

**Portsmouth and Middletown Residents
Can Help Evaluate Hurricane Preparedness Brochure**



Roger Williams University Graduate Student's MPA Capstone Project
Engages Resident to Benefit Local Towns.

“Evaluation of Hurricane Preparedness Brochure”

Portsmouth and Middletown residents have the unique opportunity to participate in the RWU capstone project to evaluate a hurricane preparedness brochure as an outreach program in their community.

Committed to keeping residents safe and growing community resilience, Portsmouth and Middletown Emergency Management Directors and Town Administrators have approved the research project and recognized the direct benefit to the local communities. Towns that use brochures as an outreach method want to make sure they are well-designed to grab the reader's attention and provide needed information while inspiring the reader to take action.

This study will be conducted by Roger Williams University graduate student Debra L. Correia, a Portsmouth resident, as part of her Master of Public Management/Public Management capstone project. The purpose of this study is to investigate the presentation of information about hurricane preparedness in the form of a brochure on participant's knowledge, recall, behavioral intent, and attitude toward this outreach method.

The study is anonymous, as no identifying information will be collected. Interested adult residents who volunteer to participate, will be given an informed consent form prior to beginning the survey process.

Access to the survey will be granted by visiting your Town Hall website or the direct survey link:

[Portsmouth Town Hall](https://www.portsmouthri.com/143/Emergency-Management): <https://www.portsmouthri.com/143/Emergency-Management>

[Middletown Town Hall](http://fire.middletownri.com/middletown-emergency-management/): <http://fire.middletownri.com/middletown-emergency-management/>

[RWU Qualtrics Survey Link](http://rwu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ookbk6KSiffgfr): http://rwu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ookbk6KSiffgfr

No time limit will be placed on reading the brochure or the questionnaire. The survey is designed for the brochure to open to a new tab, so you may refer back to it should you choose. The average time for completing the questionnaire is ten (10) minutes. The questionnaire is divided into 5 sections (24-evaluation questions and 3-general questions; twenty-seven (27) questions total). General questions asked will pertain to years of education, annual income, and town of residence. Evaluation questions are intended to evaluate the brochure, measure participants' recall, attitude, and behavioral intention toward hurricane preparedness. At the end of the survey you will be provided a copy of your responses, as well as, the correct answers to

the seven (7) multiple choice Recall questions. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time.

Participants responses may help researchers learn more about developing effective risk communication material for the resident's in their town.

The study will run over the period of time of February 20, 2019 to March 21, 2019.

Did you know?

Many residents don't realize that the lack of knowledge for hurricane preparedness is a global concern. Hurricanes are massive storm systems that form over warm ocean waters and move toward land. The Town's close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean renders it particularly susceptible. Threats from hurricanes include powerful winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges, coastal and inland flooding, rip currents, and more. The lack of knowledge on how to prepare for a hurricane can have a life-altering impact on individuals, families, and our communities. A 2015 report by the Council for Excellence in Government found one-third (32%) of US residents took no steps to prepare for potential emergencies, with lack of awareness, beliefs and resources (time, knowledge, money) being cited as the main reasons.

Peter Faerber, Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director of Middletown and Raymond Perry, Emergency Manager of Portsmouth, know all too well that hurricane preparedness reduces the risk of loss of lives and injuries and increases a capacity to cope with hazard when it occurs. Their devotion to community safety includes developing ways to encouraging citizens to be prepared as well. Citizen awareness consisting of outreach programs such as the hurricane preparedness brochure is just one step in that process.

Gary Crosby, Town Planner and Richard Rainer, Town Administrator, both of Portsmouth, agree that the hurricane preparedness brochures are an important tool for communicating risk to local residents and helping them secure their own homes.

In public administration, evaluation is a critical component of program development, implementation, and improvement. Thus, as public service agencies, the study will benefit in monitoring and planning, as well as, accountability of tax paying dollars. One of the reasons Ms. Correia choose the brochure outreach program for evaluation is because brochures are a simple and inexpensive way of sharing information. One of the big advantages of brochures is their potential to provide a lot of information for residents to read at their own leisure.

This capstone study is being conducted at no expense to Portsmouth or Middletown. It also comes at an opportune time, as the Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1st to November 30th. Gain knowledge and prepare now.

Knowledge is power and your evaluation of the brochure is appreciated. Feel free to share the questionnaire link with family and friends. Watch for updates on the "Evaluation of Hurricane Preparedness Outreach Brochure" project.