



Nuclear Worries: Nearly Six in Ten Concerned Catastrophe Could Strike in States

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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This McClatchy-Marist Poll Reports:

Japan's nuclear crisis has raised questions about whether or not an emergency of that proportion could occur in the United States. According to this McClatchy-Marist Poll, nearly six in ten Americans -- 57% -- say it could happen here. Included here are 16% who think it is very likely and 41% who say a nuclear power plant emergency is likely. However, 31% believe it is not very likely, and 9% report it is not likely at all to happen. Just 2% are unsure.

"Americans certainly don't rule out the possibility of a nuclear emergency here," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "Although a majority think it is likely to be an accident at a power plant, a sizeable proportion is worried about a terror attack."

If such a power plant emergency were to take place, is the U.S. government prepared to handle it? Americans divide. 49% report the country is either very prepared or prepared to take on such a tragedy while 48% say it is not very prepared or not prepared at all to do so. Among those who think the nation is ready to handle this type of situation are 10% who believe the government is very prepared and 39% who say it is prepared. Looking at those who are less confident, about one-third -- 33% -- report America is not very prepared, and 15% believe it is not prepared at all. Just 4% are unsure.

Accident Not an Attack, Say Residents

A majority of Americans -- 56% -- believe that if the United States were to face a nuclear crisis today, it would be a result of an accident at a nuclear power plant. However, four in ten -- 40% -- think an act of terrorism would be behind it. Four percent are unsure.

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: National Poll of 1,274 Adults

This survey of 1,274 adults was conducted on April 10th through April 14th, 2011. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Nature of the Sample: Adults

Nature of the Sample - National Adults		
		National Adults
		Col %
National Adults		100%
Registered Voters		80%
Region	Northeast	19%
	Midwest	22%
	South	37%
	West	22%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	51%
	\$50,000 or more	49%
Race	White	67%
	African American	10%
	Latino	11%
	Other	11%
Race	White	67%
	Non-white	33%
Age	Under 45	40%
	45 or older	60%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	20%
	Gen X (31-46)	24%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	37%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	19%
Gender	Men	49%
	Women	51%
Interview Type	Landline	74%
	Cell Phone	26%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted April 10th through April 14th, 2011, N=1274 MOE +/- 3%.
 Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Possibility of Nuclear Power Plant Emergency

Asked of National Adults:

Question Wording: Do you think it is very likely, likely, not very likely, or not likely at all that a nuclear emergency at a power plant like what happened in Japan could happen in the United States?

		National Adults				
		Do you think it is very likely, likely, not very likely, or not likely at all that a nuclear emergency at a power plant like what happened in Japan could happen in the United States?				
		Very likely	Likely	Not very likely	Not likely at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		16%	41%	31%	9%	2%
Registered Voters		15%	41%	32%	10%	2%
Party ID	Democrat	16%	49%	26%	8%	1%
	Republican	10%	32%	45%	11%	1%
	Independent	19%	42%	27%	10%	2%
Tea Party Supporters		11%	40%	38%	11%	<1%
Political Ideology	Liberal	21%	37%	30%	11%	1%
	Moderate	12%	46%	30%	10%	2%
	Conservative	12%	41%	36%	10%	1%
Region	Northeast	8%	36%	38%	16%	3%
	Midwest	16%	34%	38%	10%	3%
	South	18%	48%	25%	7%	1%
	West	20%	38%	31%	7%	4%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	21%	41%	28%	8%	2%
	\$50,000 or more	12%	39%	37%	10%	2%
Education	Not college graduate	18%	45%	25%	8%	3%
	College graduate	11%	36%	42%	10%	1%
Age	Under 45	15%	44%	34%	5%	2%
	45 or older	18%	39%	29%	11%	3%
Race	White	16%	36%	37%	9%	2%
	Non-white	18%	50%	22%	8%	2%
Gender	Men	12%	43%	33%	11%	2%
	Women	22%	39%	30%	7%	3%
Interview Type	Landline	17%	41%	31%	9%	3%
	Cell Phone	14%	42%	34%	9%	2%

Marist Poll National Adults Split Sample: Interviews conducted April 10th through April 14th, 2011, N=629 MOE +/- 4%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Preparedness for Nuclear Power Emergency

Asked of National Adults:

Question Wording: In the event of a nuclear emergency at a U.S. power plant, do you think the U.S. government is very prepared, prepared, not very prepared, or not prepared at all?

		National Adults				
		In the event of a nuclear emergency at a U.S. power plant, do you think the U.S. government is very prepared, prepared, not very prepared, or not prepared at all?				
		Very prepared	Prepared	Not very prepared	Not prepared at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		10%	39%	33%	15%	4%
Registered Voters		10%	38%	33%	15%	4%
Party ID	Democrat	8%	46%	31%	10%	5%
	Republican	12%	39%	29%	16%	4%
	Independent	10%	31%	39%	19%	1%
Tea Party Supporters		9%	44%	29%	15%	3%
Political Ideology	Liberal	14%	32%	36%	15%	2%
	Moderate	9%	45%	34%	8%	4%
	Conservative	9%	35%	31%	21%	4%
Region	Northeast	13%	36%	39%	12%	1%
	Midwest	14%	40%	34%	8%	4%
	South	7%	37%	31%	20%	5%
	West	9%	44%	30%	13%	5%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	10%	41%	29%	17%	3%
	\$50,000 or more	9%	39%	34%	14%	4%
Education	Not college graduate	11%	40%	31%	13%	5%
	College graduate	8%	38%	35%	16%	3%
Age	Under 45	10%	40%	33%	14%	3%
	45 or older	9%	38%	33%	15%	5%
Race	White	10%	39%	36%	11%	4%
	Non-white	8%	41%	27%	20%	5%
Gender	Men	12%	38%	30%	17%	3%
	Women	8%	40%	35%	12%	5%
Interview Type	Landline	10%	36%	35%	15%	4%
	Cell Phone	11%	48%	25%	13%	3%

Marist Poll National Adults Split Sample: Interviews conducted April 10th through April 14th, 2011, N=629 MOE +/- 4%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Cause of Hypothetical U.S. Nuclear Emergency

Asked of National Adults:

Question Wording: If there were to be a nuclear emergency in the United States today, do you think it is more likely to be the result of:

		National Adults		
		If there were to be a nuclear emergency in the United States today, do you think it is more likely to be the result of:		
		A terror attack	An accident at a nuclear power plant	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		40%	56%	4%
Registered Voters		40%	56%	4%
Party ID	Democrat	39%	59%	2%
	Republican	50%	47%	4%
	Independent	36%	60%	4%
Tea Party Supporters		51%	45%	4%
Political Ideology	Liberal	35%	62%	3%
	Moderate	39%	58%	3%
	Conservative	45%	51%	4%
Region	Northeast	41%	53%	6%
	Midwest	40%	54%	6%
	South	42%	56%	3%
	West	35%	60%	5%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	45%	51%	5%
	\$50,000 or more	37%	60%	3%
Education	Not college graduate	46%	50%	4%
	College graduate	30%	67%	3%
Age	Under 45	38%	60%	2%
	45 or older	40%	54%	6%
Race	White	41%	55%	5%
	Non-white	39%	57%	4%
Gender	Men	36%	61%	4%
	Women	45%	50%	5%
Interview Type	Landline	36%	59%	5%
	Cell Phone	50%	48%	2%

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