



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

CASPER - FAQs

Why are you doing a survey?

Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) wants to know how well county residents are prepared for a variety of emergencies. To find out, FCHD will be conducting a survey called a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) in a representative sampling of neighborhoods. Staff and volunteers will be going door-to-door on June 4 & 5, 2016 asking residents to participate in the anonymous survey. This information will be critical in improving our planning efforts and understanding how best to respond in times of emergency to meet our community's needs.

What is a CASPER and why is it called that?

CASPER stands for Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response. CASPER was developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a survey tool for local, regional, state and federal health officials to use in rapidly assessing community needs during and after a disaster. Public health departments have also used the tool to assess the community's level of preparedness for a variety of emergencies by asking about personal and household preparedness.

How will you choose the neighborhoods and households?

CASPER uses a validated cluster sampling methodology to collect information at the household level that can then be extrapolated to the entire county. For this CASPER, we are using a two-stage cluster sampling method in which 45 clusters, or census tracts, are selected and then seven interviews are completed in each of the 45 clusters. The interview teams are provided with detailed maps of each selected cluster and instructed to randomly select the housing units for the seven interviews in each cluster. The goal is to complete 315 interviews within the assessment area, and the data collected are then analyzed to generate estimates.

How long will it take?

Each survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete and includes about 50 questions.

What kind of questions will you ask?

The survey will include questions on the household and the people who live there, as well as questions about their knowledge of emergencies and disease threats and their personal and family preparedness. Some of the questions include: do you have an emergency supply kit; do you have a working generator and carbon monoxide detector; would you be able to evacuate in the event of a large-scale disaster; and if you have pets, do you have supplies and a plan for what to do with your pets during an evacuation?

Who will be asking the questions?

Small teams comprised of Fairfax County Health Department staff, Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers, and American Red Cross volunteers will be conducting the surveys.

How do I know this is legitimate?

Volunteers and staff will be wearing red vests and will have Fairfax County, MRC, or American Red Cross identification. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the Fairfax County Health Department at 703-246-8610, TTY 711.

Is it voluntary?

Yes, the survey is voluntary. While we appreciate and encourage your participation, nothing will happen to you or your household if you choose not to participate.

Is it okay to skip questions if I'm not comfortable answering?

Yes, you have the right to decline to answer any or the questions. You can also stop participating at any time.

Do I get something for participating?

By participating, you are helping to make Fairfax County better prepared for emergencies. The information gathered in the surveys will help inform our county's emergency planning efforts and help us to anticipate and respond to the community's needs in times of disaster.

How will you protect my identity and my personal information?

The survey is anonymous and no personally identifying information will be collected. Respondents will not be asked give their names and when the CASPER is complete, the addresses will not be linked to specific questionnaires.

How will I get the results of the survey?

A summary report will be made available at a later date. The Health Department will announce the availability of the report through the local news media and on our website www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions about this survey, call the Fairfax County Health Department at 703-246-8610, TTY 711.

Sources:

CDC CASPER <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

CDC CASPER Toolkit: http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/surveillance/pdf/CASPER_Toolkit_Version_2_0_508_Compliant.pdf