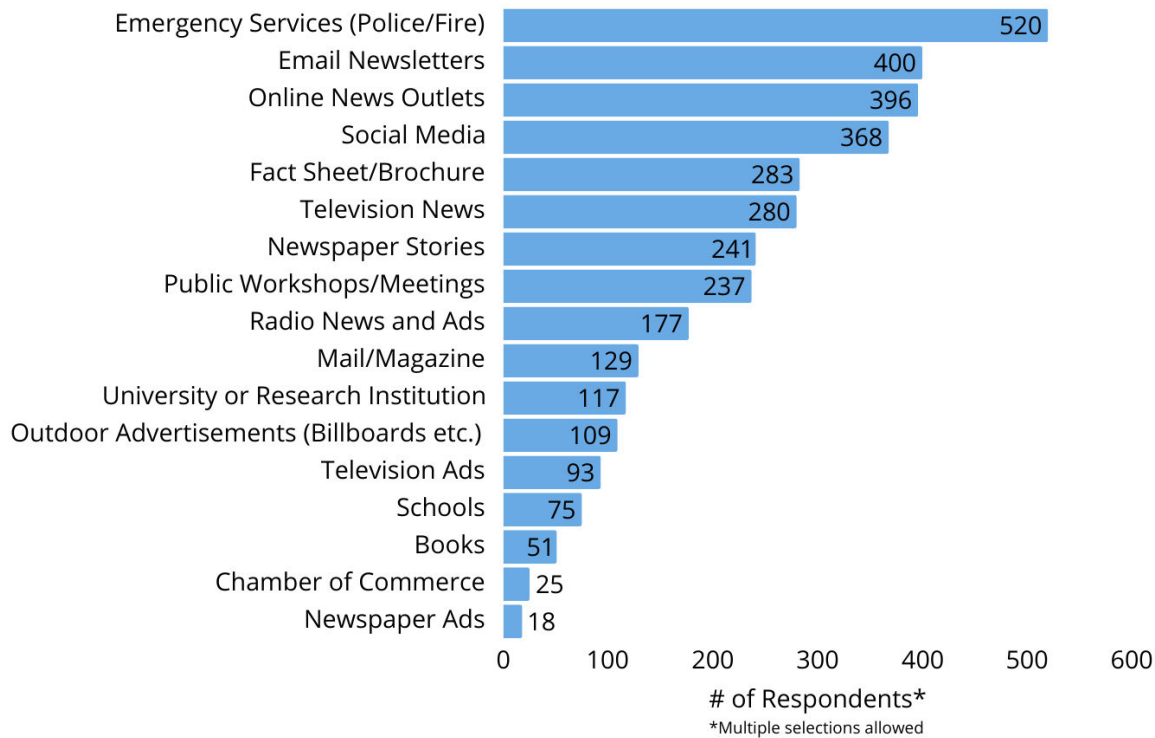
Respondents who answered "other" identified barriers that fall into a few broad categories:

- Personal/time/priority barriers
- Cost and storage
- Knowledge and information gaps
- Kit maintenance burdens/worry about waste, expiry
- Renting constraints
- Age/disability/mental health needs
- Need materials in Spanish



Preferred Information Channels

Respondents noted a variety of preferred channels for receiving information on personal preparedness and safety:



Open-Ended Questions

At several points during the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to answer the following open-ended questions. Answers grouped into general themes are included as sub bullets under each question.

- What matters most to you when planning for disasters
 - Community safety & wellbeing
 - Clear, accessible communication
 - Safe evacuation routes & traffic flow
 - Accessibility & equity
 - Protecting homes & property
 - Critical infrastructure & utilities
 - Smart growth & land use
 - Environmental stewardship
 - Community training & engagement



- Are there any actions you'd like to see Deschutes County take to reduce the risk from natural disasters?
 - Wildfire risk reduction on public & private lands
 - Home hardening and defensible space
 - Evacuation routes & infrastructure
 - Better public information & alerts
 - Land use & development decision aligned with hazard realities
 - Utilities & critical lifelines
 - Address human-caused ignitions while providing support
 - Community capacity, coordination and drills
- Is there anything else you'd like to share?
 - Evacuation routes & maps – clear neighborhood-specific maps; fix bottlenecks, add redundant egress
 - Wildfire mitigation – fuels reduction and maintenance on public/private lands; prescribed burns
 - Home hardening and defensible space – update building codes; provide financial assistance (grounds, vouchers, rebates)
 - Land use and development – align zoning and permits with hazard realities; manage density in high-risk areas
 - Support for vulnerable populations – seniors, disabled, unhoused; include animal/livestock evacuation planning
 - Community training and drills – Expand CERT; hands-on workshops; county-wide evacuation drills

Next Steps:

Survey insights will help guide planning discussions and outreach efforts.

Learn more or get involved by emailing emergency.management@deschutes.org

Disclaimer

This open, voluntary survey conducted by Deschutes County Emergency Management and COIC between December 15, 2025, and January 5, 2026, reflects the perspectives of respondents and is not statistically representative. Results are intended to provide insights into community priorities and preparedness to inform the Deschutes County 2026 Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning discussion, alongside other data and analysis.