Public Engagement Report & Outreach Strategy

Community Disaster Preparedness Plan

Prepared by IZO for Clackamas County   April, 2025

Project Overview

This Public Engagement Report and Outreach Strategy was developed to support the planning and implementation of a comprehensive public information campaign related to **Clackamas County Disaster Preparedness.** The goal of the project is to ensure that community members are informed, heard, and empowered to participate in decisions that impact their safety, well-being, and access to resources.

A multi-phased community engagement process was conducted, which included online surveys, in-person focus groups, and one-on-one stakeholder interviews. These efforts were designed to gather a broad range of perspectives from residents, local organizations, and traditionally underrepresented groups.

Three engagement tactics formed the backbone of this process:

1. **Focus Groups** (six in total—four in English, two in Spanish)

2. **One-on-one interviews** (nine total, five in English and four in Spanish)

3. **Online Surveys** (920 in total, 875 in English, and 45 in Spanish)

These activities, supported by outreach to diverse populations (rural farmers, Spanish-speaking residents, vulnerable communities, etc.), yielded valuable perspectives. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) Report synthesizes these findings to inform strategies that enhance **equity, resilience, and efficiency** in Clackamas County's disaster preparedness awareness campaign.

The feedback collected through this process provides valuable insight into the community's awareness levels, priorities, communication preferences, and unmet needs. It also highlights the importance of multilingual outreach, accessible formats, and culturally relevant messaging—particularly for populations who may face barriers to traditional forms of engagement.

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Engagement Goals

- **Collect and Validate Community Input:** Gather firsthand experiences, identify barriers, and distill best practices from the public regarding disaster preparedness and past evacuation experiences.

- **Identify and Prioritize Needs:** Highlight recurring themes— traffic bottlenecks, communication gaps, equity concerns, etc.— that require immediate and long-term county action.

- **Enhance Trust and Inclusion:** Demonstrate transparent public engagement, especially within Spanish-speaking and low-income communities, to ensure no residents are left behind in an emergency.

- **Develop Targeted Recommendations:** Translate community feedback into actionable steps for policy updates, infrastructure improvements, volunteer engagement, and communication upgrades.

Engagement Methods & Tools

Overview of Tactics

1. Focus Groups

- **Total Groups:** Six—four in English (Welches, Sandy, Estacada, Beavercreek/Redland) and two in Spanish (Canby/Molalla).

- **Participants:** Representing rural, suburban, and Spanish-speaking populations.

- **Focus:** Evacuation challenges, preparedness habits, communication barriers, and county support needs.

2. One-on-One Interviews

- **Total Interviews:** Nine (in both English and Spanish).

- **Participants:** Residents and stakeholders from Welches, Molalla, Estacada, and Canby (varied housing and income levels).

- **Focus:** Deeper dive into personal stories, direct experiences with past emergencies, and perspectives on county response.

3. Online Surveys

- **Distribution:** County channels (website, social media, email lists) and partner organizations.

- **Focus:** Mirrored focus group themes—preparedness levels, evacuation barriers, communication experiences, and recommended improvements.

Recruitment and Outreach

Bilingual Invitations: Flyers, social media posts, and outreach messages in English and Spanish.

Local Partnerships: Churches, nonprofits, farm associations, and community centers helped reach Spanish speakers, rural residents, and vulnerable communities.

Incentives: Light refreshments or small gift cards in some sessions to increase attendance.

Public Engagement Results & Analysis

Focus Group Session Log

Date	Location	Language	Session	Incentives	Attendance
2/18/25	Canby, OR	Spanish	In-Person	Food, Gift Cards	17
2/26/25	Molalla, OR	Spanish	In-Person	Food, Gift Cards	15
3/3/25	Beavercreek/Redland and Clarkes-Highland	English	In-Person	Food, Gift Cards	9
3/4/25	Estacada, OR	English	In-Person	Food, Gift Cards	16
3/5/25	Sandy, OR	English	In-Person	Food, Gift Cards	11
3/10/25	Welches, OR	English	In-Person	Food, Gift Cards	15

Role of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

A consistent theme across all engagement methods was the critical role that Community-Based Organizations play in reaching underserved communities and non-English speaking residents in Clackamas County. These organizations are deeply embedded in their communities and are seen as trusted messengers, especially in moments of crisis.

A. Trusted Messengers for Hard-to-Reach Communities

Participants—especially those from Spanish-speaking and immigrant communities—emphasized that they are far more likely to trust and act on information shared by familiar local organizations, such as community centers, churches, nonprofits, and grassroots networks.

> *"I trust Hacienda CDC more than the county. During the fires, they helped us find a place to stay. I never saw anyone from the government."*

– Focus group participant, Molalla

> *"We need the county to work through the people we already listen to. Churches, food banks, the schools — that's who we turn to."*

– Interviewee, Canby

This trust is particularly important for reaching residents who face language, literacy, or immigration status barriers. CBOs often provide information in Spanish, offer culturally competent assistance, and can identify community members who may not be reached by traditional alert systems or media.

B. Coordination

While CBOs are already filling gaps in emergency support services, many feel uncertain about their role during public emergencies or disasters.

C. Recommendations

Clackamas County's community engagement process revealed that CBOs are essential partners in building equitable disaster preparedness across a linguistically and culturally diverse region.

While much of the public input focused on Spanish-speaking communities, the county is also home to sizable populations who speak Russian, Ukrainian, and other languages. Building strong, proactive partnerships with the CBOs that serve these groups is critical to closing access gaps before, during, and after emergencies.

Based on community input and recommended best practices, we recommend the following strategies to strengthen the county's CBO engagement efforts:
CBOs often operate on a limited budget but hold strong trust within their communities. The county should provide:

- Emergency preparedness toolkits and templates.
- Multilingual communication materials.
- Stipends or microgrants, when possible for public outreach.
- Targeted training on the county's role in public emergencies.

Leverage CBOs for Preparedness Education. CBOs are ideal partners for delivering disaster education in formats that resonate with their communities. This includes:

- Hosting bilingual preparedness workshops and drills.
- Organizing home-based visits or informal gatherings in trusted spaces like churches and community centers.
- Incorporating culturally relevant visuals and real-life scenarios in training.
- Offering sessions tailored for seniors, people with disabilities, and multigenerational households.

"We already help our neighbors. If the county gave us the tools, we could do even more."

– Community feedback, Beavercreek Focus Group

Data Collection and Analysis

- **Recordings and Notes:** Focus groups were audio recorded; surveys were captured digitally.

- **Thematic Coding:** Major themes (Preparedness, Evacuation Challenges, Communication Barriers, Community Needs, etc.) identified across all sources.

- **Triangulation:** Findings from each tactic were cross-referenced to ensure accuracy and identify any outliers.

Overarching Themes

From all three tactics, the challenges fall under four main categories:

Infrastructure & Evacuation Routes

- **Single-Entry/Exit Points:** Many communities rely on a single highway or bridge, which can quickly become impassable.

- **Terrain Constraints:** Bridges, canyons, and mountainous roads exacerbate bottlenecks and raise safety risks if blocked.

Communication & Information

- **Alert System Inequities:** Emergency Alerts miss some residents; many are not signed up for county texts.

  » Both groups showed a high likelihood to check mobile devices during emergencies (English 98%, Spanish 95%), reinforcing mobile-first communication as the most effective tool.

  » However, Spanish speakers were significantly less likely to have received alerts or know how to sign up for them.

  » Participants across both surveys called for better consistency in emergency alert systems and more frequent updates via multiple platforms (e.g., text, social media, radio, and television).

- **Language & Cultural Gaps:** Spanish speakers encounter late or no translations, compounding fear and confusion.

- **Rumors & Misinformation:** In the absence of reliable info, rumors spread quickly online, causing panic or misdirection.
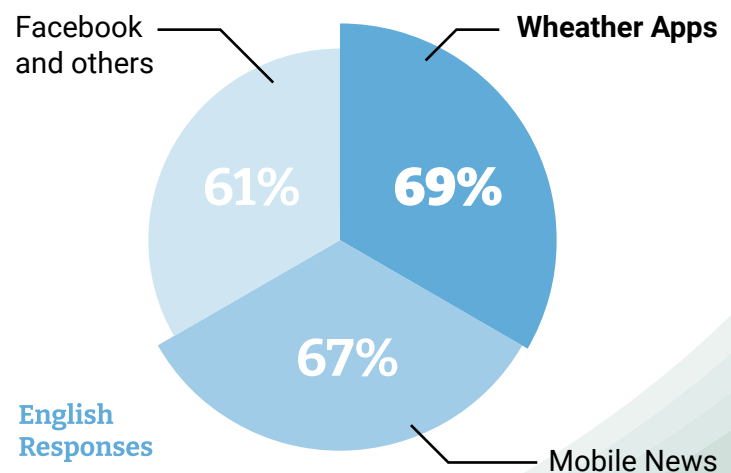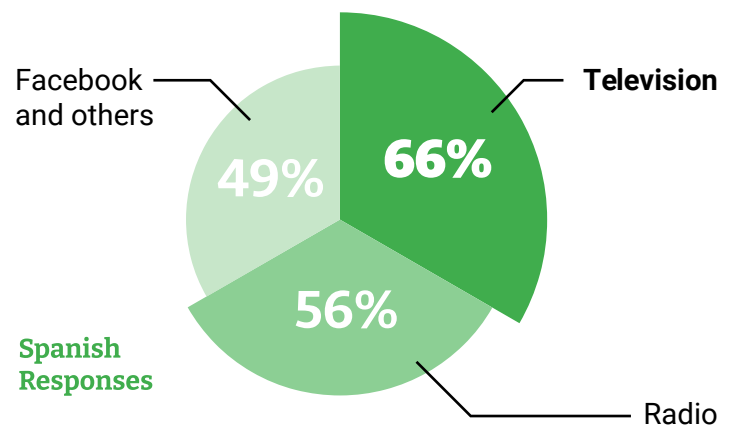
Preferred Communication Platforms

Online Survey Responses

Answer Choices	English Responses	Spanish Responses
Mobile news	68.91%	58.54%
Television news	51.78%	65.85%
Public Television	0.00%	0.00%
Radio	40.58%	56.10%
Facebook	60.87%	48.78%
Instagram	27.54%	24.39%
X (FKA Twitter)	8.30%	4.88%
Threads	3.29%	0.00%
Snapchat	2.11%	14.63%
Nextdoor	**23.45%**	0.00%
WhatsApp	3.29%	**21.95%**
TikTok	8.30%	**19.51%**
YouTube	17.79%	29.27%
Reddit	7.77%	2.44%
FEMA App	7.11%	7.32%
Weather Apps	**67.33%**	34.15%
Map Apps	28.19%	17.07%
MyShake	7.77%	0.00%
Watch Duty	24.64%	0.00%
Discord	1.71%	0.00%
Faith-based ORG Newsletter	2.50%	14.63%
Clackamas County Newsletter	23.06%	17.07%
Clackamas County Website	25.82%	12.20%
Newsletter	4.87%	2.44%
Billboard/Signs	5.93%	0.00%
Word of mouth	47.56%	36.59%
Other	9.88%	0.00%
Total Respondents	**759**	**41**

Spanish-speaking respondents favored **television (66%)**, **radio (56%)**, and **Facebook (49%)** — platforms that are passive, familiar, and accessible regardless of digital literacy. WhatsApp and TikTok are popular platforms.

English-speaking respondents showed high use of **weather apps (67%)**, **mobile news (69%)**, and **Facebook (61%)**, along with diverse online platforms like **Nextdoor**, **Reddit**, and **YouTube**.

Facebook and others — 49%

Television 66%

56%

Spanish Responses

Radio

Facebook and others — 61%

Wheather Apps 69%

67%

English Responses

Mobile News

This highlights two clear trends:

> **1. Digital diversity** is broader among English speakers — indicating higher comfort navigating online sources.
>
> **2. Trusted, familiar, and accessible sources** (TV, radio, word of mouth) remain crucial for Spanish-speaking communities.

Public alert systems should consider prioritizing **multi-platform redundancy,** with extra attention to **radio, Spanish-language TV, and culturally familiar digital channels** for equitable emergency information delivery.

Preferred Method of Communication Platforms
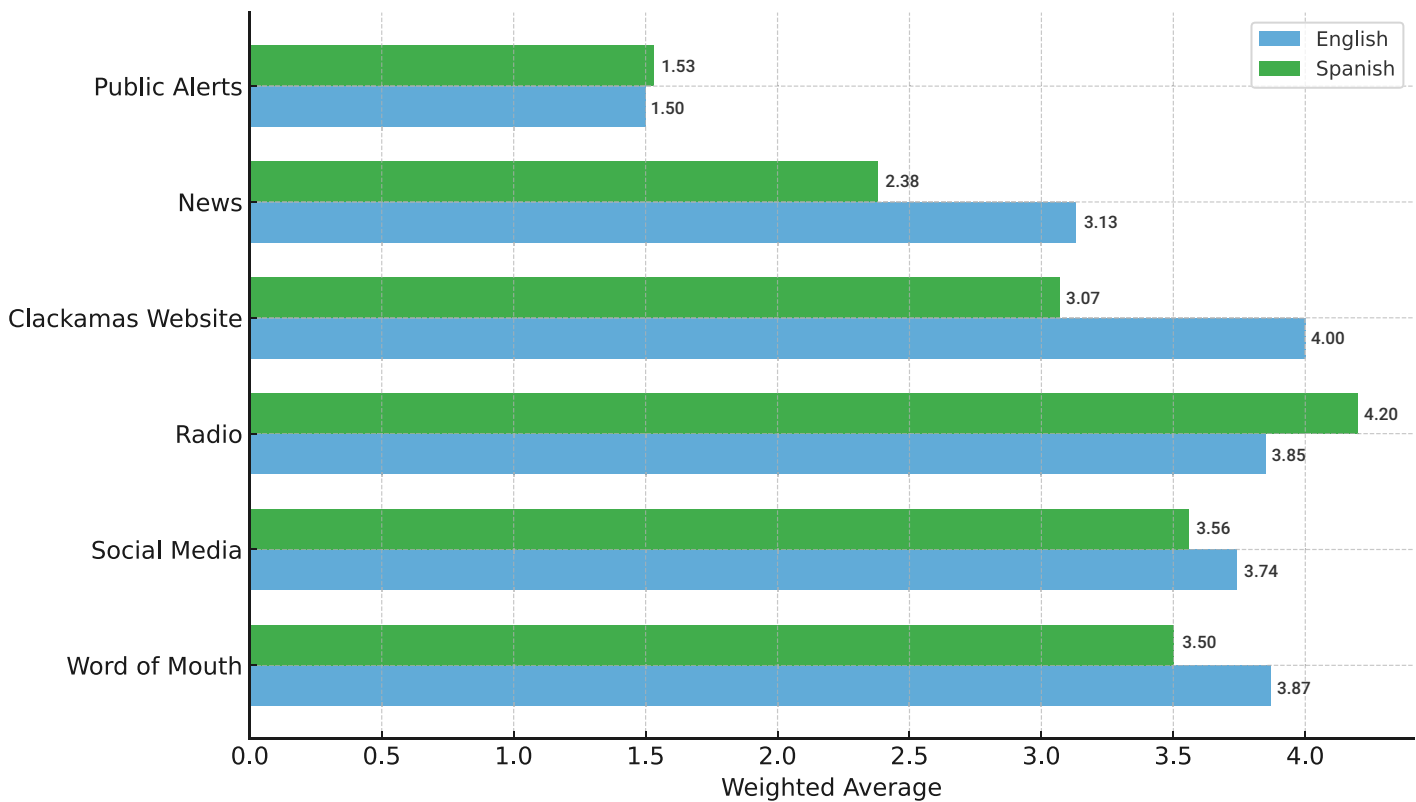
Online Survey Responses

Both groups **overwhelmingly prefer PublicAlerts** — the automated mobile/text alert system — as their **#1 communication method** in emergencies:

86% of *English* respondents
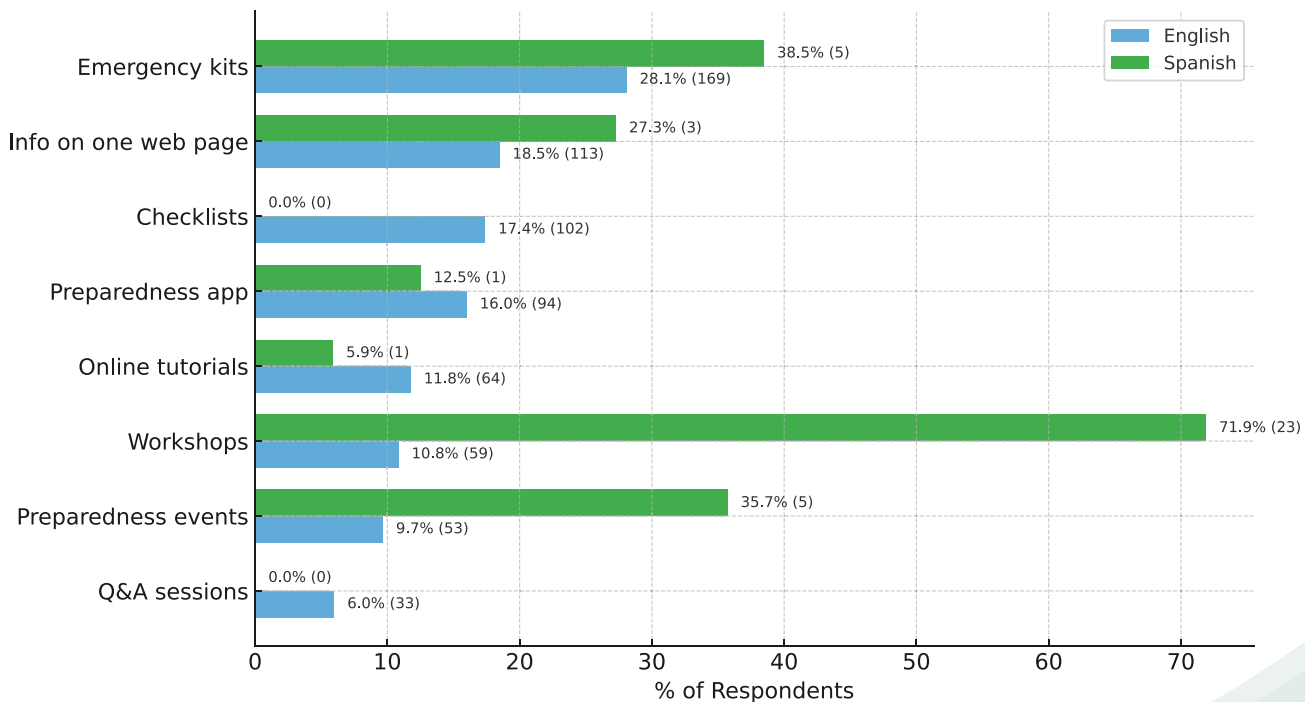
85% of *Spanish* respondents

Other notable observations:

- Spanish-speaking participants showed a **higher preference for traditional media (TV/news)** and **word of mouth**, while English respondents leaned more toward **weather apps** and **digital alerts.**

This strongly supports prioritizing **mobile-based alert systems** but also suggests a need for **secondary methods** (TV, trusted messengers, Community-Based Organizations) to ensure no one is missed.

Emergency Preparedness Tools and Resources

Online Survey Results

Horizontal bar chart titled "Emergency Preparedness Tools and Resources — Online Survey Results", comparing English and Spanish respondents (% of Respondents):

Tool	Spanish	English
Emergency kits	38.5% (5)	28.1% (169)
Info on one web page	27.3% (3)	18.5% (113)
Checklists	0.0% (0)	17.4% (102)
Preparedness app	12.5% (1)	16.0% (94)
Online tutorials	5.9% (1)	11.8% (64)
Workshops	71.9% (23)	10.8% (59)
Preparedness events	35.7% (5)	9.7% (53)
Q&A sessions	0.0% (0)	6.0% (33)

Social & Economic Barriers

- **Financial Strain:** Lower-income families cannot stockpile supplies or afford extended hotel stays.

- **Immigration Concerns:** Undocumented residents fear that seeking help at shelters might jeopardize their status.

- **Apathy or Anxiety:** Some avoid planning altogether due to denial or stress, especially if they've never personally experienced a disaster.

Coordination & Resource Gaps

- **Underutilized Local Resources:** Residents with heavy equipment, water tenders, or large vehicles felt ignored by official responders.

- **Livestock Planning:** No centralized protocol for quickly relocating or housing large animals.

- **Volunteer Management:** No formal system for channeling volunteer energy during crises.

Reaching Vulnerable Populations

Across focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and survey responses, a clear and urgent theme emerged: vulnerable populations face disproportionate risks during emergencies—and often lack the resources or support needed to adequately prepare or evacuate.

Key Populations Identified:

- **Seniors and people with disabilities:** Many lack evacuation support, rely on medical equipment (like oxygen), or are unable to drive. One participant shared, "I could barely move after surgery—I needed someone to help me evacuate" (Molalla).

- **Low-income families:** Economic hardship prevents many from creating go-bags, maintaining emergency supplies, or affording hotel stays if displaced. As one Spanish-speaking resident put it, "The hotels were full. Where do we go now?" (Canby).

- **Non-English speakers:** Language barriers delayed or blocked access to vital alerts, leading to confusion and delayed action. Delayed Spanish tornado alerts in Molalla caused "panic and confusion. "

- **Undocumented immigrants:** Fear of interacting with government agencies or being asked for ID at shelters prevents some families from seeking help. One participant noted,
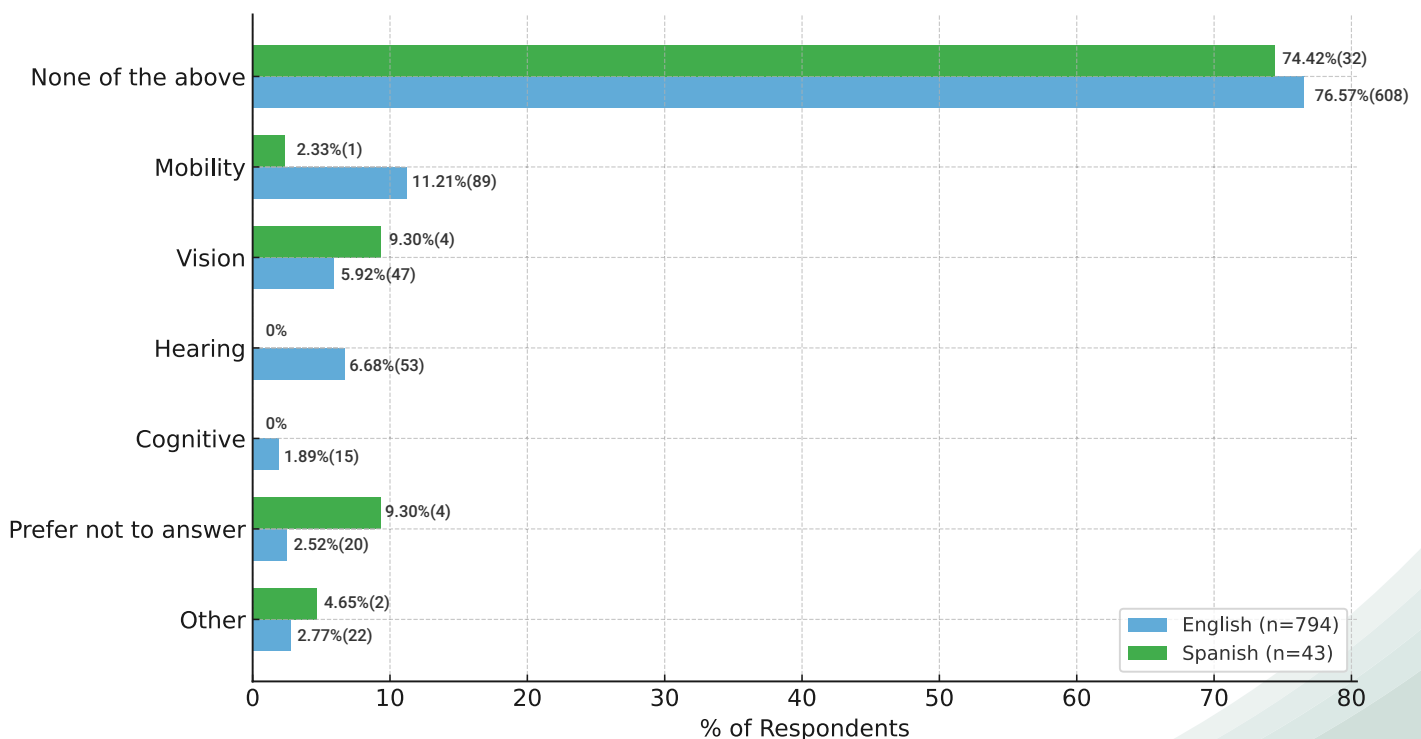
> *"Immigration status shouldn't matter. Not everyone has papers, and those who don't may hesitate to ask for help."*

– Molalla

- **Rural residents with livestock or limited road access:** These residents face long evacuation times, isolation, and difficulty relocating animals safely. In Beavercreek, some had to move horses multiple times during the 2020 fires.

"Other" Challenges
Open-Ended Responses (English Survey)

Horizontal bar chart titled "% of Respondents" comparing English (n=794) and Spanish (n=43):

Category	Spanish	English
None of the above	74.42% (32)	76.57% (608)
Mobility	2.33% (1)	11.21% (89)
Vision	9.30% (4)	5.92% (47)
Hearing	0%	6.68% (53)
Cognitive	0%	1.89% (15)
Prefer not to answer	9.30% (4)	2.52% (20)
Other	4.65% (2)	2.77% (22)

Q7: Do you experience any challenges that affect your daily activities?

Themes reported include:

- **Caregiving responsibilities** (e.g., for elderly parents, children with special needs)

- **Chronic health conditions** (e.g., CPAP use, oxygen, stroke recovery)

- **Mental health** (anxiety, PTSD, depression)

- **Mobility and accessibility barriers** (unable to walk far, overstimulation from light/sound)

- **Technology limitations** (e.g., "Facebook challenged," poor cell service)

- **Environmental stressors** (noisy or crowded spaces)

Quotes:

"Sensory sensitivities...sirens, hold music, bright lights can be painful."

"Teen children are challenges that affect my daily activities."

"Caretaker for bed-bound senior (mom) in stroke recovery."

"Cannot drive, disabled adult child at home."

The Spanish-language survey reported fewer challenges overall — this may reflect actual differences, but could also indicate **underreporting due to stigma, survey fatigue, or cultural norms.**

Focus Group Findings

Focus Group Findings

Participant Demographics Overview

The Clackamas County focus group and bilingual survey outreach engaged a diverse cross-section of residents, with noticeable differences in preparedness, communication preferences, and evacuation barriers based on geography, language, and socioeconomic factors.

Geographic Diversity

Spanish-speaking participants were primarily concentrated in Molalla (52%) and Canby (48%), while English-speaking respondents were more dispersed across Clackamas County. A good majority of English-speaking participants live in unincorporated/rural areas, a factor influencing internet reliability and evacuation routes.

Age

Spanish speakers skewed younger, with most between ages 35–54. English speakers skewed older, with over 40% aged 55–64, affecting tech access and preferred outreach channels.

Preparedness

- **General Lack of Personal Preparedness**

  » Many admitted to having no formal evacuation plans, kits, or practiced drills; one Spanish group reported only 3 of 15 participants feeling prepared.

  » Most recognized they "should do more, " yet remained unsure where to start or what resources exist.

- **Improved Readiness Through Experience**

  » Residents who evacuated in 2020 felt somewhat more prepared (go-bags, generators, etc.), but new residents and those who have never evacuated remain particularly vulnerable.

- **Vulnerable Groups**

  » Individuals with special health needs (oxygen dependence, limited mobility) need extra support.

  » Spanish-speaking and low-income families struggle with limited finances to assemble thorough emergency kits or secure alternate lodging.

Evacuation Challenges

- **Limited Evacuation Routes & Traffic Bottlenecks**

  » **Estacada:** Only two major highways (211 & 224) led to multi-hour gridlock during the wildfires.

  » **Sandy & Welches**: Single roads/highways and dead-end streets created panic about potential entrapment.

  » **Beavercreek/Redland:** Bottlenecks on narrow, single-lane roads forced hours-long evacuation times.

- **Livestock and Pet Evacuations**

  » Rural participants (Sandy, Estacada, Beavercreek) emphasized the difficulty of transporting horses, cattle, and other animals.

  » Fairgrounds and parking lots reached capacity; many owners lacked trailers or safe destinations.

  » Pet evacuation also complicated by limited transport and uncertain shelter capacity.

- **Economic and Mobility Constraints**

  » Some families can afford just a single night in a hotel—or none at all—leading to tough choices about evacuation timing.

  » Mobility issues, such as surgical recovery or lack of a reliable vehicle, also impede quick departure.

- **Confusion About Shelter Destinations**

  » Residents were often unclear on where official shelters were located, leading to anxiety and aimless searching.

Communication Barriers

- **Late or Missing Alerts**

  » Reports of a four-hour delay between U.S. Forest Service and county notices in Estacada.

  » Sporadic or outdated info in Sandy/Beavercreek, causing reliance on rumors and social media.

- **Connectivity Issues**

  » Internet and cell service are often unreliable in rural areas; infrastructure fails quickly with power outages.

  » Lack of backup power for cell towers leaves entire zones without official warnings.

- **Language Gaps (Spanish-Speaking Residents)**

  » Alerts often issued in English first, or exclusively in English, delaying critical information for Spanish speakers.

  » Some can't read well, requiring verbal or visual instructions.

  » Fear/distrust due to immigration status discourages some from seeking official help.

- **Minimal County Presence**

    » Residents in Sandy and Beavercreek felt "on their own" during the 2020 wildfires, relying on volunteer networks and Facebook.

    » Little direct coordination from county officials on the ground.

Community Needs & Suggested Improvements

- **Designated Evacuation Routes and Shelters**

    » Communities want pre-identified, well-marked routes and shelter locations, with maps widely available.

    » Physical signage in grocery stores, gas stations, community boards for those lacking internet.

- **Improved Emergency Communication Systems**

    » A single authoritative source for updates, with bilingual messaging in real-time (English/Spanish).

    » Redundant channels: texts, radio broadcasts, phone calls, loudspeakers, social media, etc.

    » Backup power for critical cell towers/infrastructure.

- **Traffic Management and Coordination**

    » Formal plans to deploy officers or trained volunteers to direct traffic at choke points.

    » Better inter-agency alignment to prevent conflicting instructions.

- **Local Leadership and Self-Sufficiency**

    » Support for community-based volunteer teams (CERTs) that can coordinate local resources.

» Integration of local equipment (water tenders, bulldozers) into official response frameworks.

- **Public Education**

  » Regular bilingual workshops, simplified for low-literacy groups, focusing on assembling go-bags, evacuation routes, and communication plans.

  » Incentivized attendance (door prizes, childcare, food), especially for Spanish-speaking communities.

- **Resources for Extended Outages**

  » Support for generators, safe fuel storage, and water supplies.

  » Bulk-purchase programs or subsidies for essential emergency gear.

  » Pre-planned supply chains or caches for food, gasoline, and medicine.

One-On-One
Interview Insights

One-on-One Interview Insights

General Preparedness Levels

- Most interviewees only had informal ("mental") plans.

- Those with prior wildfire evacuation experience were slightly more prepared (fuel, water, documents ready).

- Key barriers: **time, knowing where to go, shared vehicles, pet care.**

Barriers to Evacuation

- **Transportation:** Not all families have multiple cars or reliable drivers.

- **Communication:** When one household member is away, accessing real-time info is difficult if cell service drops.

- **Pet Shelter Confusion:** Unclear if county shelters can accommodate animals.

Experience with Past Emergencies

- **Positive:** Timely alerts in some areas, visible police/fire presence, established pet shelters.

- **Negative:** Delayed or missing alerts, unclear routes, lack of county representatives on the ground

Communication and Resource Awareness

- **Limited Awareness:** Most only discovered county resources through informal channels (Facebook, NextDoor).

- **Spanish-Speaking Emphasis:** More culturally and linguistically relevant outreach is needed, especially pre-disaster.

- **Workshops:** Appreciated but viewed as sporadic; request more consistent offerings in Spanish and easily accessible locations.

Recommendations from Residents

- **Clear Tools & Templates:** Evacuation checklists, guidelines, quick-reference flyers.

- **Inclusive Outreach:** Alerts for unhoused residents, phone-based and radio-based alerts, bilingual workshop availability.

- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with local nonprofits to reach vulnerable populations.

- **Designated Shelters (People & Pets):** Clear signage, open lines of communication, pet-friendly policies.

Challenges in Hearing Community Voices

While efforts were made to engage a broader and more diverse group of individuals and organizations—such as youth leaders, multi-generational households, and BIPOC-led community-based organizations—participation from these groups remained limited. This highlights the ongoing challenge of building trust and fostering meaningful involvement, especially with communities that have not always been well represented in government-led planning processes.

Online Survey Highlights

Online Survey Highlights

Preparedness

- Majority admitted to **modest readiness** or no formal plan.

- **Rural-urban divide:** Rural respondents repeatedly mentioned single-lane roads, livestock, distance to services.

- **Knowledge vs. Action Gap:** While some survey takers knew they "should" store emergency food, water, and documents, only a small subset had actually done so. The most common reason given was lack of time or "not knowing where to start."

Communication and Information Gaps

- **Timing:** Alerts arrived late or not at all.

- **Language:** Few, if any, simultaneous Spanish alerts for critical updates.

- **Reliance on Cell Service:** A large portion of respondents said they expect to rely on text alerts or smartphone apps. Simultaneously, many reported losing cell or internet service in prior disasters, creating a dangerous informational vacuum.

- **Late or No Alerts:** Numerous comments described a lag in official alerts—if they arrived at all—during the 2020 wildfires. Many first learned of a Level 2 or Level 3 evacuation via **neighbors, Facebook, or NextDoor.**

- **Language Barrier for Non-English Speakers:** While some Spanish speakers did take the survey, they noted late or missing translations of county announcements in past events.

- **Desire for Centralized Source:** The majority of respondents want a **single, go-to platform** (a website, phone hotline, or app) where they can reliably check real-time evacuation maps, shelter locations, and official guidance.

Top Evacuation Concerns

- **Single-Highway Anxiety:** Rural and mountainous regions (e.g., around Estacada, Sandy, and Welches) reported high worry about single-lane roads or a single highway exit route; "What if it's blocked or overloaded?" was a common refrain.

- **Traffic Gridlock:** Even suburban neighborhoods expressed concern about traffic lights not being reprogrammed or no one directing flow during an evacuation, as was experienced in 2020.

Affordability and Logistics

- **Costs of Evacuation:** Many reported that finding a hotel or paying for gas to travel far from home would be financially burdensome.

- **Mobility Barriers:** Older adults, or those with disabilities, indicated a need for accessible transport and assistance if roads are treacherous.

Community-Identified Needs and Priorities

From the written-in (open-ended) portions of the survey, five clear priorities emerged:

1. Officially Designated Shelters and Routes
- Respondents want each community to have a well-advertised evacuation center (or centers) and posted signage along major roads.
- Many suggested a county-distributed map or brochure in the mail that explicitly labels routes and shelter facilities.

2. Better Evacuation Traffic Management
- Participants proposed employing volunteer "traffic wardens" or stationing law enforcement at key intersections to expedite flow.
- Some recommended pre-planning "reverse-lane" strategies on major highways if needed.

3. Pet and Livestock Contingency Plans
- High rural ownership of large animals prompted calls for an official registry of available stables, trailers, or farmland to house evacuated livestock.
- People with multiple pets desire clarifications on which hotels or shelters are pet-friendly and how to arrange pet transport.

4. Multilingual Outreach and Education
- Spanish-speaking respondents emphasized the need for simultaneous Spanish and English alerts, plus easily digestible visuals for those with limited literacy.
- Many requested ongoing workshops (quarterly or biannual) that teach basic preparedness, ways to safeguard important documents, and how to access official resources.

5. Community Resilience and Volunteer Integration

- A notable portion of respondents felt neighbors often step up first (sharing equipment, providing refuge, etc.). They want the county to acknowledge and integrate this grassroots energy—via a volunteer sign-up system, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), or block captains.

Conclusion

The findings from Clackamas County's Disaster Preparedness Project offer a detailed look into the experiences, perceptions, and needs of residents across the county. Through focus groups, interviews, and bilingual surveys, a range of insights emerged around community readiness, communication gaps, and logistical challenges during past evacuation events.

Participants across different language groups and geographies shared similar concerns—limited evacuation routes, confusion about where to go, and challenges communicating across platforms and languages during a crisis. At the same time, each community brought forward its own context: Spanish-speaking residents noted barriers related to language access, trust, and digital connectivity, while rural participants raised concerns about infrastructure, mobility, and long evacuation times.

Demographic data supports and enriches these qualitative findings. Younger, Spanish-speaking respondents were more likely to live in urban areas and seek in-person learning opportunities, while English-speaking residents in rural areas reported higher usage of digital tools but more challenges with connectivity and backup power. Across the board, residents expressed a strong interest in being better informed and prepared.

As Clackamas County reviews this data, there may be opportunities to explore how community outreach, emergency alerts, and preparedness programs can continue evolving to reflect the needs of different populations. This includes considering factors such as age, language, geography, and access to technology. The perspectives gathered here offer a foundation for further planning conversations, community engagement efforts, and inclusive decision-making as the county continues to strengthen its approach to disaster preparedness.

Appendices

Online Survey Findings and Report for the Clackamas County Disaster Evacuation Preparedness Project

Prepared for:
Clackamas County Disaster Management

Prepared by:
IZO PR & Marketing

Date:
April, 2025

1. Executive Summary

Clackamas County Disaster Management distributed an online bilingual community survey—one in English, one in Spanish, one in Russian, and one in Ukrainian—to assess public awareness, preparedness levels, and experiences with disaster evacuation. A total of 920 residents participated: 875 completed the English survey and 45 completed the Spanish version. The survey explored readiness, communication barriers, evacuation challenges, and community priorities. The findings offer valuable insights to help the County improve emergency response, outreach, and equity in disaster planning.

Key Insights: While most residents agree on the importance of preparedness, many lack emergency kits, formal evacuation plans, or access to real-time alerts. Rural respondents and Spanish-speaking residents reported higher vulnerability due to limited resources, evacuation routes, or digital access. Language barriers, cell service failures, and traffic congestion during past evacuations were frequent concerns. Despite this, residents showed resilience—many rely on neighbors and social networks when official systems fall short. Spanish-speaking residents emphasized the need for multilingual alerts, culturally relevant outreach, and dignified support regardless of legal status.

Purpose of this Report: This report summarizes findings from the English and Spanish online surveys and highlights community-identified needs. It is intended to inform Clackamas County's evacuation readiness campaign and long-term resilience planning. Key themes include the need for multilingual alerts, mobile-based communication, equitable evacuation resources, and better coordination with community groups. Together, these findings offer a roadmap for improving trust, access, and safety for all residents—urban and rural, English- and Spanish-speaking.

2. Key Findings

The online survey revealed consistent themes around emergency readiness, communication gaps, and equity issues. While many residents feel confident in their ability to respond to a public emergency, this confidence is not always matched by actual preparedness behaviors or access to resources. The analysis is organized into four thematic categories with comparative insights across both English and Spanish respondents.

Preparedness

A majority of respondents believe it is "very important" to be prepared for an emergency, and almost all agree that they have a personal responsibility in that preparedness.

- Despite this awareness, gaps remain: many respondents do not have an evacuation plan, go-kit, or signed up for local alerts. 76% of English-speaking respondents are signed up for PublicAlerts, but only 47% of Spanish-speaking respondents are.
- Spanish-speaking respondents were significantly more likely to request workshops, printed checklists, and emergency information delivered in-person or in Spanish-language formats.

Evacuation Challenges

- 86% of English-speaking respondents know multiple routes to evacuate, compared to only 57% of Spanish speakers.
- Open-ended responses described traffic congestion, limited road access, confusion about where to go, and challenges evacuating pets or livestock.
- Spanish speakers emphasized the need for evacuation shelters in their neighborhoods that accept families and pets without immigration-related concerns.

Communication Barriers

- Both groups showed a high likelihood to check mobile devices during emergencies (English 98%, Spanish 95%), reinforcing mobile-first communication as the most effective tool.
- However, Spanish speakers were significantly less likely to have received alerts or know how to sign up for them.
- Participants across both surveys called for better consistency in emergency alert systems and more frequent updates via multiple platforms (e.g., text, social media, radio, and television).

Community Needs

- Respondents want more accessible, inclusive outreach—especially in rural and Spanish-speaking communities.
- There is a strong desire for Clackamas County to designate evacuation centers and publish evacuation routes, especially for families with pets and limited mobility.
- Spanish-language responses emphasized dignity, inclusion, and the need to be actively considered in disaster planning, not treated as an afterthought.

These findings offer a foundation for understanding the gaps in Clackamas County's current disaster readiness system and highlight areas for immediate and long-term improvement.

3. Challenges

The survey responses surfaced a wide range of challenges that affect Clackamas County residents' ability to prepare for and respond to public emergencies. These challenges mirror themes identified in previous focus groups and demonstrate that preparedness and evacuation issues are interconnected with infrastructure, communication, and social equity.

Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Challenges

- Respondents across both language groups consistently cited limited road networks as a major evacuation concern. Several described being trapped or delayed for hours during the 2020 wildfires.
- Many neighborhoods, especially in Oregon City, Estacada, and unincorporated areas like Holcomb, have only one road in and out. These routes became gridlocked in prior evacuations.
- Respondents expressed concern that new housing is being built without corresponding upgrades to transportation infrastructure. They fear future evacuations will be even more dangerous without traffic control systems in place.
- Spanish-speaking respondents were especially concerned about not having a clear place to go or a safe shelter nearby that accepts undocumented residents or pets.

Communication and Information Barriers

- Although most respondents reported being likely to check mobile devices during a disaster, many cited issues with receiving timely alerts—especially during the 2020 wildfires.
- Cell service and internet outages remain a critical problem in rural and mountainous parts of the county.
- Spanish-speaking residents noted that many alerts are still English-only, and others were unaware of how to sign up for PublicAlerts or confused by the interface.
- Residents in both surveys mentioned that conflicting messages between agencies and delayed updates made it difficult to make decisions during an evacuation.

Social and Economic Barriers

- Many families, especially in the Spanish-speaking community, face affordability challenges in preparing for disasters (e.g., purchasing go-bags, storing water, affording hotel stays).
- People with disabilities, chronic health conditions, or without access to reliable transportation described needing more support in evacuation planning.
- Some survey respondents noted fear of shelters or services due to immigration status or past experiences of being turned away.
- Residents asked for the County to include support for special populations—those without housing, rural residents without vehicles, or medically fragile individuals.

Gaps in Resources and Public Education

- Several respondents, particularly Spanish speakers, called for workshops and preparedness trainings to be offered in Spanish with bilingual facilitators.
- The public requested visible signage for evacuation routes, pre-planned shelter locations, and checklists mailed to households—especially for those without reliable internet access.
- Respondents called for better education around what to pack, how to prepare livestock or pets, and how to help neighbors.
- Some mentioned a lack of mental readiness—feeling panic or avoidance when trying to prepare for a disaster, and suggested more culturally accessible and family-friendly formats to make learning easier.

These structural and social challenges indicate that emergency preparedness must be treated as both a planning and equity issue. Solutions will need to be layered: increasing infrastructure investment, improving communication tools, and building trust with residents most likely to be left behind in a crisis.

Appendix A: Survey Questions and Response Analysis

This appendix provides a full question-by-question analysis of the online bilingual survey conducted by Clackamas County Disaster Management. It includes all 26 survey questions along with summarized findings from both the English and Spanish surveys.

For each question, the following elements are provided:

- A brief description of the question's intent
- Response breakdowns in both English (🔵) and Spanish (🔴), including numerical or percentage summaries when available
- A synthesis of any notable trends or disparities between English- and Spanish-speaking respondents
- For open-ended questions, a summary of key themes, with selected quotes to illustrate common experiences and suggestions

This format allows for a detailed understanding of how residents across different language and cultural communities perceive their emergency preparedness, what challenges they face, and what resources they value most. It also serves as a transparent record of the raw feedback shared by community members—feedback that should inform both near-term outreach and long-term emergency management planning.

All analysis has been anonymized and synthesized to protect respondent privacy while preserving the clarity of their perspectives.

Q1: What is your zip code?

🔵 **English Survey (875 responses)**

Top reporting zip codes:

- **97045 – Oregon City:** 149
- **97068 – West Linn:** 139
- **97017 – Colton:** 134
- **97023 – Estacada:** 87
- **97038 – Molalla:** 53

🔴 **Spanish Survey (45 responses)**

Top reporting zip codes:

- **97013 – Canby: 42**
- **97045 – Oregon City: 1**
  (Other zip codes had only 1 or no responses.)

The **Spanish-language survey received nearly all responses from Canby (97013)**, suggesting strong community engagement in that area — likely due to targeted outreach or high Spanish-speaking populations. In contrast, the English survey had broader geographic coverage with higher response rates from Oregon City, West Linn, and Colton.

This points to a potential opportunity for **expanded Spanish outreach** in other cities where English-speaking engagement is already high, like Estacada or Molalla.

Q2: Where do you live?

🔵 **English Survey**

- Within city boundaries in Clackamas County: 482
- Unincorporated Clackamas County: 382
- Outside Clackamas County: 11

🔴 **Spanish Survey**

- **Dentro de los límites de la ciudad en el Condado de Clackamas:** 45
  (All Spanish respondents selected this option)

All Spanish-speaking respondents reported living **within city boundaries**, whereas English-speaking respondents were more evenly split between **urban** and **unincorporated/rural areas**.

This may reflect:

- **Outreach limitations of online surveys** among Spanish-speaking communities
- The need for more inclusive methods, such as **in-person focus groups or community events**

*To address this, Spanish-language focus groups were successfully conducted in both **Molalla** and **Canby**, which tend to yield better engagement and richer feedback than online methods alone.*

Q3: How old are you?

🔵 **English Survey**

- **65 or over:** 287
- **55–64:** 150
- **45–54:** 173
- **35–44:** 147
- **25–34:** 51
- **18–24:** 7
- **17 and under:** 3
- **Prefer not to answer:** 9

🔴 **Spanish Survey**

- **45–54:** 14
- **35–44:** 12
- **55–64:** 6
- **18–24:** 2
- **25–34:** 1
- **17 or under:** 1
- **Prefer not to answer:** 7

The English-language survey had a much higher representation of **older adults**, with nearly **50% aged 55 and over**. In contrast, the Spanish-language survey skewed **younger**, with most respondents in the **35–54 age range**.

This aligns with national trends: younger, working-age adults tend to be more active in bilingual or Spanish-speaking community networks.

Q4: Primary language spoken

🔵 **English Survey**

- **English:** 823
- **Vietnamese:** 2
- **Other:** 2

🔴 **Spanish Survey**

- **Español (Spanish):** 41
- **Inglés (English):** 2

The English-language survey overwhelmingly reflects **English-speaking respondents** (94%). Meanwhile, 91% of Spanish-language respondents indicated **Spanish** as their primary language, confirming that the translated version successfully reached its intended audience.

Interestingly, 2 Spanish respondents selected **English** as their primary language — this could represent bilingual individuals who prefer receiving community engagement in Spanish but function primarily in English.

This validates the importance of **bilingual and bicultural outreach** strategies — many individuals may prefer **Spanish-language formats for trust and clarity**, even if they speak English fluently.

Q5: What secondary languages do you speak?

🔵 **English Survey**

- **Spanish:** 46
- Russian: 3
- Ukrainian: 3
- Chinese: 2
- Other: Tagalog, French, Japanese, German, ASL, Aymara, Dutch, Thai, Farsi, Norwegian.

🔴 **Spanish Survey**

- **English:** 33

This suggests that while Clackamas County is predominantly English-speaking, there is a **meaningful representation of many other languages**, especially among bilingual or multilingual individuals.

These findings support the value of having **multi-language emergency resources**, especially in written form, for accessibility beyond just English and Spanish.

Q6: Do you own or have any of the following?

Resource	🟦 English (n=825)	🔴 Spanish (n=43)
Reliable internet	96.12% (793)	74.42% (32)
Laptop computer	84.85% (700)	30.23% (13)
Desktop computer	46.06% (380)	11.63% (5)
Cell phone	99.03% (817)	95.35% (41)
Landline phone	24.36% (201)	18.60% (8)
Backup power (generator/power bank)	55.52% (458)	9.30% (4)
Pets	73.21% (604)	44.19% (19)
Livestock	14.79% (122)	4.65% (2)

The data shows high overall access to key technology and household resources among English-speaking respondents. Nearly everyone reported having **cell phones (99%) and internet (96%)**, with strong access to laptops (85%) and pets (73%).

In contrast, Spanish-speaking respondents also reported high **cell phone (95%)** and **internet access (74%)**, but had significantly lower access to:

- **Laptops (30%)**
- **Backup power (9%)**
- **Desktop computers (12%)**

These disparities suggest that **digital readiness and resilience tools** (like computers and power backups) may be less accessible to Spanish-speaking households. This could have direct implications for **emergency preparedness campaigns**, especially if digital access is assumed.

Recommendation: Consider providing **printed materials, community workshops**, and other **non-digital formats** in Spanish to ensure equitable outreach.

Q7: Do you experience any challenges that affect your daily activities?

Challenge Type	🟦 English (n=794)	🔴 Spanish (n=43)
None of the above	76.57% (608)	74.42% (32)
Mobility challenges	11.21% (89)	2.33% (1)
Vision challenges	5.92% (47)	9.30% (4)
Hearing challenges	6.68% (53)	0.00% (0)
Cognitive challenges	1.89% (15)	0.00% (0)
Prefer not to answer	2.52% (20)	9.30% (4)
Other	2.77% (22)	4.65% (2)

Open-Ended Responses (English Survey) – "Other" Challenges

Themes reported include:

- **Caregiving responsibilities** (e.g., for elderly parents, children with special needs)
- **Chronic health conditions** (e.g., CPAP use, oxygen, stroke recovery)
- **Mental health** (anxiety, PTSD, depression)
- **Mobility and accessibility barriers** (unable to walk far, overstimulation from light/sound)
- **Technology limitations** (e.g., "Facebook challenged," poor cell service)
- **Environmental stressors** (noisy or crowded spaces)

Quotes:

> *"Sensory sensitivities...sirens, hold music, bright lights can be painful."*
> *"Caretaker for bed-bound senior (mom) in stroke recovery."*
> *"Teen children are challenges that affect my daily activities."*

The Spanish-language survey reported fewer challenges overall — this may reflect actual differences, but could also indicate **underreporting due to stigma, survey fatigue, or cultural norms**.

Q8: Is your primary residence also used for any of the following?

Residence Use Type	🟦 English (n=807)	🔴 Spanish (n=43)
None of the above	96.16% (776)	88.37% (38)
Child daycare	0.62% (5)	4.65% (2)
Adult daycare	0.37% (3)	6.98% (3)
Foster home	0.50% (4)	0.00% (0)
Other	2.35% (19)	0.00% (0)

"Other" Uses (English Survey)

Responses point to a variety of multi-purpose uses, including:

- **Home-based businesses**:
  - "Work from home", "Small consulting business", "Home office, online therapist", "Horse boarding business", "Equine veterinary clinic"
- **Caregiving**:
  - "Parent caregiver", "Caregivers at home", "Disabled daughter who receives care in our home"
- **Community/animal support**:
  - "Pet care for others", "Feral cat community", "Youth camp"
- **Hobby/side projects**:
  - "Hobby shop", "Farm"

While most respondents did **not report alternate use** of their primary residence, a closer look reveals a **diverse range of informal and formal activities** happening at home — especially among English survey participants. These include:

- **Home-based work and telehealth**
- **Livestock and animal care**
- **In-home caregiving or medical support**

These uses can **significantly impact evacuation planning**, particularly for households responsible for:

- **Caring for vulnerable individuals**
- **Animal management**
- **Home-based medical or therapeutic services**

Spanish-language respondents reported slightly higher use of **adult or child daycare**, suggesting that further outreach to **multigenerational or caregiving households** may be beneficial.

Q9: How prepared do you feel in your ability to evacuate if a public emergency were to happen today?

Response Option	🟦 English (n=758)	🔴 Spanish (n=42)
Very prepared	99	5 (Muy preparado)
Somewhat prepared	450	9 (Algo preparado)
Not very prepared	167	9 (Poco preparado)
Not prepared at all	40	18 (No preparado)
I don't know / No sé	2	1

	VERY PREPARED	SOMEWHAT PREPARED	NOT VERY PREPARED	NOT PREPARED AT ALL	I DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	13.06% 99	59.37% 450	22.03% 167	5.28% 40	0.26% 2	758	2.20

	MUY PREPARADO	ALGO PREPARADO	POCO PREPARADO	NO PREPARADO	NO SÉ	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	11.90% 5	21.43% 9	21.43% 9	42.86% 18	2.38% 1	42	3.02

In the **English survey**, the majority felt **somewhat prepared** (59%), with 13% reporting they were **not prepared at all**.

In the **Spanish survey**, **43% (18 of 42)** said they were **not prepared at all**, which is more than **3× the English response rate** for the same option.

Q10: Which of the following describes your current situation if a public emergency were to occur?

Situation Description	🟦 English (n=751)	🔴 Spanish (n=40)
I need to rely on someone to evacuate	65	13 *(Necesito depender...)*
Others rely on me to evacuate	308	14 *(Otros dependen de mí)*
None of the above	378	13 *(Ninguna de las opciones anteriores)*

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ I need to rely on someone else for help to evacuate	8.66%	65
▼ Others rely on me to help them evacuate	41.01%	308
▼ None of the above	50.33%	378
TOTAL		751

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Necesito depender de alguien más para que me ayude a evacuar	32.50%	13
▼ Otros dependen de mí para ayudarlos a evacuar	35.00%	14
▼ Ninguna de las opciones anteriores	32.50%	13
TOTAL		40

Over **40% of English respondents** said **others rely on them** to evacuate — a key indicator of **caregiving or leadership roles** in households.

In the **Spanish survey**, the split was more even:

- **33%** need help evacuating
- **35%** are relied upon by others
- **33%** selected "none of the above"

This suggests that both groups include individuals in **dual-risk households** — where some residents need help, while others carry responsibility.

Q11: Are there barriers (e.g., transportation, safety, or language) that might prevent you from evacuating or accessing emergency info?

This question was **open-ended**, meaning responses were varied and qualitative. From the 875 English and 43 Spanish survey responses.

Common Themes from English Responses:

- **Transportation barriers**
  "One way road with no optional exits"
  "No car and no family in the area"

- **Internet or phone service issues**
  "Unreliable internet", "Black hole for cell service"

- **Disability or mobility limitations**
  "Cannot drive, disabled adult child at home"

- **Caregiver dependencies**
  "My mom is on oxygen – need help loading supplies"
  "I'm responsible for elderly parents and pets"

- **Communication delays & confusion**
  "Unsure where the rest of the family is"
  "Need better notifications, in real-time"

Spanish Responses:

Most responses in the Spanish dataset were left **blank** or were **general statements**, such as:

- *"No tengo transportación"* (I don't have transportation)
- *"Barreras del idioma"* (Language barriers)
- *"Falta de información clara"* (Lack of clear information)

Barriers exist in **both communities**, but the **type and frequency differ**:

- English respondents offered **rich, situational detail**, especially related to **caregiving, rural infrastructure, and mobility limitations**.
- Spanish-speaking respondents pointed to more **structural barriers** like **lack of transportation and language access** — highlighting the need for **culturally tailored communication strategies**.

Q12: Which platforms do you currently use to find information?

Platform	🔵 English (n=759)	🔴 Spanish (n=41)
Mobile news	68.91% (523)	58.54% (24)
Television news	51.78% (393)	65.85% (27)
Weather apps	67.33% (511)	34.15% (14)
Facebook	60.87% (462)	48.78% (20)
Word of mouth	47.56% (361)	36.59% (15)
Radio	40.58% (308)	56.10% (23)
YouTube	17.79% (135)	29.27% (12)
Map apps	28.19% (214)	17.07% (7)

English Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Mobile news	68.91%	523
▼ Television news	51.78%	393
▼ Public television	0.00%	0
▼ Radio	40.58%	308
▼ Facebook	60.87%	462
▼ Instagram	27.54%	209
▼ X (formerly Twitter)	8.30%	63
▼ Threads	3.29%	25
▼ Snapchat	2.11%	16
▼ Nextdoor	23.45%	178
▼ WhatsApp	3.29%	25
▼ TikTok	8.30%	63
▼ YouTube	17.79%	135
▼ Reddit	7.77%	59
▼ FEMA app	7.11%	54
▼ Weather apps	67.33%	511
▼ Map apps	28.19%	214
▼ MyShake	7.77%	59
▼ Watch Duty	24.64%	187
▼ Discord	1.71%	13
▼ Faith-based organization newsletter	2.50%	19
▼ Clackamas County newsletter	23.06%	175
▼ Clackamas County website	25.82%	196
▼ Newsletter	4.87%	37
▼ Billboards/signs	5.93%	45
▼ Word of mouth	47.56%	361
▼ Other	9.88%	75
Total Respondents: 759		

Spanish Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Noticias de televisión	65.85%	27
Noticias en dispositivos móviles	58.54%	24
Radio	56.10%	23
Facebook	48.78%	20
De boca en boca	36.59%	15
Aplicaciones meteorológicas	34.15%	14
YouTube	29.27%	12
Instagram	24.39%	10
WhatsApp	21.95%	9
TikTok	19.51%	8
Aplicaciones de mapas	17.07%	7
Boletín del Condado de Clackamas	17.07%	7
Snapchat	14.63%	6
Boletín de organización religiosa	14.63%	6
Sitio web del Condado de Clackamas	12.20%	5
Aplicación FEMA	7.32%	3
X (anteriormente Twitter)	4.88%	2
Reddit	2.44%	1
Boletín	2.44%	1
Threads	0.00%	0
Nextdoor	0.00%	0
MyShake	0.00%	0
Watch Duty	0.00%	0
Discord	0.00%	0
Cartel publicitario/letreros	0.00%	0
Otro	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 41		

- **Spanish-speaking respondents** favored **television (66%)**, **radio (56%)**, and **Facebook (49%)** — platforms that are passive, familiar, and accessible regardless of digital literacy.

- **English-speaking respondents** showed high use of **weather apps (67%)**, **mobile news (69%)**, and **Facebook (61%)**, along with diverse online platforms like **Nextdoor**, **Reddit**, and **YouTube**.

This highlights two clear trends:

1. **Digital diversity** is broader among English speakers — indicating higher comfort navigating online sources.

2. **Trusted, familiar, and accessible sources** (TV, radio, word of mouth) remain crucial for Spanish-speaking communities.

Public alert systems should consider prioritizingng **multi-platform redundancy**, with extra attention to **radio, Spanish-language TV, and culturally familiar digital channels** for equitable emergency information delivery.

Q13: In the case of a public emergency, what is your preferred method of communication?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
PublicAlerts (automated messages to your mobile phone/device)	85.97% 576	3.58% 24	1.19% 8	0.15% 1	2.24% 15	6.87% 46	670	1.50
News (online or television)	4.62% 27	38.18% 223	22.09% 129	15.75% 92	13.01% 76	6.34% 37	584	3.13
Clackamas County website	2.31% 13	14.21% 80	21.14% 119	23.80% 134	20.96% 118	17.58% 99	563	4.00
Radio	4.44% 26	15.02% 88	23.04% 135	22.53% 132	18.26% 107	16.72% 98	586	3.85
Social media	6.28% 37	19.69% 116	20.71% 122	17.66% 104	18.17% 107	17.49% 103	589	3.74
Word of mouth (call, text, in person from someone you know)	7.05% 45	17.40% 111	16.77% 107	18.34% 117	20.85% 133	19.59% 125	638	3.87

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Radio	0.00% 0	20.00% 2	10.00% 1	30.00% 3	10.00% 1	30.00% 3	10	4.20
Redes sociales	12.50% 2	6.25% 1	37.50% 6	12.50% 2	18.75% 3	12.50% 2	16	3.56
De boca en boca (llamada, mensaje de texto o en persona de alguien que conoce)	14.29% 2	14.29% 2	14.29% 2	35.71% 5	7.14% 1	14.29% 2	14	3.50
Sitio web del Condado de Clackamas	13.33% 2	40.00% 6	13.33% 2	6.67% 1	13.33% 2	13.33% 2	15	3.07
Noticias (en línea o por televisión)	23.81% 5	33.33% 7	28.57% 6	9.52% 2	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	21	2.38
PublicAlerts (mensajes automatizados a su teléfono/dispositivo móvil)	85.29% 29	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.82% 3	2.94% 1	34	1.53

Both groups **overwhelmingly prefer PublicAlerts** — the automated mobile/text alert system — as their **#1 communication method** in emergencies:

- 86% of English respondents

- 85% of Spanish respondents

Other notable observations:

- Spanish-speaking participants showed a **higher preference for traditional media (TV/news)** and **word of mouth**, while English respondents leaned more toward **weather apps** and **digital alerts**.

This strongly supports prioritizing **mobile-based alert systems** but also suggests a need for **secondary methods** (TV, trusted messengers, Community-Based Organizations) to ensure no one is missed.

The **Clackamas County website** is valued as a **backup or supplemental source** — particularly in the Spanish-language group, where it's slightly more trusted.

Q14: How likely are you to check your mobile device for updates during a public emergency?

Response Option	🔵 English Survey	🔴 Spanish Survey
Very likely	697	34 *(Muy probable)*
Somewhat likely	46	4 *(Algo probable)*
Not very likely	7	—
Not likely at all	4	2 *(Nada probable)*
I don't know	2	—

98% of English respondents said they are either "very" or "somewhat" likely to check their mobile device.

95% of Spanish respondents said the same, with **"Muy probable" (Very likely)** dominating.

This further validates that **mobile alerts are a reliable communication channel across language groups**.

Q15: Are you currently signed up to receive local public emergency alerts (PublicAlerts)?

Response Option	🔵 English Survey	🔴 Spanish Survey
Yes / Sí	601	20
No	20	14
I don't know / No sé	137	7

English respondents:

- 76% are signed up for PublicAlerts
- 17% don't know
- Only 2.5% said no

Spanish respondents:

- 47% are signed up
- 33% said no
- 17% don't know

This reveals a **significant awareness gap**:

- Spanish-speaking residents are **less likely to be signed up**, and more likely to say **"No" or "I don't know."**
- English-speaking respondents show higher enrollment, but confusion still exists among 1 in 6.

Recommendation:

- **Clearer outreach in Spanish**, including visuals and step-by-step instructions.

Q16: What kind of emergency preparedness tools and resources would be most helpful to you?

Resource	English	Spanish
Emergency kits	28.07% (169)	38.46% (5)

Information on one web page	18.46% (113)	27.27% (3)
Checklists or booklets	17.38% (102)	0%
Preparedness mobile app	15.99% (94)	12.5% (1)
Online tutorials	11.76% (64)	5.88% (1)
Workshops or classes	10.83% (59)	71.88% (23)
Emergency preparedness events	9.65% (53)	35.71% (5)
Q&A sessions with disaster management professionals	5.97% (33)	0%

English Survey

Respondents favor **practical, tangible resources** like:

- Emergency kits
- Checklists/booklets
- A central web page

Workshops and in-person events ranked **lower overall**.

Spanish Survey

A clear **preference for in-person learning experiences**:

- 72% chose *"Workshops or classes"* as most helpful
- 36% also selected *"Preparedness events"*

Lower engagement with digital formats like tutorials or apps

Q17: What would make it easier for you to attend an emergency preparedness class, workshop or event?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Translation or interpretation services	0.77%	5
▼ Childcare provided	9.10%	59
▼ If it is no cost to me	72.22%	468
▼ Dinner or lunch provided	19.44%	126
▼ Other	Responses 24.54%	159
Total Respondents: 648		

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ Servicios de traducción o interpretación		66.67%	26
▼ Cuidado de niños disponible		35.90%	14
▼ Si no tiene ningún costo para mí		61.54%	24
▼ Cena o almuerzo incluido		28.21%	11
▼ Otro	Responses	5.13%	2
Total Respondents: 39			

Common themes across responses include:

Schedule-related barriers

- "If it's outside work hours" / "Evenings or weekends only"
- "Give enough advance notice to plan ahead"
- "Multiple dates and times would help"
- "If I can Zoom it" / "Prefer online class" / "Livestream"

Location and access

- "Nearby my home" / "In my community" / "At the library"
- "At a park" / "Local fire station" / "With easy parking"
- "Accessible for mobility issues"

Format and expectations

- "Short format, 45 minutes max"
- "Sensory-friendly environment"
- "Needs to feel useful — not basic info"
- "More hands-on, or real-world examples"
- "Involve teens and young adults"
- "Family-friendly format" or "Snacks always help"

Disinterest or limitations

- "I wouldn't attend" / "Not interested"
- "Prefer reading or online resources"
- "Not worth time or money"
- "No time to take a class"

Spanish-speaking respondents most frequently need:

- Translation support (67%)
- Childcare (36%)
- No-cost attendance (62%)

English-speaking respondents prioritize:

- Free access (72%)
- Convenient timing and location
- Online/virtual flexibility
- Clear communication and sufficient notice

Q18: How important is it to be prepared for a public emergency?

Response Option	🔵 English Survey	🔴 Spanish Survey
Very important	574	38 *(Muy importante)*
Important	158	2 *(Importante)*
Moderately important	20	1 *(Moderadamente importante)*
Slightly important	3	—
Not important at all	2	1 *(Nada importante)*

An overwhelming majority of both groups agree that being prepared is either **"very important" or "important"**:

- **92% of English respondents** selected "Very important"
- **97% of Spanish respondents** selected "Muy importante" or "Importante"

This shared perspective provides a strong foundation for emergency preparedness campaigns, as both groups **value the topic highly** — even if their **barriers and needs differ**.

Q19: Have you ever been asked to evacuate due to a public emergency?

Response	🔵 English Survey	🔴 Spanish Survey
Yes / Sí	378	27
No	384	15

English responses were evenly split — **50% have experienced an evacuation**.

In the Spanish group, **69% have been asked to evacuate**, a notably higher rate.

This suggests Spanish-speaking residents may have more **first-hand experience with evacuations**, possibly due to:

- Living in **higher-risk areas**
- Facing **disproportionate impacts** from natural disasters or emergencies

Q20: Is there something you wish Clackamas County had done differently during the evacuation?

Response	🔵 English Survey (n=342)	🔴 Spanish Survey (n=19)
Yes / Sí	43% (147)	63% (12)
No	51% (173)	37% (7)
Prefer not to comment	6% (22)	0%

Common Themes from English Comments (Summarized from 100+ responses)

Traffic and Evacuation Routes

- Gridlock, bottlenecks, lack of traffic direction
- Not enough exits or alternative routes (esp. Oregon City, Molalla, Holcomb)
- Suggestion for staggered evacuation zones
- Law enforcement or public works needed at intersections

Delayed or Confusing Communication

- Mixed signals from different agencies
- Inconsistent evacuation maps
- No timely alerts for some residents
- Lack of multilingual messaging
- Reliance on social media over official alerts

Lack of Planning & Shelter Info

- No clear instructions on where to go
- No access to food/water/shelter
- Residents left to rely on neighbors or guess

Security and Safety Concerns

- Looting after homes were marked
- Concern about public visibility of evacuations
- Private citizens with guns blocking roads

Accessibility and Equity Gaps

- No help for seniors or disabled individuals
- No shelter info for people with special needs
- Concerns about those without transportation or tech access

A significant number of both English (43%) and Spanish (63%) respondents felt **the County could have improved its evacuation response**.

The most common frustrations revolve around **traffic congestion, lack of timely alerts, and missing support infrastructure** (food, shelter, instructions).

Comments also show that residents **want clarity, coordination, and compassion** — especially when they're vulnerable, isolated, or facing fast-moving events.

Q21: Regarding the time you were asked to evacuate due to a public emergency, is there something you wish you had done differently?

Response Option	🔵 English Survey (n=352)	🔴 Spanish Survey (n=2)
Yes / Sí	45% (158)	100% (2)
No	52% (182)	0%
Prefer not to comment	3% (12)	0%

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	44.89%	158
No	51.70%	182
Prefer not to comment	3.41%	12
TOTAL		352

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sí	100.00%	2
No	0.00%	0
Prefiero no contestar	0.00%	0
TOTAL		2

Themes from Open-Ended Responses

Preparedness Gaps

- "Wish I had a go-bag ready"
- "Should have had emergency kits, backup supplies"
- "Didn't have my documents organized or backed up"
- "Didn't know where to go or what to bring"

Timing

- "Left too late and got stuck in traffic"
- "Should have packed earlier"
- "Waited too long out of denial or panic"

Packing Lessons

- "Brought too much stuff we didn't need"
- "Forgot things like meds, pet supplies, documents"
- "Didn't have a checklist, it was chaos"

Mental and Emotional Readiness

- "Panicked and stressed my kids out"
- "Wasn't thinking clearly, wasted time"
- "Didn't believe it would really happen"

Caregiving and Livestock Considerations

- "Didn't have a plan for our livestock"
- "Had trouble with kids with disabilities"
- "Didn't check on neighbors or help others evacuate"

Spanish Comments (Translated)

- *"Estar preparada para evacuar"* – To be prepared to evacuate
- *"Tener un plan y haber tomado una clase"* – To have a plan and take a class
  These reinforce the same themes around preparation and planning.

Nearly **half of all respondents**, and **all Spanish-speaking respondents who answered**, wish they had done something differently — especially around:

- **Preparation**
- **Decision-making under pressure**
- **Organization and clarity**

Q22: What things were helpful during the evacuation?

Top Themes from English Survey (Hundreds of comments)

Theme Example Quotes
Timely alerts (text, mobile, public alerts)
"Texted updates were helpful"
"PublicAlerts worked great"

Access to updated information
"The map system was a lifeline"
"News told me what to do"
Pre-preparation (go-bags, plans)
"We had our trailer packed"
"Having gas, documents, cash, and pet crates ready"

Support from neighbors/community
"My neighbors really stepped up"
"Community helped evacuate livestock"

Clear evacuation levels & instructions
"The level system helped"
"Wind maps, Level 1-2-3 system"

Resources for pets & livestock
"Local humane society took pets"
"Cowgirl 911 helped with livestock"

Emergency responders or law enforcement presence
"Sheriff knocking on doors helped"
"Police directing traffic"

Social media & local info hubs
"Facebook pages saved us"
"Livestock help via social"

Having a safe place to go
"We went to a son's house"
"Charbonneau campground hosted us"

Evacuation success depended on:

- **Preparation (go-bags, plans, gas, pet kits)**
- **Access to trustworthy, timely updates** (texts, maps, community channels)
- **Community support** (neighbors, local responders, volunteers)
- **Mobile-friendly and multilingual communication tools**

Q23: In the event of an evacuation notice, are you aware of multiple routes to leave your neighborhood/community?

Response	🔵 English Survey	🔴 Spanish Survey
Yes / Sí	624	13
No	105	10

86% of English respondents said "Yes," while
57% of Spanish respondents said "Sí" (Yes), and **43% said "No"**
This shows a **notable gap in evacuation route awareness** among Spanish-speaking residents.

Q24: How strongly do you agree with the following statements about Clackamas County's role during a public emergency?

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
It is the county's responsibility to issue public alerts during a public emergency.	87.19% 640	10.76% 79	1.77% 13	0.14% 1	0.14% 1	734	1.15
It is the county's responsibility to provide clear evacuation routes during a public emergency.	72.40% 530	18.99% 139	7.65% 56	0.82% 6	0.14% 1	732	1.37
It is the county's responsibility to provide timely updates throughout a public emergency.	84.27% 616	13.95% 102	1.64% 12	0.14% 1	0.00% 0	731	1.18
It is the county's responsibility to protect property during a public emergency.	29.78% 218	31.01% 227	31.69% 232	5.87% 43	1.64% 12	732	2.19
It is the county's responsibility to provide power stations for the public during a public emergency.	28.77% 210	29.59% 216	32.60% 238	6.99% 51	2.05% 15	730	2.24
It is the county's responsibility to provide alternative shelter if needed during a public emergency.	39.81% 289	35.12% 255	20.25% 147	4.13% 30	0.69% 5	726	1.91

	TOTALMENTE DE ACUERDO	DE ACUERDO	NI DE ACUERDO NI EN DESACUERDO	EN DESACUERDO	TOTALMENTE EN DESACUERDO	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
▼ Es responsabilidad del condado emitir alertas públicas durante una emergencia pública.	90.24% 37	4.88% 2	4.88% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	41	1.15
▼ Es responsabilidad del condado proporcionar rutas de evacuación claras durante una emergencia pública.	74.36% 29	25.64% 10	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	39	1.26
▼ Es responsabilidad del condado proporcionar actualizaciones oportunas durante una emergencia pública.	72.50% 29	22.50% 9	5.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40	1.32
▼ Es responsabilidad del condado proporcionar refugio alternativo si es necesario durante una emergencia pública.	75.00% 30	17.50% 7	5.00% 2	0.00% 0	2.50% 1	40	1.38
▼ Es responsabilidad del condado proporcionar estaciones de energía para el público durante una emergencia pública.	72.50% 29	10.00% 4	15.00% 6	2.50% 1	0.00% 0	40	1.48
▼ Es responsabilidad del condado proteger la propiedad durante una emergencia pública.	46.15% 18	33.33% 13	10.26% 4	10.26% 4	0.00% 0	39	1.85

Both groups **strongly agree that the County should:**

● Issue public alerts
● Provide timely updates
● Offer clear evacuation routes

However, there are notable differences in expectations when it comes to:

- **Providing shelter & power stations:**
  - Spanish-speaking respondents rated these **much more important** (likely reflecting vulnerability and access concerns)
- **Protecting property:**
  - Seen as **less central** by both groups, especially the English-speaking respondents (only 30% strongly agree)

Q25: Your personal role in emergency preparedness?

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
It is my responsibility to review emergency preparation tools before an emergency occurs.	84.64% 617	14.81% 108	0.55% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	729
It is my responsibility to be aware of multiple routes to leave my neighborhood/community in the case of an evacuation.	80.03% 585	17.65% 129	1.09% 8	0.82% 6	0.41% 3	731
It is my responsibility to sign up for public alerts.	78.88% 575	17.28% 126	2.61% 19	0.96% 7	0.27% 2	729
It is my responsibility to prepare a bag in the case of an evacuation.	80.08% 583	17.99% 131	1.65% 12	0.14% 1	0.14% 1	728

	TOTALMENTE DE ACUERDO	DE ACUERDO	NI DE ACUERDO NI EN DESACUERDO	EN DESACUERDO	TOTALMENTE EN DESACUERDO	TOTAL
Es mi responsabilidad preparar una mochila en caso de una evacuación.	77.50% 31	17.50% 7	5.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40
Es mi responsabilidad conocer varias rutas para salir de mi vecindario o comunidad en caso de una evacuación.	80.49% 33	17.07% 7	2.44% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	41
Es mi responsabilidad inscribirme para recibir alertas públicas.	68.29% 28	19.51% 8	9.76% 4	2.44% 1	0.00% 0	41
Es mi responsabilidad conocer los recursos de preparación para emergencias antes de que ocurra una emergencia.	73.81% 31	26.19% 11	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42

English respondents agree or strongly agree that they have a **personal responsibility to prepare**.

Spanish respondents also agree they have a **personal responsibility to prepare.**

Q26: Please provide additional information on anything you feel is important for Clackamas County to know.

Evacuation Routes & Traffic Infrastructure (most mentioned topic)

- Over 100+ mentions of traffic bottlenecks, single-road exits, and congestion
- Specific areas repeatedly cited: Oregon City, Holcomb Blvd, 213, South End Rd, Redland Rd, Marmot Rd, Hwy 26

Communication & Alerts

Requests for:

- **More frequent, consistent, and multi-channel updates**
- Backups for **cellular and internet failures**
- Public signage, mailers, or analog options for non-tech users
- **Push notifications** instead of opt-in systems

Confusion over **inconsistent evacuation notifications** in 2020

Preparedness for Vulnerable Populations

Frequent mentions of:

- Seniors, disabled individuals, and people with chronic conditions
- **Pets and livestock evacuation needs**
- Need for **community-wide "neighbor check-ins"**
- Concerns that **go-bags and emergency kits are unaffordable** for some families

Desire for Localized Preparedness Resources

Suggestions for:

- **Refuges/shelters in every community**
- Go-bag supply kits sold **at-cost**
- Multilingual and neighborhood-specific outreach
- CERT-like programs expanded to unincorporated areas
- Workshops in partnership with **schools, churches, HOAs, and fire stations**

Personal Reflections & Gratitude

- Dozens thanked the County and said **"communication is the most important thing"**
- Many shared detailed personal evacuation experiences from 2020 fires or recent storms

Equity in Communication

- Call for emergency updates in multiple languages
- Emphasis on the need to reach undocumented or marginalized residents
    - *"Por favor en una emergencia ofrezcan a todas las personas aunque sean indocumentadas."*
    "Please, in an emergency, offer help to everyone, even if they are undocumented."
- Requests for more classes and workshops in Spanish