

The 2006 Citizen Recovery Survey New Orleans and Jefferson Parish

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**See jbv.com/unosurvey/
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The 2006 Citizen Recovery Survey: A Baseline

The UNO Survey Research Center began its Quality of Life series in 1986. Since then the quality of life and government services in Jefferson and Orleans parishes has been assessed every other year. However, since Katrina, new problems and issues facing citizens require a new approach.

We have begun a new series of surveys, the Citizen Recovery Surveys, which assess how people currently living in New Orleans and Jefferson are coping with their new lives. We measure problems they are having in everyday life, the losses they experienced, and their psychological condition.

The results should be viewed as a baseline from which we will measure progress over the next few years.

Our focus is on keeping people in the area, which is an important component of re-population. Most research and public policy discussions have been about bringing back the displaced residents. However, we cannot assume that everyone who is currently living in these parishes will stay. Some of the reasons people will stay or leave are contained in this survey.

The survey has limitations in the current environment, and these should be kept in mind.

- These respondents are not the evacuees.
- These are people currently living in New Orleans and Jefferson with land based phones.
- They are the people in the best living conditions because they are in a house or apartment that is renovated enough to have a land based phone, and they are not in trailers.
- The Orleans survey is limited to zip codes “populated” as of February 2006.¹
- The post-Katrina racial composition of these seven zip codes is not known, so the sample is presented without an adjustment for racial composition. The consequence is that there are probably too few African Americans in the sample, but we don’t know the degree to which they are underrepresented. An alternative method is in the Appendix.
- The Jefferson survey was weighted to represent the 2004 US Census estimates.

¹ 70113, 70114, 70115, 70116, 70118, 70130, 70131

Housing Losses

	Orleans	Jefferson
Flooding	28%	32%
Other damage	85%	85%
Not in pre-Katrina home	20%	23%
Living with others	28%	27%
Current residence is temporary	22%	30%

- The housing and material losses among the entire pre-Katrina populations of these parishes are well known and documented. But even among these respondents who are back in town, about one-third experienced flooding and 85% had other damage to their house or apartment.
- It appears from these data that approximately one-fourth of the current residents of New Orleans and Jefferson, even those with land lines, are in some sort of transitional housing arrangement. Notice the questions; these questions are not typically asked in surveys of Americans.
 - About one-fifth are displaced from their pre-Katrina home, indicating serious upheaval in their life.
 - One-fourth are either living with others or have other people living with them.
 - Another fourth consider their current residence temporary.
- One measure of recovery will be a decline in the number who are living with others or who describe their residence as temporary.

Possessions and Jobs

	Orleans	Jefferson
Lost any possessions	57%	60%
Someone in household lost job	35%	40%
Person found another job	42%	49%
Family income decreased	37%	24%

- Over half of these residents lost some possessions, most commonly furniture, clothes, or a car in Katrina.
- Significant numbers had someone in the household lose a job, and only about half of those found another job.
- Probably most significant is the third of families in these parishes whose family income has decreased since Katrina.

- Another measure of recovery will be a decline in the number of families whose income decreased since the storm.

Everyday Difficulties

<i>Percent experiencing difficulty:</i>	Orleans	Jefferson
Getting groceries	41%	41%
Doing other shopping	68%	61%
With mail service	86%	71%
Getting around town	68%	60%
Getting medical care	45%	34%
Making home repairs	72%	59%

- As we all know, life can be difficult and inconvenient in this metro area. We asked residents how difficult it was for them to accomplish everyday tasks. Again, these are not questions typically asked in surveys in this country, illustrating the unique challenges facing residents of New Orleans and Jefferson.
- Particularly difficult is getting and receiving mail, and making home repairs. Large majorities in New Orleans are having difficulties with mail and home repairs, and, although Jefferson residents are having less trouble, a majority in that parish report difficulties with mail and home repairs.
- The traffic problems in this area are reflected in two-thirds of respondents saying that they have trouble getting around town and shopping.
- Not surprisingly, most of these everyday activities are reported as more difficult for people living in New Orleans than for those living in Jefferson.
- Recovery will be measured by a decline in the number of people reporting these everyday difficulties.

Health Problems

	Orleans	Jefferson
Have health problem made worse by Katrina	27%	25%
Condition staying the same or getting worse (among those with the condition)	78%	71%

- The effects of Katrina on the health of residents has received wide attention, especially given the shortage of medical personnel. One-fourth of the residents of both parishes reported that they have a health problem made worse by Katrina.
- Most of these people are not experiencing an improvement in their condition. It is either staying the same or getting worse.

Worry and Sleep

	Orleans	Jefferson
<i>Worried about what will happen to you over the next five years?</i>		
Somewhat worried	36%	33%
Very worried	31%	34%
<i>Sleeping worse than pre-Katrina</i>		
	38%	28%

- Seven months after the storm, the psychological effects of Katrina in New Orleans and Jefferson are still apparent.
- Problems with worry and sleep are the most significant findings. Two-thirds are worried about what will happen to them (not the city) in the next five years.
- One-third are sleeping worse than before the storm.
- These are indicators of stress that, without improvement, may cause some people to leave the area. Again, a decline in the worry level and improvement in the ability to sleep will be indicators of recovery.

Depression and Mood

<i>Percent reported feeling that way 5-7 days last week</i>	Orleans		Jefferson
	2003*	2006	2006
Tired	--	37%	39%
Worried	--	29%	28%
Irritable	--	20%	21%
Everything an effort	14%	22%	24%
Trouble falling asleep	11%	30%	21%
Mind not on track	9%	23%	13%
Sad	8%	21%	19%

*Source: Drs. Jeanne Hurlbert and John Beggs, LSU Dept. of Sociology

- As we might expect, indicators of mood and depression have worsened since Katrina.

- The most prominent symptoms of distress in New Orleans and Jefferson are being tired, worried, irritable, having trouble sleeping, feeling everything is an effort, and sadness.
- Compared to 2003, over twice as many people in New Orleans have trouble sleeping, keeping their mind on track, and feel sad. Most troubling is that one-fifth or more report feeling this way five to seven days in the previous week. The specific number of five, six, or seven days should not be taken literally, but as a general statement that the person experiences this symptom nearly every day.
- Our measure of recovery six months from now will be a decline in the number of people who experience these symptoms so frequently.

Race and Losses

	Orleans		Jefferson	
	Black	White	Black	White
Flooding	46%	19% *	37%	29%
Other damage	90%	83%	93%	84%
Not in pre-Katrina home	34%	13% *	51%	15% *
Living with others	48%	18% *	38%	22%
Current residence is temporary	34%	16% *	57%	21% *
Lost any possessions	79%	47% *	85%	53% *
Someone in family lost job	46%	29% *	75%	30% *
Person found another job	19%	56% *	37%	54% *
Family income decreased	48%	31% *	40%	19% *
Difficulty getting medical care	60%	37% *	52%	31% *

* Statistically significant difference between blacks and whites

- Blacks currently living in these parishes incurred heavier losses from Hurricane Katrina than whites. We already know that, within the pre-Katrina population, blacks were disproportionately damaged, and it appears that the same pattern exists in the post-Katrina population.
- In both parishes blacks are more than whites likely to:
 - Be displaced from their pre-Katrina home
 - Live in a temporary housing situation
 - Have lost possessions
 - Have lost a job due to Katrina
 - Experience a decrease in family income
 - Experience difficulty getting medical care
- Because the New Orleans sample probably under represents blacks in the seven zip codes, the actual material losses in Orleans reported in earlier tables are likely

to be underestimated. In the Appendix we weighted the black respondents upward from 33% to 44% of the New Orleans sample to illustrate the magnitude of change that would result. Material losses in New Orleans increase about 2-3%.

- Racial differences on the depression/mood indicators are more mixed. In both parishes, blacks are more likely to feel that they can't "get going", that everything is an effort, and that they can't shake "the blues." On the remaining mood indicators, there was either no significant racial difference, or the difference only existed in one of the two parishes.
- Most importantly, **blacks and whites are equally worried about what is going to happen to them in the future, and have equal trouble sleeping.**

What People Want from Government

<i>Open ended:</i>	Orleans	Jefferson
Levees/ hurricane preparation	24%	27%
Housing/help repair houses	20%	17%
Financial assistance	16%	15%

- In a free response question, people were asked what government at any level could do to help. The most common free response answers were:
 - Rebuilding the levees and providing greater hurricane protection
 - Assisting with rebuilding and repairing houses
 - Providing general financial assistance
- These three areas are consistent with the current policy proposals, indicating that local and state government are attempting to respond to citizen needs.

Overall Satisfaction

<i>Satisfied with life in Orleans/Jefferson</i>	Orleans	Jefferson
2004	59%	89%
2006	48%	70%

- It is quite predictable that fewer people are satisfied with life in Orleans and Jefferson compared to two years ago, however, satisfaction in with life in Jefferson is still quite high.
- The number satisfied in New Orleans is particularly important to watch over time as an indicator of recovery in the City. This item can be considered an overall barometer of whether life is improving for New Orleans residents.

Note: For trends in objective indicators of recovery see the Brookings Institute Katrina Index reports at http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/200605_KatrinaIndex.pdf

Appendix

Survey Methodology:

Dates of Interviewing: March 24 – April 30, 2006

Number of Interviews: Jefferson, 266; Orleans, 204

Sampling Error: Jefferson, 6%, Orleans, 7%

Orleans survey covered only seven zip codes (see page 1, fn 1)

Percent Black in Jefferson sample: 23%

Percent Black in New Orleans sample: 33%

Weighting Blacks Upward in New Orleans

Housing Losses

(Actual results compared to weighting Blacks to 44% of sample)

	Orleans (33% B1)	Orleans (44% B1)
Flooding	28%	31%
Other damage	85%	86%
Not in pre-Katrina home	20%	22%
Living with others	28%	31%
Current residence is temporary	22%	24%

Possessions and Jobs

(Actual results compared to weighting Blacks to 44% of sample)

	Orleans (33% B1)	Orleans (44% B1)
Lost any possessions	57%	61%
Someone in family lost job	35%	37%
Person found another job	42%	37%
Family income decreased	37%	39%
Difficulty getting medical care	45%	47%

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