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POST-HURRICANE MICHAEL HEALTH ASSESSMENT SURVEYS COMPLETE

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Panama City, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Bay County (DOH-Bay) and the Florida Department of Health in Gulf County (DOH-Gulf) are releasing the results of the post-Hurricane Michael door-to-door community assessment. The survey analysis was provided by the Florida Department of Health’s Public Health Research Section.

“This information will help DOH-Bay and DOH-Gulf and our partners understand the health needs of Bay and Gulf County residents post-Hurricane Michael.”, said Sandon S. Speedling, MHS, CPM, CPH, Administrator and Health Officer, DOH-Bay.

“We appreciate the community members who answered their door for our volunteers and took the time to respond to help their community. Due to your input, 178 responses were recorded.”, said Sarah Hinds, Administrator and Health Officer, DOH-Gulf.

Hurricane Michael Evacuation

- Over half of participants reported evacuating before (43.4%) or after (13.7%) landfall
- 41.5% did not evacuate
- Among those who evacuated:
 - 39.0% went to friends/family nearby
 - 27.2% friends/family residences elsewhere
 - 5.3% shelter

Hurricane Michael Emergency Supplies

- 74.3% reported having an emergency supply kit for their household prior to the storm
 - Almost half (44.1%) reported that their household needed supplies that were not in their kits. The most common supplies needed included:
 - Water (22.8%)
 - Food (20.4%)
 - Batteries (15.3%)
 - Medical supplies (7.3%)
 - Other common items included gas/fuel/electricity, generators, and clean-up supplies/tools

Damage and Repairs from Hurricane Michael

- 68.2% reported that their homes were damaged but repairable
- 20.9% reported minimal to no damage
- 9.9% reported their homes were destroyed
- Average damage estimates - \$79,653 (median: \$50,000; range \$240-565,000)
- The majority (54.7%) reported their home was somewhat repaired or completely repaired (27.0%)
- Most common barrier to repair being slow money receipt from insurance or FEMA (30.2%)
- Just over half (52.0%) reported having used a generator since the storm. However, only 40.0% reporting having a working carbon monoxide (CO) detector.



Post-Hurricane Injuries and Illnesses

- 80.5% reported not having anyone in their household injured as a result of Hurricane Michael
- Among those who did report injuries, the most common was slips, trips, and falls (47.0%).
- The most common new illnesses reported included anxiety (48.7%), allergies (45.0%), depression (37.3%), cough (34.6%), and asthma/COPD/respiratory difficulties (27.5%).

Access to Healthcare Post-Hurricane

- Most (53.9%) reported being able to get their medications from their usual source
- Among the individuals who had trouble accessing medications (23.1%) reasons included:
 - Usual clinic/physician closed (30.7%)
 - Usual pharmacy closed (15.3%)
 - Multiple reasons (48.9%)
- Most (73.5%) reported needing primary or pediatric care during the past year. Of those 94.3% were able to receive the care they needed.
- 21.0% of respondents reported that a member of their household needed care for mental health concerns with the majority of those reporting they were able to receive the care they needed (80.7%).

Suicide Ideation and Risk

- Most respondents had low to no risk of suicidality (94.3%)

The information will be used to tell decision-makers about the needs of the community, determine the critical health needs, identify the ongoing health effects of Hurricane Michael, and discover barriers to accessing resources. DOH-Bay, DOH-Gulf and our partners will work together to make plans to meet the needs of the community through our Community Health Improvement Plan. The full nine-page report is available on our respective websites.

For more information in Bay County, call 850-872-4455, visit Bay.FloridaHealth.gov, or follow us on Twitter @FLHealthEmerald.

For more information in Gulf County, call 850-227-1276 or visit Gulf.FloridaHealth.gov.

About the Florida Department of Health

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