

Suncorp Resilient Home

NOVEMBER 2021 ANNUAL HOME
RESILIENCE RESEARCH REPORT



Foreword

Australia's weather extremes are increasing in frequency and severity, and the financial and emotional impact on communities can be devastating and long-lasting.

Building resilience is not only about supporting customers and communities to get back on their feet when disaster strikes. It is about giving them the tools, knowledge, and support to proactively prepare and strengthen their homes, businesses and communities before an event hits.

Australia needs to address climate risk and disaster mitigation, rather than disaster clean-up. Resilience and mitigation is something Suncorp has been a long-standing and passionate advocate for, and is now the focus of this report.

This inaugural edition of the Suncorp Resilient Home Report aims to increase awareness of the impacts – financial, physical, and emotional – of natural hazards and the measures Australians can take to better prepare for extreme weather events.

The pandemic has impacted how people live with many considering moving regionally for a lifestyle change. However, many Australians are failing to consider the impacts of natural disasters in planning where they live.

This research aims to shine a spotlight on, and more deeply understand the mindsets, behaviours and attitudes of Australians towards making their homes more resilient against the upcoming summer natural hazard season, and to view resilience as a vital consideration for homes – and communities.

As an insurer, we recognise the role we play in helping people recover after disaster strikes, but also informing people on how to reduce risk. By educating Australians on how to strengthen the resilience of their homes and communities ahead of severe weather, we better protect them from the impacts of events such as flood, bushfire and storms.

We hope our Suncorp Resilient Home Report will raise awareness and continue conversations, and help Australians build brighter futures and protect what matters.

Lisa Harrison,
Chief Executive Officer
Suncorp Insurance Product & Portfolio



The research findings in *Suncorp's Resilient Home Report* were compiled through 2 research projects conducted by Kantar on behalf of Suncorp. The first piece of research was conducted in March 2021 with a representative sample of 1195 homeowners aged 18+. The findings are used on pages 6, 7, 8, 10 & 11. The second piece of research was conducted in September and October 2021 with a representative sample of 1,499 Australians aged 18+. The findings are used on pages 4, 5, 9, 10 & 12.

Contents

Spotlight Research: Australians are moving without considering the impact of natural disasters

PAGE 4

Research key findings: Natural Disaster Resilience

PAGE 6

Research key findings: Natural Disaster Awareness and Preparations

PAGE 9

State-based Breakdown of Findings

PAGE 10



Australians are moving without considering impact of natural disasters

Each year, *Suncorp's Resilient Home Report* will shine a spotlight on a particular topic relevant to home resilience.

This year, in light of the impacts COVID-19 has had on our country, and the associated increase in interstate migration, the report has focused on the considerations Australians make before embarking on a move – and whether the impacts of natural disasters play any role in their decision making process.

Have you made or seriously considered a significant move (to another state or region) in the past two years?

27% OF AUSTRALIANS HAVE MOVED OR SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED MOVING



Australians are moving without considering impact of natural disasters

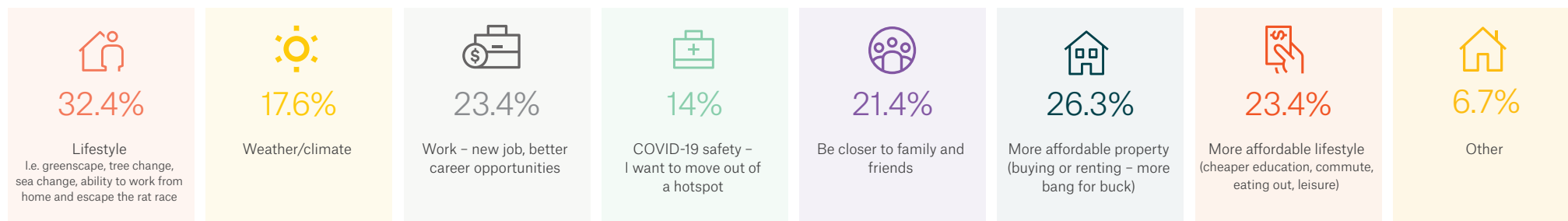
As we face an increased risk from cyclones, fires and floods during the summer months, Suncorp research has found almost a third of Australians moved or considered moving for a sea change/tree change during COVID-19 – however almost half (46%) of them failed to consider the impacts of natural disasters when moving.

Lifestyle factors including being closer to family and friends, better climate/weather, work/life balance and job opportunities were the main drivers for those seeking to relocate to another state or region.

Almost half of Australians admit to not taking into consideration the increasing risks of extreme weather when deciding on where to live, and even more did not consider the impacts when selecting the type of home (ie. structure) to live in.



What was the reason for you moving/thinking about moving?



RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

Natural Disaster Resilience

With a boom in home renovations in recent years, Suncorp's research has found Australian homeowners are prioritising aesthetics over resilience when it comes to making improvements to their home.

Homeowners are more willing to spend on kitchen and bathroom renovations than invest in measures to withstand a flood, cyclone or bushfire.

62% UPDATE INTERIOR AESTHETICS (I.E. PAINTING, DÉCOR, FURNITURE, FLOORING)

54% RENOVATE THE KITCHEN

53% RENOVATE THE BATHROOM(S)

14% HOME IMPROVEMENTS/ENHANCEMENTS TO PROTECT AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS

Which 3 home improvements do you think would add the most value to your home?



RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

Natural Disaster Resilience

Two thirds of Australians admit extreme weather events in recent years have made them more aware of the risks, however only one in four have actually made modifications to their home to protect against natural disasters.

Key barriers for Australian homeowners to make the investment in improving their home's resilience include:

- Believing they are not at risk based on their own assessments of their homes and neighbourhoods (**38 per cent**)
- Cost (**31 per cent**)
- Believing they have adequate insurance to cover any damage from natural disasters (**22 per cent**)
- Improving their home's resilience is not a priority (**22 per cent**).

Would you invest in making your home better protected against natural disasters if the measures were scientifically tested and proven to significantly reduce damage to property?



RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

Natural Disaster Resilience

Reasons Australians choose aesthetic options over improving resilience

44% WILL ADD MORE VALUE TO MY HOME WHEN IT COMES TIME TO SELL

44% I WANT TO MAKE MY HOME MORE COMFORTABLE TO LIVE IN

40% I'D LIKE TO IMPROVE THE AESTHETICS OF MY HOME

36% I WANT TO MODERNISE MY HOME

3% I LIVE IN AN AREA KNOWN FOR NATURAL DISASTERS (E.G. BUSHFIRES, FLOODS, CYCLONES)



Which of the following reasons would encourage you to spend money to ensure your home is better protected against natural disasters?



RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS


Natural Disaster Awareness and Preparations


Over half of Australian homeowners believe their home is at risk of being impacted by natural disasters.

Australians are aware of what they need to do in the lead up to natural hazard season to prepare including:


- When a natural hazard event is forecast, 67 per cent of Australians understand what activities are required to be prepared.
- 65 per cent of Australians admit to regularly trimming tree branches and foliage close to their home.
- 61 per cent of Australians regularly clear their gutters or have guards in place to prevent a build-up of leaves/debris.
- One third of Australian households have an agreed natural hazard survival plan.


Which of the following, if any, have you done to protect against natural hazards as a result of seeing recent events?


 **41%** ensured locks work on windows, doors and garage doors


 **33%** completed maintenance around the house


 **32%** have done nothing

 **21%** checked that their sum insured takes into account any extra rebuilding costs from changes to building codes/standards


 **28%** checked that roof or roof tiles are intact and secure


 **19%** contacted their insurer and updated or checked their home and contents insurance


 **19%** set up an alert system (SMS, email, media) to keep up to date with potentially dangerous weather situations and restrictions


 **13%** prepared an evacuation kit with a torch, batteries, radio, blankets, important documents and enough food and water to last three days

 **10%** repainted the outside of their home

 **11%** created a 'natural hazard survival plan' with their household

 **16%** checked and improved drainage on the land around their home

 **5%** purchased a portable pump to use from their swimming pool or water tank

 **5%** have moved to a different, less natural hazard prone/vulnerable area

State-based Breakdown of Findings

Question/statement	National	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC
SPOTLIGHT RESEARCH: AUSTRALIANS ARE MOVING WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF NATURAL DISASTERS				
Have you made or seriously considered a significant move (to another region or state) in the past two years? (Responded Yes)	27%	27%	30%	30%
What was the reason for moving/ thinking about moving? (Responded Lifestyle Factors)	32%	33%	32%	35%
Was the potential for natural hazards a factor in your decision making when choosing where you have or would move to? (Responded No)	46%	48%	41%	46%
Does/did the potential for natural hazards influence your preference for the type of home/structure you built/ bought? (Responded No)	52%	61%	49%	50%
Before purchasing your property, did you do some research into the frequency/severity of natural hazards in the area? (Responded No)	34%	35%	31%	33%
Natural hazard events in recent years have made me more aware of the risks my home faces. (Responded Agree or Strongly Agree)	64%	57%	68%	62%
Have you made modifications to your home to protect it against natural disasters? (Responded Yes)	25%	21%	27%	26%

Question/statement	National	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC
RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS - NATURAL DISASTER RESILIENCE				
Which 3 home improvements do you think would add the most value to your home?				
Update interior aesthetics ie. painting, decor, furniture, flooring	62%	61%	62%	63%
Renovate the kitchen	54%	53%	54%	54%
Renovate the bathroom	53%	57%	54%	51%
Home improvements/enhancements to protect against natural disasters	14%	15%	16%	11%
Reasons for selecting these home improvement options				
I live in an area known for natural disasters e.g. bushfires, floods, cyclones etc	3%	6%	3%	3%
It will add more value to my home when it comes time to sell	44%	48%	41%	44%
I'd like to improve the aesthetics of my home	40%	42%	38%	40%
I want to make my home more comfortable to live in	44%	43%	43%	42%

State-based Breakdown of Findings

Question/statement	National	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC
RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS – NATURAL DISASTER RESILIENCE				
Willingness to invest in resilience measures				
Cyclone washers (for cyclones) (Responded 'Would not consider')	66%	48%	68%	74%
Gutter guards (for cyclones/severe storms) (Responded 'Would not consider')	43%	35%	39%	51%
Cyclone shutters (for cyclones) (Responded 'Would not consider')	71%	60%	70%	76%
Seal roof cavity (ember protection for bushfires) (Responded 'Would not consider')	53%	59%	48%	57%
Metal gutters (ember protection for bushfires) (Responded 'Would not consider')	41%	40%	38%	46%
Roof sprinklers (for bushfires) (Responded 'Would not consider')	64%	73%	59%	66%
Metal frames for windows and doors (for cyclones, severe storms and bushfires) (Responded 'Would not consider')	40%	31%	40%	46%
Metal screens (for cyclones and severe storms) (Responded 'Would not consider')	57%	43%	55%	67%

Question/statement	National	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC
RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS – NATURAL DISASTER RESILIENCE				
Motivators to natural disaster resilience spend				
Reducing my insurance premium	43%	48%	41%	38%
Improving the value of my property	36%	41%	37%	33%
Government subsidy or grant	36%	43%	36%	32%
Protecting my family, friends and pets	34%	35%	35%	28%
Minimising the costs of natural disaster repairs	26%	31%	23%	24%
Minimising inconvenience after a natural hazard event i.e. the recovery, clean up and making a claim	24%	29%	23%	19%
Nothing, I'm not concerned with natural disaster risks to my home	22%	20%	23%	25%
Protecting items of sentimental value	19%	15%	16%	19%
Learning I live in a high-risk area	14%	11%	15%	16%
Increasing my insurance cover i.e. you're covered if you have these home features	11%	13%	9%	12%

State-based Breakdown of Findings

Question/statement	National	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC
RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS – NATURAL DISASTER AWARENESS AND PREPARATIONS				
I believe I live in an area with some form of risk to natural hazards	52%	72%	56%	35%
Area of risk – bushfire	29%	26%	34%	18%
Area of risk – storms	30%	54%	32%	19%
Which of the following, if any, have you done to protect against natural hazards as a result of seeing recent events?				
I have contacted my insurer and updated or checked my home and contents insurance	19%	20%	19%	17%
I have checked that my sum insured takes into account any extra rebuilding costs from changes to building codes/standards	21%	21%	22%	19%
Checked that roof or roof tiles are intact and secure	28%	29%	26%	25%
Ensured locks work on windows, doors and garage doors	41%	47%	40%	35%
Repainted the outside of my home	10%	9%	10%	11%
Completed maintenance around the house (e.g. mended fences, checked downpipes and gutters are clear of rust, leaves and debris etc)	33%	39%	28%	28%

Question/statement	National	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC
Checked and Improved drainage	16%	17%	19%	11%
Created a 'natural hazard survival plan' with my household	11%	12%	13%	8%
Set up an alert system (SMS, email, media) to keep up to date with potentially dangerous weather situations and restrictions	19%	25%	19%	18%
Prepared an evacuation kit with a torch, batteries, radio, blankets, important documents and enough food and water to last three days	13%	19%	12%	10%
Moved to a different, less natural hazard prone/vulnerable area	5%	6%	5%	5%

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Suncorp Resilient Home

Learn more about our resilience work.

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