

Disaster Relief: America's Response to Recent Hurricanes

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The September 2017 AP-NORC Poll of 1,150 adults asks Americans how they have reacted to recent hurricanes and what they think of their government's response.



In the aftermath of the recent devastating hurricanes about half of Americans approve of how President Trump has handled disaster relief for the victims within the United States, but just a third approve of his response to those impacted in the U.S. territories, according to a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Nearly half disapprove of his handling of disaster relief in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Eight percent of those surveyed say the recent hurricanes had a serious impact on them personally, and another 34 percent say they seriously impacted family or friends. Those who were personally impacted by the storm are less likely to approve of the job President Trump has done in response to disaster situations in the states (29 percent vs. 49 percent). Residents of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands were not included in the survey.

Most Americans say the federal government has a major responsibility to help victims of natural disasters at home (88 percent) and in its territories (77 percent). While only 16 percent say the United States has a major responsibility to help out in other countries, 61 percent say it has a minor responsibility.

Americans have sprung into action in the aftermath of the hurricanes that have recently struck the U.S. and Caribbean, with 55 percent saying they gave money, clothes, or other items to charity, 11 percent saying they did volunteer work, and 9 percent saying they donated blood in response to the storms.

The nationwide poll was conducted September 28-October 2, 2017 using the AmeriSpeak® Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Online and telephone interviews using landlines and cell phones were conducted with 1,150 adults. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.