


2015

# Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #5" Sea Level Rise Rise and Flooding

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University

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## Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #5

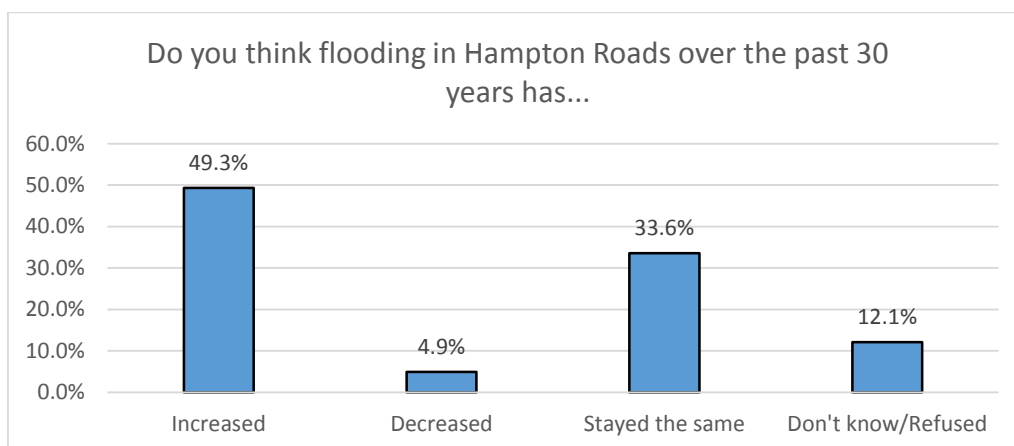
### Sea Level Rise and Flooding

*This report examines regional and sub-regional measures of environmental risk perceptions from the 2015 Life In Hampton Roads survey (LIHR 2015) conducted by the Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center. Data from prior years is also provided when available to show comparisons in responses over time. Responses were weighted by city population, race, age, gender, and phone usage (cell versus land-line) to be representative of the Hampton Roads region. For additional information on survey methodology, and analyses of other issues, please see the SSRC website at [www.odu.edu/ssrc](http://www.odu.edu/ssrc).*

The 2015 Life in Hampton Roads survey contained an extensive battery of questions to determine how people in Hampton Roads felt about several environmental issues, with a major focus on sea level rise and flooding to support the work of faculty affiliated with the ODU Mitigation and Adaptation Research Institute (MARI). The survey asked 883 respondents to give their opinion on a variety of questions ranging from sea level rise to prevalence of recurrent flooding and other flood related topics.

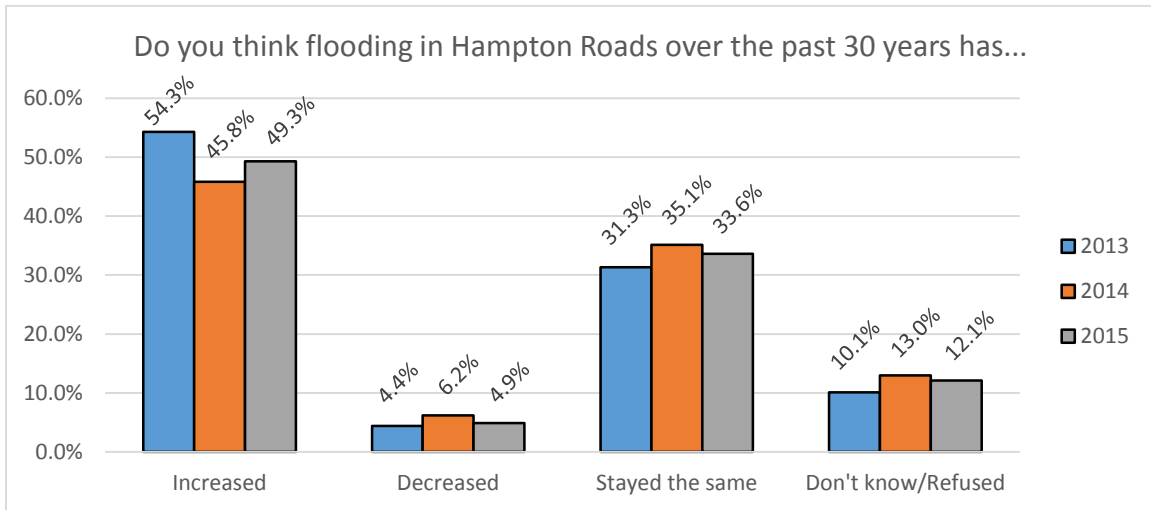
### Sea Level Rise, Flooding, and Flood Risks

Respondents were asked whether they believe that flooding in Hampton Roads has increased, decreased, or stayed the same in the past 30 years. The overwhelming majority of respondents (82.9%) stated that flooding has either increased (49.3%) or stayed the same (33.6%) in Hampton Roads over the past 30 years. Only 4.9 percent stated that flooding has decreased and 12.1 percent said that they did not know.

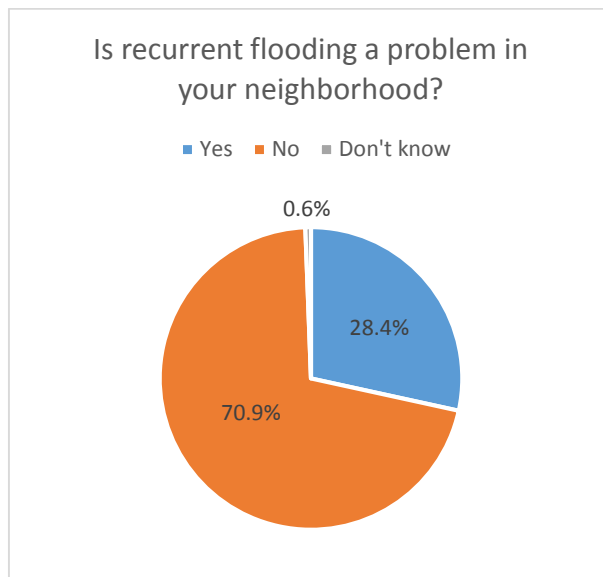


Comparing answers to the question “Do you think flooding in Hampton Roads over the past 30 years has increased, decreased, or stayed the same over time,” there are some considerable differences. In

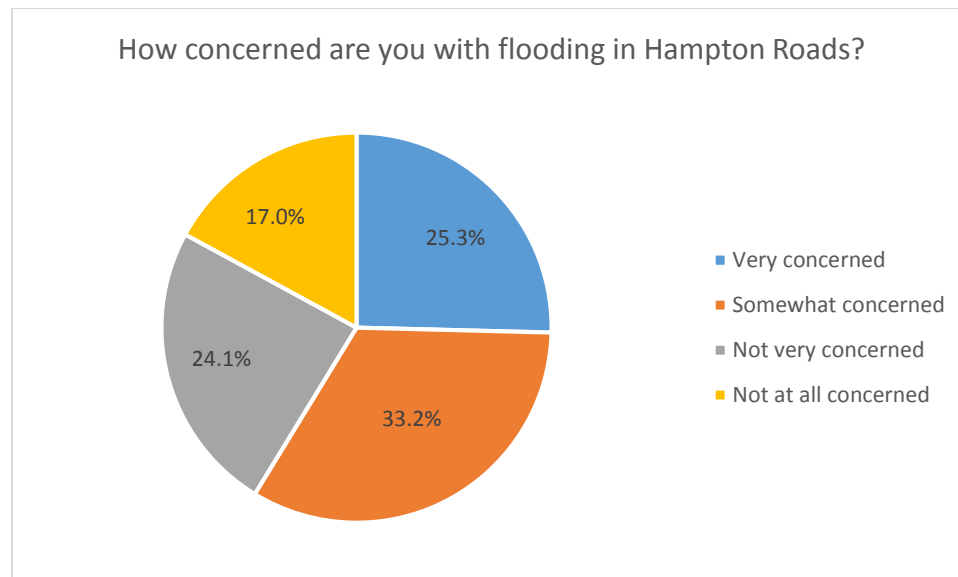
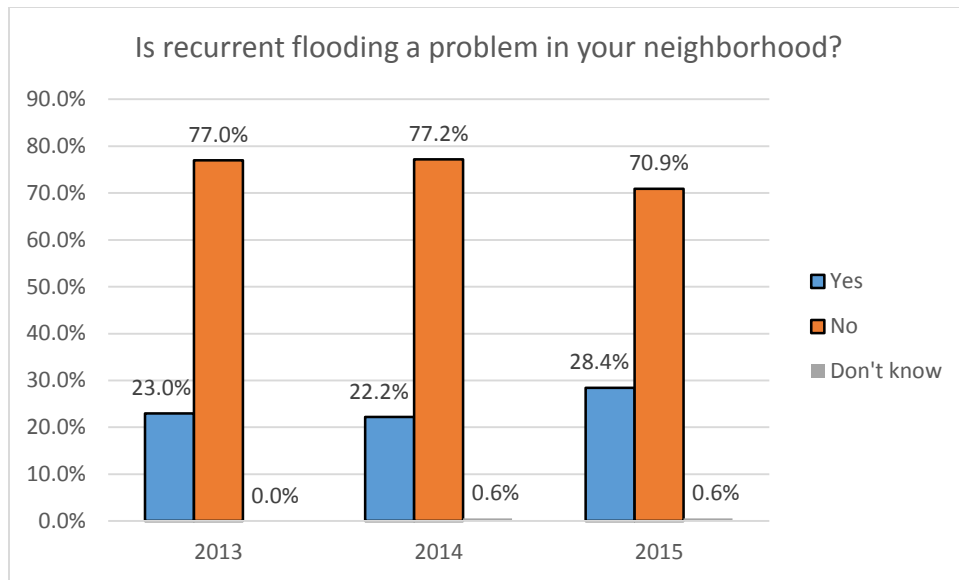
2013, 54.3 percent of respondents reported that they believe flooding had increased in Hampton Roads over the past 30 years. In 2014, that figure went down to 45.8 percent and in 2015 increased to 49.3 percent. Additionally, a slightly smaller percentage believed flooding has decreased in Hampton Roads over the past 30 years in 2015 (4.9%) compared to 2014 (6.2%). Over the last three years, the percentage of respondents was fairly consistent regarding flooding staying the same in Hampton Roads over the past 30 years (33.6% in 2015, 35.1% in 2014, and 31.2% in 2013).



Respondents were also asked whether or not recurrent flooding is a problem in their neighborhood. While 49.3 percent of respondents indicated that they think flooding has increased over the past 30 years, 70.9 percent reported that recurrent flooding is not a problem in their neighborhood.

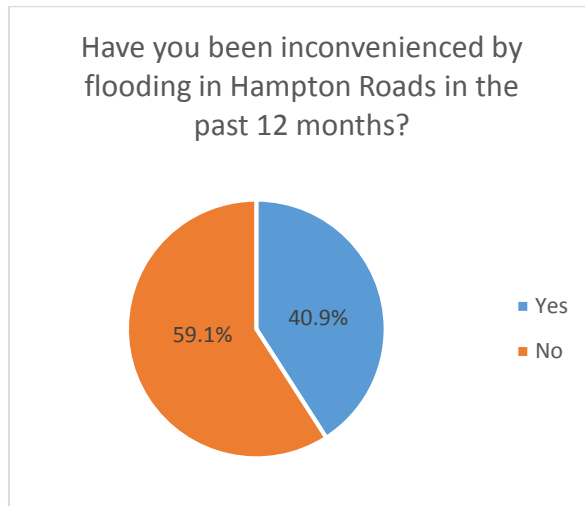


The percentage of Hampton Roads respondents reporting that recurring flooding is a problem in their neighborhood (28.4%) is the highest since 2013.

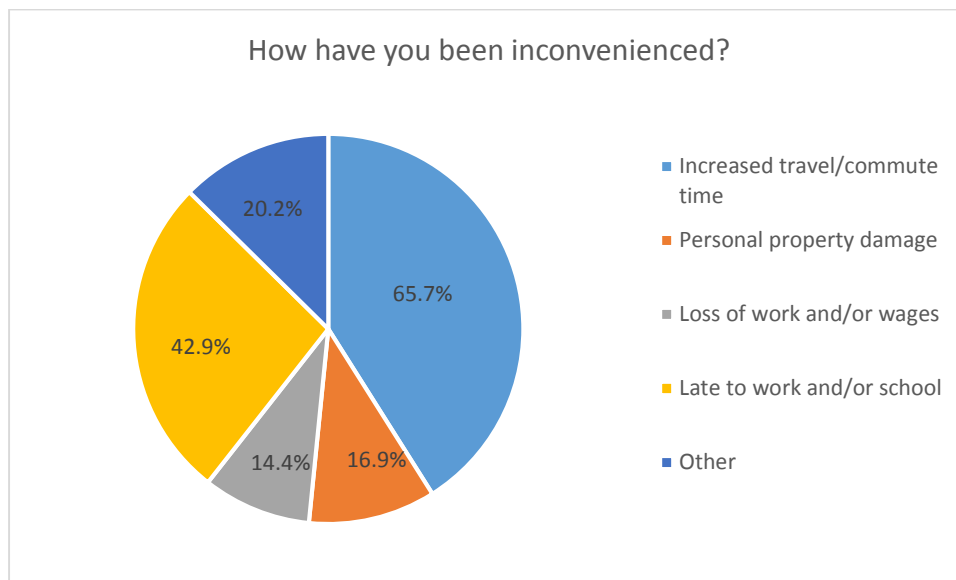


In 2015, respondents were asked “How concerned are you with flooding in Hampton Roads?” Over half of respondents (58.5%) reported that they were either very concerned (25.3%) or somewhat concerned (33.2%) with flooding in Hampton Roads. Conversely, 41.1 percent reported that they were either not at all concerned (17%) or not very concerned (24.1%) with flooding in Hampton Roads.

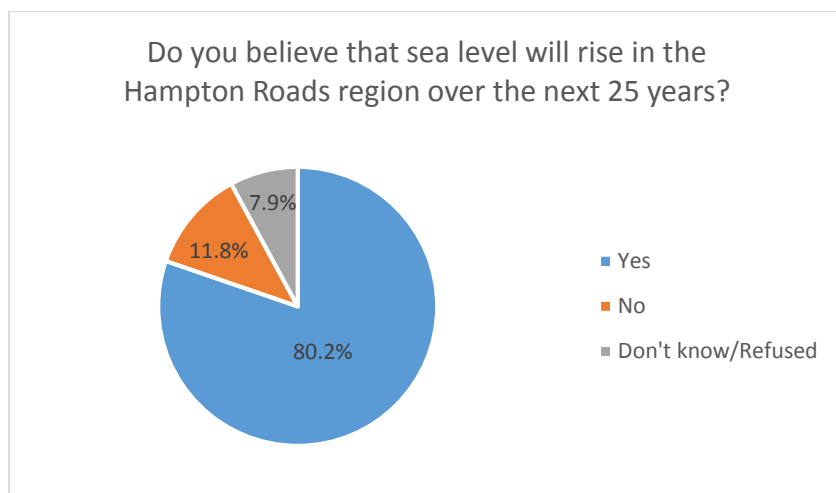
In addition, respondents were asked if they had been inconvenienced by flooding in the past 12 months. Although more than half of respondents reported not being inconvenienced by flooding (59.1%), another (40.9%) reported they were inconvenienced by flooding in some manner.



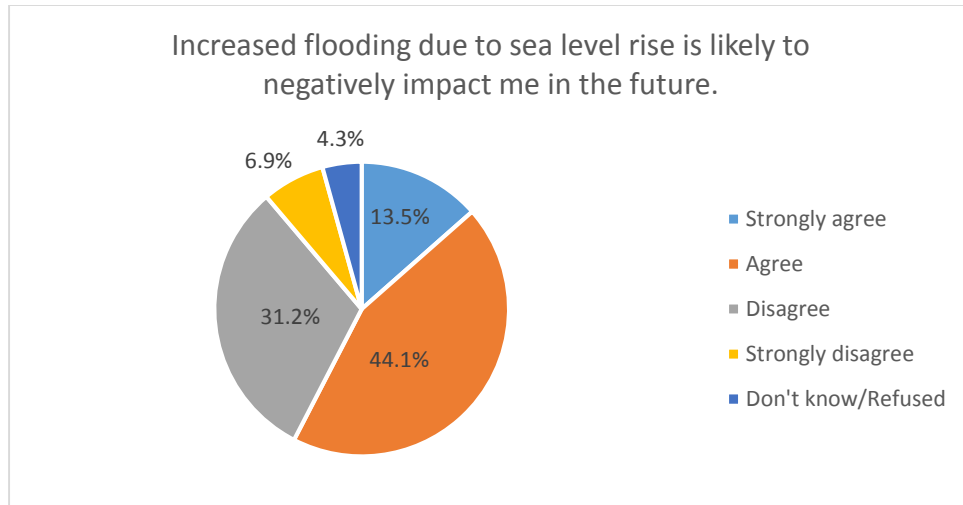
The majority of respondents who reported being inconvenienced reported increased travel/commute time due to flooding in Hampton Roads (65.7%), as well as being inconvenienced by being late to work and/or school (42.9%). To a lesser extent, respondents reported being inconvenienced by flooding through personal property damage (16.9%) and loss of work and/or wages (14.4%). Another 20.2 percent were inconvenienced in some other way by flooding in Hampton Roads.



Respondents were also asked if they believe that sea level will rise in the Hampton Roads region over the next 25 years. The majority of respondents (80.2%) reported they believe sea level will rise over the next 25 years, with 11.8 percent reported that they do not believe sea level will rise over the next 25 years, and another 7.9 percent refusing to answer or responding they do not know if sea level will rise over the next 25 years.

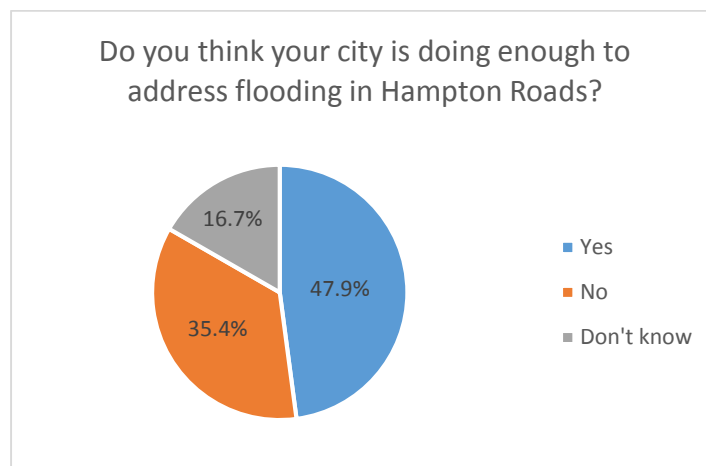


Respondents were also asked if they think increased flooding due to sea level rise is likely to negatively impact them in the future. The majority of respondents (57.6%) strongly agree (13.5%) or agree (44.1%) that increased flooding due to sea level rise is likely to negatively impact them in the future. More than one-third (38.1%) reported that they strongly disagree (6.8%) or disagree (31.2%) that increased flooding due to sea level rise is likely to negatively impact them in the future. Another 4.3 percent either refused to answer or reported they did not know if increased flooding due to sea level rise is likely to negatively impact them in the future.

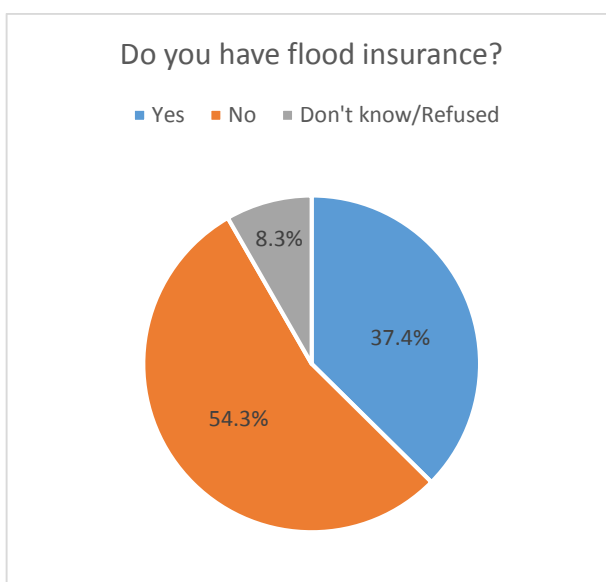


Additionally, respondents were asked to identify how many inches they believe sea levels will rise in the next twenty-five years. The most commonly given answers were five inches (14.1%), six inches (12.3%), and two inches (11%). On average Hampton Roads residents believe sea levels will rise 10.3 inches over the next 25 years.

In 2015, respondents were asked whether they thought their city is doing enough to address flooding in Hampton Roads. Almost half of respondents (47.9%) reported their city is doing enough to address flooding in Hampton Roads. Another 35.4 percent reported their city is not doing enough to address flooding in Hampton Roads and 16.7 percent reported they do not know if their city is doing enough to address flooding in Hampton Roads.

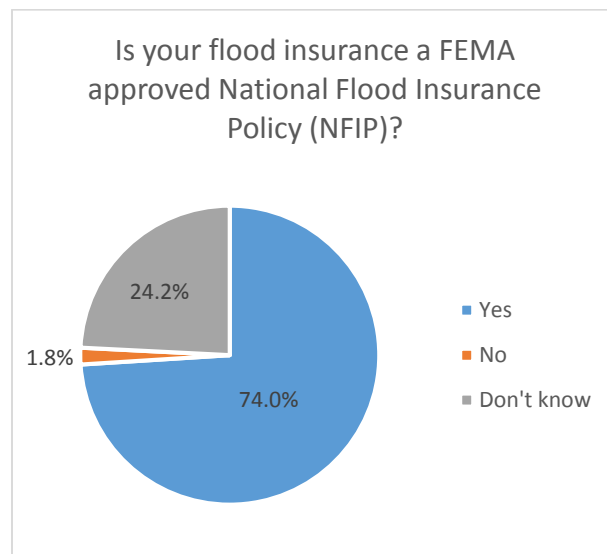
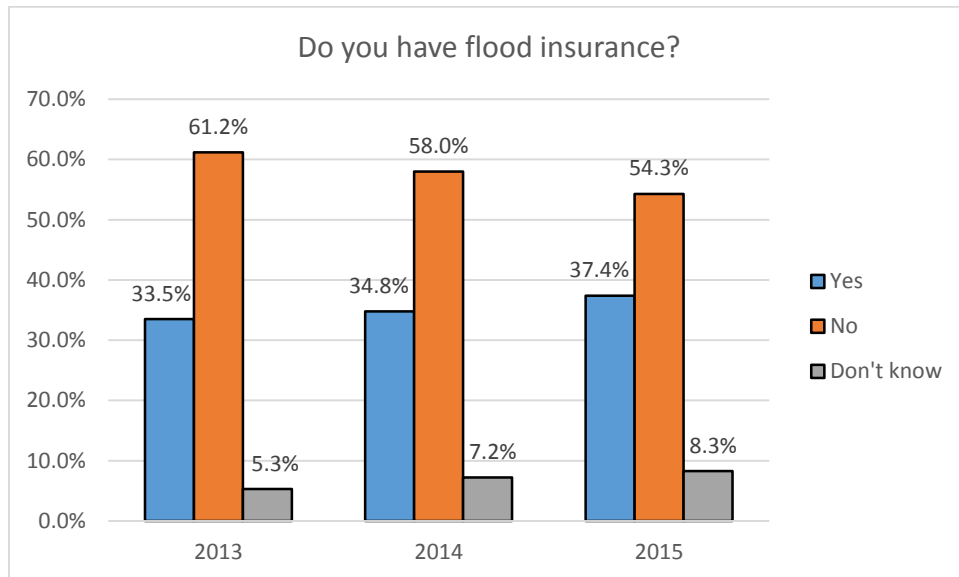


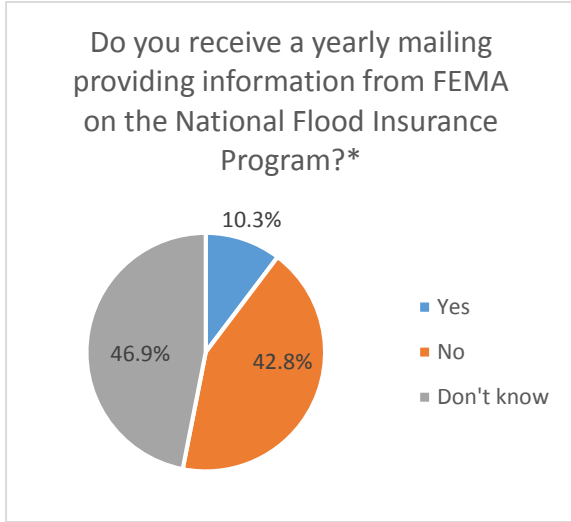
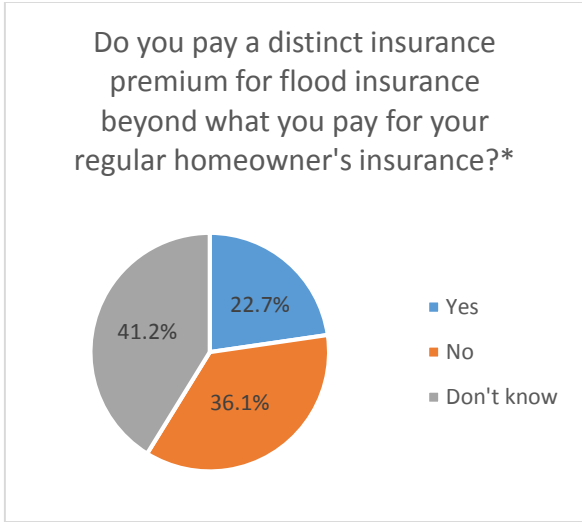
Respondents who reported they own or are in process of buying their home were asked to answer the question, "Do you have flood insurance?" It may not be surprising that with only 28.4 percent reporting that recurrent flooding is a problem in their neighborhood, only 37.4 percent of homeowners reported having flood insurance. The majority of respondents (54.3%) claimed not to have flood insurance and another 8.3 percent did not know if they had flood insurance. Of those that reported having flood insurance, 74 percent indicated that they have a FEMA approved National Flood Insurance Policy (NFIP) and 24.2 percent said they did not know if they have a NFIP. Of those respondents who reported either not having FEMA approved NFIP or not knowing if they had FEMA approved NFIP, 22.7 percent said they pay a distinct insurance premium for flood insurance beyond what they pay for regular homeowner's insurance, 36.1 percent said they did not pay a distinct insurance premium for flood insurance beyond what they pay for regular homeowner's insurance, and 41.2 percent said they did not know if they pay a distinct insurance premium for flood insurance beyond what they pay for regular homeowner's insurance. Respondents who reported either not having FEMA approved NFIP or not knowing if they had FEMA approved NFIP were also asked if they receive a yearly mailing providing information from FEMA on the National Flood Insurance Program. Only 10.3 percent said they do receive a yearly mailing providing information from FEMA on the National Flood Insurance Program and 46.9 percent said they do not know.





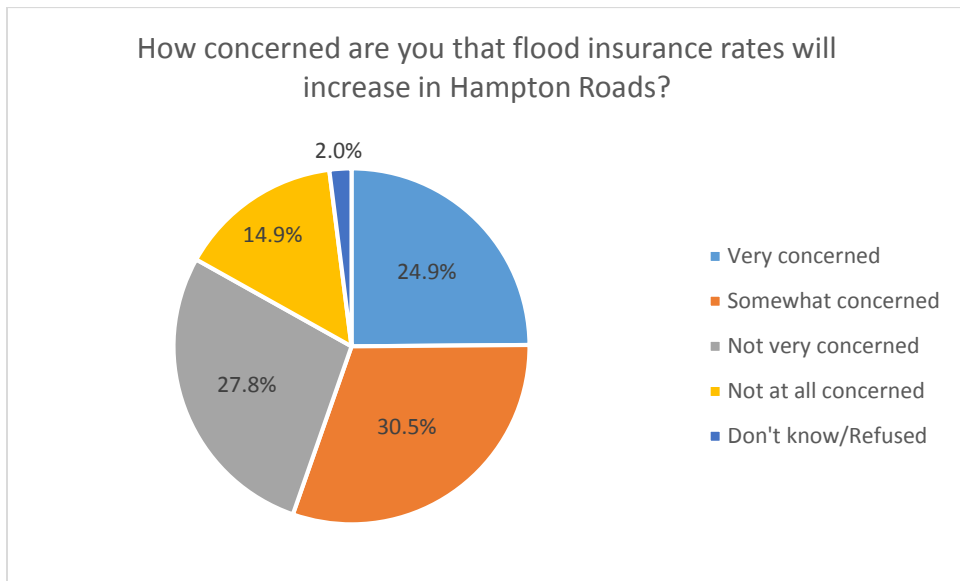
Respondents gave very similar answers last year as they did in 2015 as to whether or not they have flood insurance. In 2014, 34.8 percent of respondents reported having flood insurance compared to 37.4 percent in 2015. Additionally, 58 percent of respondents reported not having flood insurance in 2014, while 54.3 percent reported not having flood insurance in 2015.



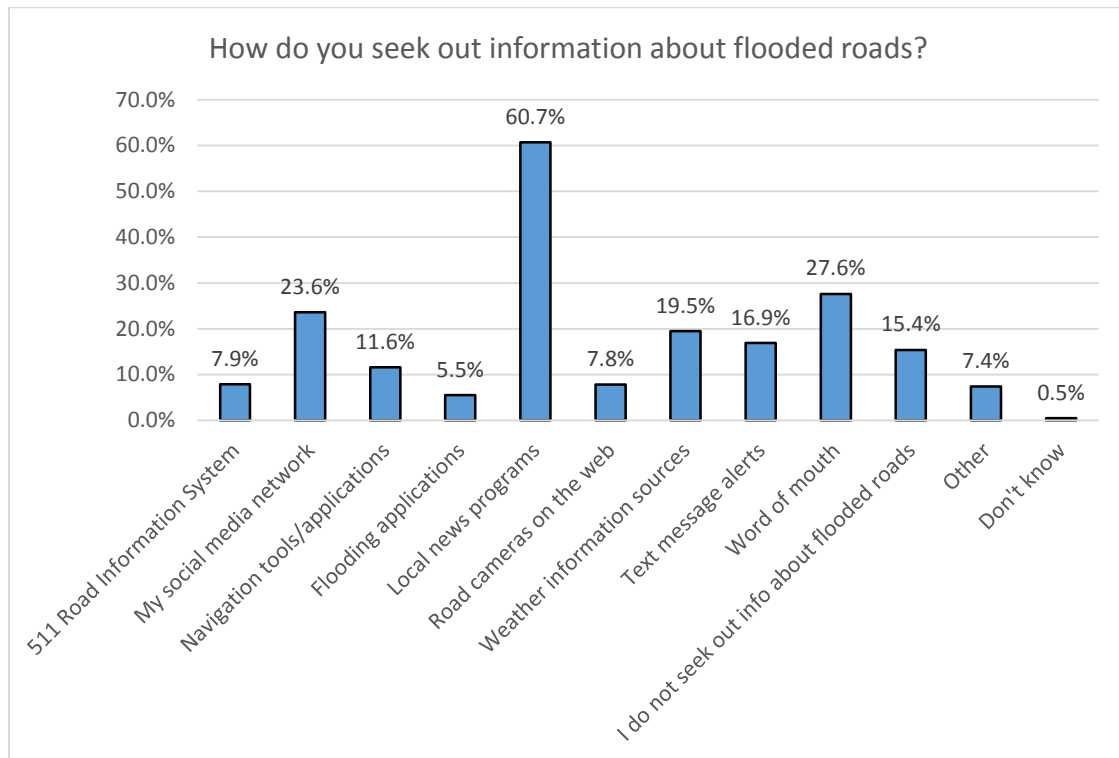


\*Only asked of respondents who did not have FEMA approved NFIP or they did not know if they had FEMA approved NFIP

All respondents who own a home or are in the process of buying a home were asked how concerned they are that flood insurance rates will increase in Hampton Roads. Over half of respondents (55.4%) reported being either somewhat concerned (30.5%) or very concerned (24.9%) that flood insurance rates will increase in Hampton Roads. Another 27.8 percent reported not being very concerned and 14.9 percent reported being not at all concerned about flood insurance rates increasing in Hampton Roads.



Respondents were asked how they seek out information about flooded roads and the three most common responses were local news programs (60.7%), word of mouth (27.6%), and their social media network (23.6%). Additional responses given were weather information sources (19.5%), text message alerts (16.9%), and navigation tools/applications (11.6%). Another 15.4 percent of respondents said they do not seek out information about flooded roads.



The majority of Hampton Roads residents believe that flooding will increase in Hampton Roads over the next 25 years. More than half of respondents believe that flooding due to sea level rise is likely to impact them in the future and less than half believe their city is doing enough to address flooding in Hampton Roads. However, only about one-third of respondents currently have flood insurance and over half of respondents reported being concerned that flood insurance rates will increase.

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All Life in Hampton Roads Data Analyses will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (<http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>). Follow-up questions about the 2015 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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