

Making Research Accessible: DRCit! Approach to Sharing Disaster Social Science



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
DISASTER RESEARCH CENTER

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Objectives

Disaster research has successfully identified evidence-based findings, but scholarly articles are often complex and difficult to access. DRCit! takes scientifically informed findings and converts it to written products that emergency managers, the media, and the public can easily access and consume. Here, we highlight two modules: Unique aspects of disaster vulnerability experienced by renters and factors impacting hurricane evacuation compliance.

Methods

The process involves 1) identifying, in consultation with applied stakeholders, topics of interest to the emergency management community; 2) reviewing the literature; 3) consolidating the findings; 4) creating a theme summary, shorter topic summary, and bibliography for reference; 5) developing a script and design concept; 6) developing an easy-to-understand animated video for public dissemination.



Selected Findings

- Renters often face longer, deprioritized recovery
- Renters are dependent on landlords for mitigation action and are not eligible for the same kind of assistance post-disaster
- Affordable rental units often decline in availability
- Evacuation compliance is connected to demographic characteristics (perhaps related to risk perception and social roles), perception of hazard risk to their homes, resource availability, and concern about other aspects (e.g. loss of work), and influence of social/environmental cues (seeing neighbor activity or changing hazardous conditions)
- The timing, content, quality, and consistency of warning messages are critical when communicating disaster risk.

Watch the videos here!

Hurricane Evacuation Decision Making

Why people do or do not evacuate during a hurricane response

Understanding the reasons why individuals choose to evacuate or not is a complex issue that researchers have been studying for years. Our products highlight the most important and consistent findings within the hurricane evacuation decision making literature.

“DRC It!: Hurricane Evacuation Decision Making”

“DRC It!: What Challenges Do Renters Face When Disasters Strikes?”

Renters Challenges

What unique challenges do renters face when disaster strikes?

Renters face unique disaster-related challenges—whether in preparing for and mitigating impacts, or in responding to and recovering from disasters. Our products highlight important findings from the literature.

Business Recovery

What affects post-disaster business recovery?

Understanding the factors that influence why some businesses recover after a disaster and some do not is a complex issue that researchers have been studying for years. Our products highlight the most important and consistent findings within the business recovery after disaster literature.

“DRC It!: What Affects Post-Disaster Business Recovery?”

Risk Communication

How to improve risk communication during a public health crisis:

How does risk perception influence the way people respond to risk communication messages during a public health crisis and what factors should communicators take into account when crafting messages? Our products highlight important findings in the disaster literature.

“DRC It!: How To Improve Risk Communication During A Public Health Crisis”

Selected Tips for Future Practice

- Information should be given in multiple sources, channels, and languages
- Messages about hurricane threat should go out as soon as there is a credible threat
- Be specific: Tell people about the risk, what they should do to protect themselves, who to ask if they need help
- Consistently coordinate communication from official sources to avoid confusion.
- Build relationships and trust with communities before an event.
- Remind people to reach out to loved ones as well as those in their communities who might need help.



- Involve organizations representing renters in the planning process to reinforce tenant protections and incentivize resilient rental housing
- Implement expansive eligibility and streamlines processes for post-disaster rental assistance and provide multiple avenues for renters to access support
- Strengthen post-disaster rental opportunities and protections, like working with affordable housing providers and implement eviction bans and rental caps
- Develop outreach campaigns that specifically target renters
- Partner with local organizations to better understand and cater to vulnerable renters

Applications

- Accessible/digestible research-grounded resources for emergency managers and decision-makers.
- Source for journalists and other communicators to quickly glean accurate information after a disaster
- Resource for K-12 and college courses; distills & communicates research findings.

Learn more about the Disaster Research Center



Bibliographies

Hurricane Evacuation



Renters Challenges



Business Recovery



Risk Communication



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