

PRESS RELEASE

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REGIONAL POLL SHOWS MAJORITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA THINKS FLORIDA DID A GREAT JOB IN RESPONDING TO HURRICANE WILMA

Survey also shows strong devastation felt by South Florida residents as a result of Hurricane Wilma

Miami, November, 29, 2005 - Florida International University's Metropolitan Center, an urban think tank, released a poll today showing that the majority (63.4%) of South Florida voters think Florida does an excellent job in preparing and responding to hurricanes. In addition, voters in the three Counties rated governmental and utilities' response to Hurricane Wilma as generally adequate.

The regional telephone poll of registered voters in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties by partisan identification, ethnicity, gender and region was conducted from November 13-20, 2005. The poll was done jointly by the Metropolitan Center and the International Hurricane Research Center.

"The Metropolitan Center conducted studies after Hurricanes Andrew, Charley, Katrina, and Rita and felt it was important to do a Hurricane Wilma study since we are one of few institutions with real experience in this type of disaster," said Dario Moreno, Director of the Metropolitan Center.

Additional findings of the poll include:

- A majority of those polled (58.5%) said that Hurricane Wilma either had a serious or devastating impact on their lives
- 20.1% rated FPL's response to the storm as excellent and 52.3% rated it as satisfactory
- Only 1.8% ranked gas shortage as the most disruptive aspect of Wilma, while 5.9% ranked the gas shortage as the second most disruptive aspect.
- Bellsouth was rated as excellent and satisfactory by a majority of the respondents (76.3%).
- A disproportionate number of African-Americans felt that their lives were disrupted by Wilma: 71.2% compared to only 56.2% non-Hispanic whites and 53.2% Hispanics.

The **Metropolitan Center** at Florida International University, based in Miami, Florida, delivers information and expertise to decision makers, community leaders and citizens as they seek to forge solutions to urban problems. **For more information on the Metropolitan Center, contact Dr. Dario Moreno at (305) 349-1253.**

The **International Hurricane Research Center (IHRC)** at Florida International University is Florida's official hurricane research center for ten universities that comprise the state system. IHRC is also designated as the formal liaison for NOAA's Tropical Prediction Center and National Hurricane Center, located on the Florida International University campus in Miami. **For more information on the International Hurricane Research Center, visit www.ihc.fiu.edu.**