



Are we prepared for an earthquake?

The earthquake in Christchurch in February 2011, was a salutary reminder that New Zealand will, from time to time, experience a disastrous earthquake. What is perhaps less well known is that there is no place in New Zealand that is immune from this threat. The earthquake in Japan reminded us, not only of the earthquake risk, but also of the threat that a tsunami may pose when an earthquake strikes.

No doubt many people have been examining the state of their own earthquake preparedness. Research New Zealand decided to find out whether the earthquake in Christchurch had prompted people to get, or upgrade, an existing earthquake survival kit.

It should be noted that because of the earthquake, and the dislocation it has caused, we did not interview in Christchurch. The poll therefore represents the thinking of New Zealanders who live outside the region most affected by the earthquake.

Key findings:

It is significant that **48 percent of New Zealand households do not** have an earthquake survival kit at home.

The earthquake did affect earthquake preparedness. Some **18 percent of households obtained** or put together an earthquake survival kit as a result of the Canterbury Earthquake.

Detailed findings:

Almost half, 48 percent, of New Zealand households do not have an earthquake survival kit at home. This may, of course, be because they judge the risk of an earthquake to be low. This would seem to be the case, because whether one has an earthquake survival kit is very much influenced by region.

In the Lower or Central North Island earthquake preparedness is particularly high in that only 30 percent of households do **not** have an earthquake survival kit. In the Upper North Island 59 percent of households do **not** have an earthquake survival kit and in the South Island some 43 percent of homes do **not** have an earthquake survival kit. The young, those in the 15–34 year age group, are particularly prone to neglect such matters since 55 percent of their households do not have an earthquake survival kit.

The Canterbury Earthquake did have an effect on earthquake preparedness in households in that some 18 percent of households have put together an earthquake



survival kit, while 28 percent have checked or updated an existing earthquake survival kit as a result of the earthquake.

There were no significant differences when it comes to ethnicity or income.

The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone on 21—30 March 2011. The maximum margin of error for the sample as a whole is +/- 4.7 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation, but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

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Table 1: Earthquake preparedness

As a result of the Christchurch earthquake, have you and your family or household...?

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	500	250	250
	%	%	%
Obtained or put together an earthquake survival kit	18	17	18
Checked or updated an existing earthquake kit	28	27	29
Or do you not have an earthquake survival kit at home	48	45	50
Already had a kit, but have not checked or updated it	9	13	5
Don't know/no response	1	1	1

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

Table 2: Earthquake preparedness

As a result of the Christchurch earthquake, have you and your family or household...?

	Total	15-34 years	35 to 54 years	55 years and over
Base =	500	113	165	222
	%	%	%	%
Obtained or put together an earthquake survival kit	18	20	19	12
Checked or updated an existing earthquake kit	28	21	32	31
Or do you not have an earthquake survival kit at home	48	55	44	44
Already had a kit, but have not checked or updated it	9	7	7	13
Don't know/no response	1	1	1	1

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

Table 3: Earthquake preparedness

As a result of the Christchurch earthquake, have you and your family or household...?

	Total	NZ European/Pakeha	Maori/Pacific	Other
Base =	500	372	52	76
	%	%	%	%
Obtained or put together an earthquake survival kit	18	17	23	17
Checked or updated an existing earthquake kit	28	31	25	17
Or do you not have an earthquake survival kit at home	48	46	41	59
Already had a kit, but have not checked or updated it	9	9	8	7
Don't know/no response	1	0	4	0

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.



Table 4: Earthquake preparedness

As a result of the Christchurch earthquake, have you and your family or household...?

	Total	Upper North Island	Lower/Central North Island	South Island
Base =	500	266	148	86
	%	%	%	%
Obtained or put together an earthquake survival kit	18	16	21	15
Checked or updated an existing earthquake kit	28	19	43	29
Or do you not have an earthquake survival kit at home	48	59	30	43
Already had a kit, but have not checked or updated it	9	7	10	14
Don't know/no response	1	1	1	0

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

Table 5: Earthquake preparedness

As a result of the Christchurch earthquake, have you and your family or household...?

	Total	Under \$40,000	At least \$40,000 but less than \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Don't know/refused
Base =	500	206	140	138	16**
	%	%	%	%	%
Obtained or put together an earthquake survival kit	18	15	18	21	12
Checked or updated an existing earthquake kit	28	30	29	26	8
Or do you not have an earthquake survival kit at home	48	49	42	51	58
Already had a kit, but have not checked or updated it	9	8	13	6	5
Don't know/no response	1	1	0	0	17

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

**Caution: low base number of respondents - results are indicative only.

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