



# Pet owner emergency preparedness and perceptions survey

Taranaki & Wellington Regions

February 2010

Supported by Taranaki Regional Council and Wellington SPCA



"Pets are one of the family and it is not okay to leave them behind when evacuating"



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**Bibliographical reference**

Glasse, S. (2010). Pet owner emergency preparedness and perceptions survey report: Taranaki and Wellington Regions. Wellington: Mercalli Disaster Management Consulting.

## background

In 2009, Taranaki Regional Council approached Mercalli Disaster Management Consulting to facilitate a Companion Animal Emergency Management Workshop for early 2010. This request coincided with an invitation from Conferenz for Mercalli to also provide a presentation at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Emergency Management Conference in Wellington, 22 February 2010 on companion animal emergency management. To support both of these events, Mercalli Disaster Management Consulting undertook a survey of companion animal (pet) owners in the Taranaki and Wellington Regions with the support of Taranaki Regional Council and the Wellington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). The sub-discipline of companion animal emergency management is a new field both nationally and internationally, and the survey is believed to be the first comprehensive pet owner emergency preparedness and perception research of its kind in New Zealand.

## objectives

The survey had three key objectives:

1. To provide current data to support further research of companion animal emergency management in New Zealand.
2. To provide New Zealand specific data to contrast similar research in other countries to enable emergency planners to enhance the protection of companion animals during disaster.
3. To provide geographically relevant data to supplement and contrast international research being presented at the Taranaki Companion Animal Emergency Management Workshop and 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Emergency Management Conference.

## methodology

Companion animal owners living within the Taranaki and Wellington Regions were invited to complete an anonymous and confidential online survey.

The online survey was pre-tested through a pilot by key stakeholders.

The survey was marketed through:

### Taranaki:

- Flyer (annex a) letter box drop (n=1,000) in the Bell Block area
- Email notification to Taranaki Regional Council staff
- Notice of Taranaki Regional Council staff intranet
- Flyer hand outs by local animal control and pet shop staff (n=200)

### Wellington:

- Flyer (annex a) letter box drop (n=1,000) across the Porirua, Johnsonville and Tawa areas.

### Both:

- Facebook: general status postings
- Word of mouth

## sample size

The sample size for this survey was:

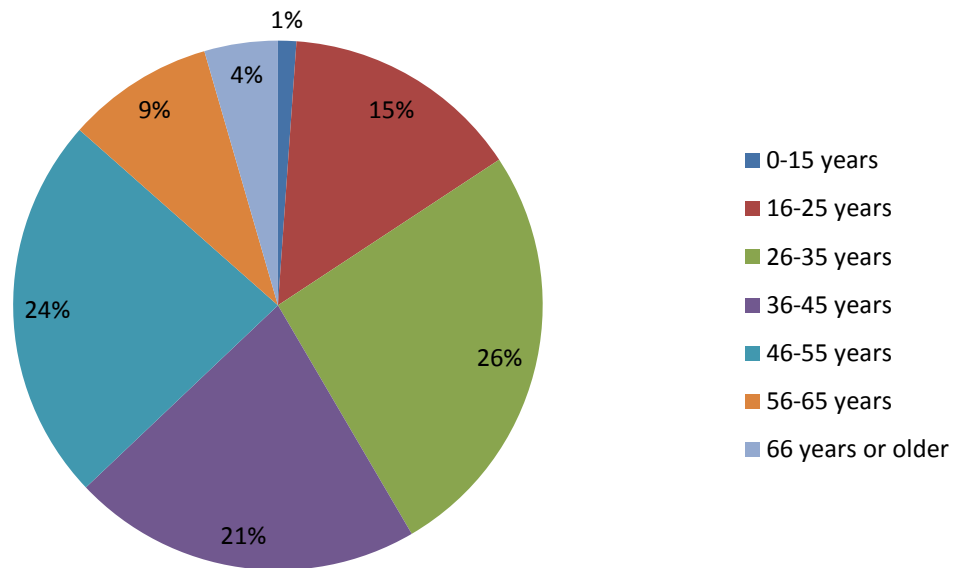
Wellington	n=35	cf. 113 (Colmar Brunton, 2009) <sup>1</sup>
Taranaki:	n=55	cf. 26 (Colmar Brunton, 2009)
<i>Not specified:</i>	<i>n=2</i>	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>n=92</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management *Campaign Monitoring Research*, 2009 carried out by Colmar Brunton.

## results

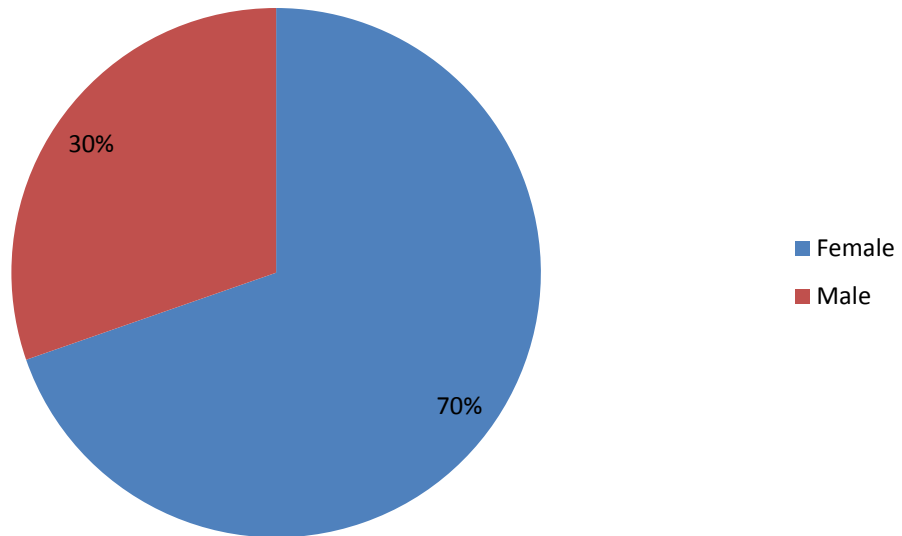
### age

What is your age?



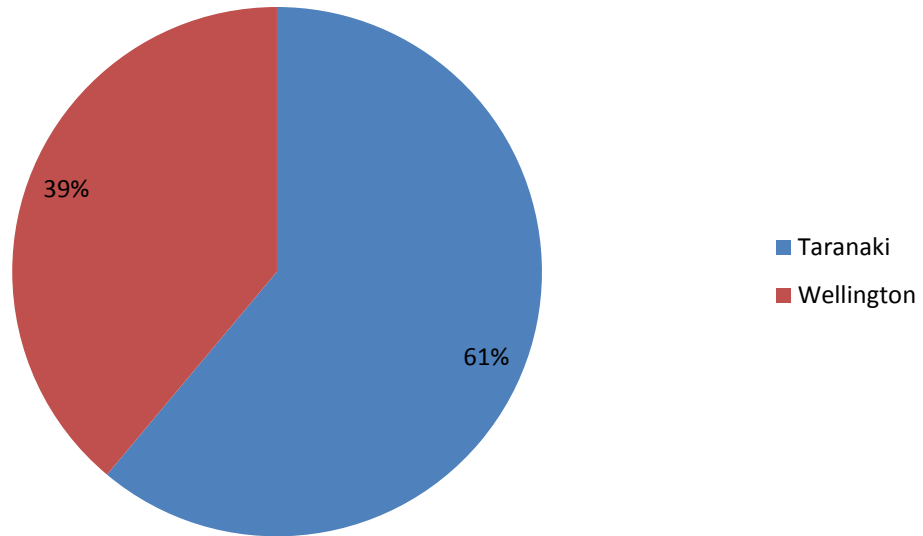
## gender

What gender are you?



location

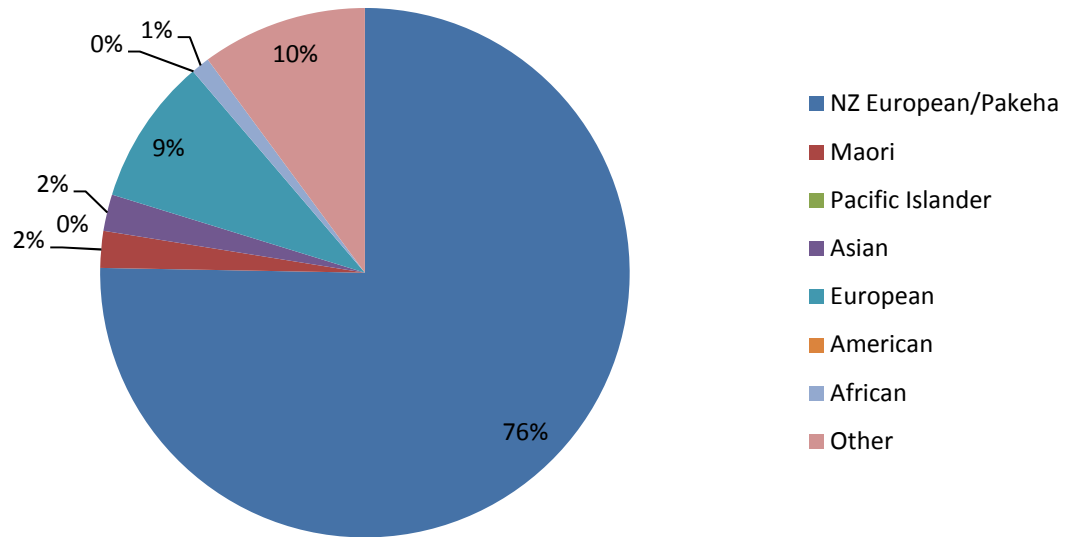
Which region do you live in?





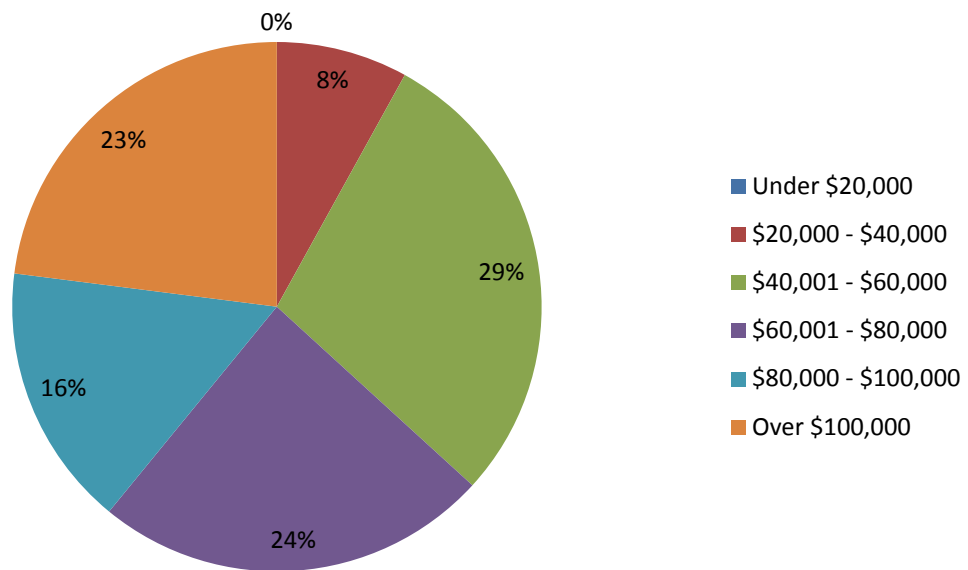
## ethnicity

Which ethnic group do you most associate yourself with?



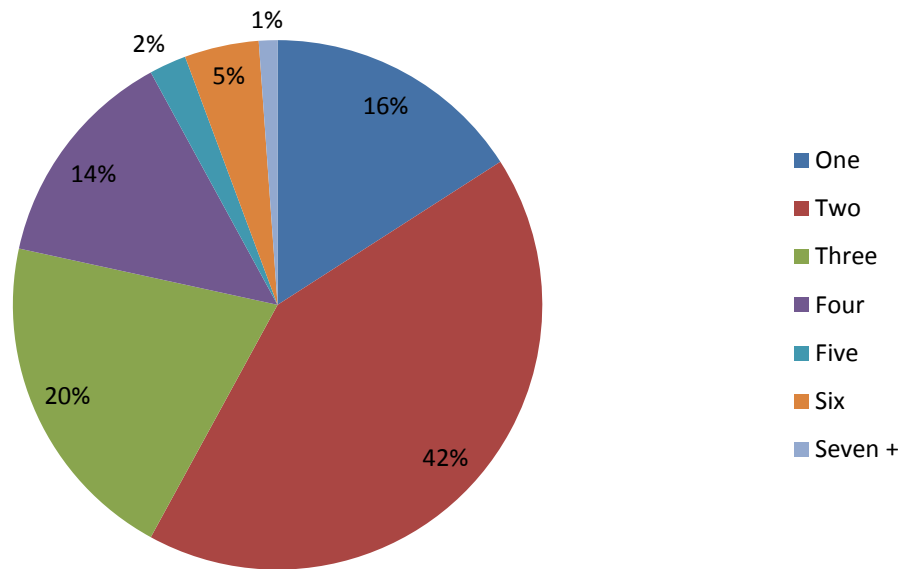
## income

What is your annual household income?



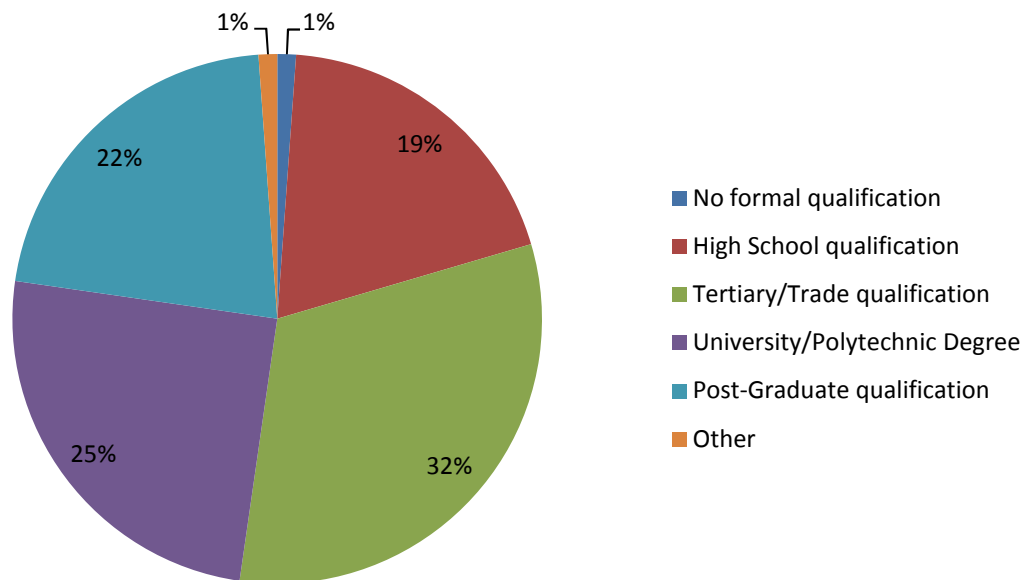
## household size

How many people permanently live at your household? (including yourself)



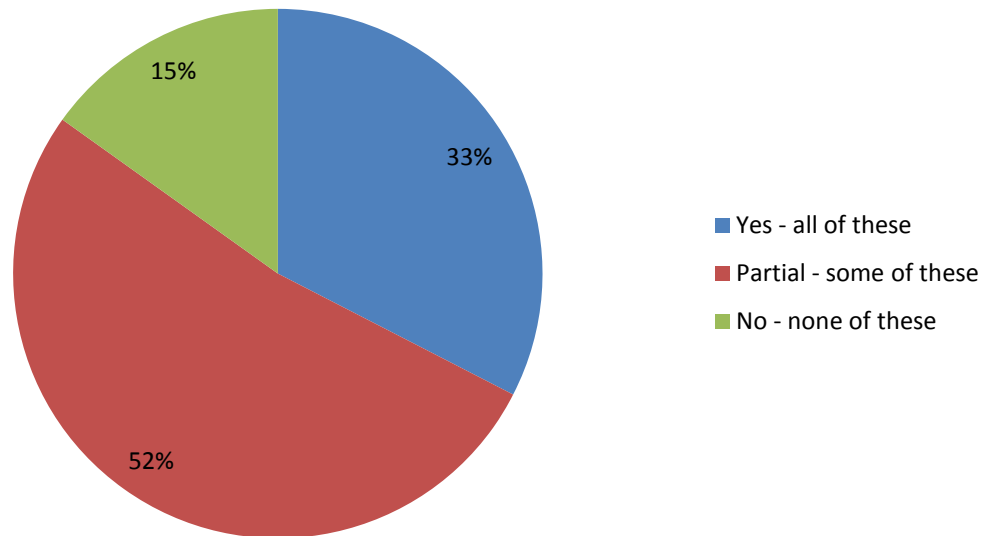
## education

What is the highest level of educational qualification you have obtained?



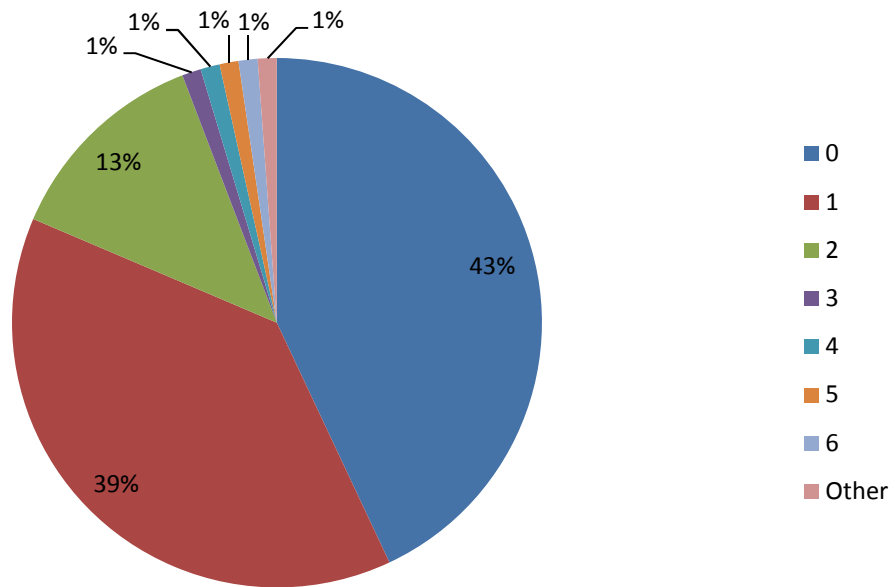
## general emergency preparedness

Do you have a family survival plan and emergency supplies including water (3 litres per person for three days), torch, radio, batteries, food, can opener, first aid kit?



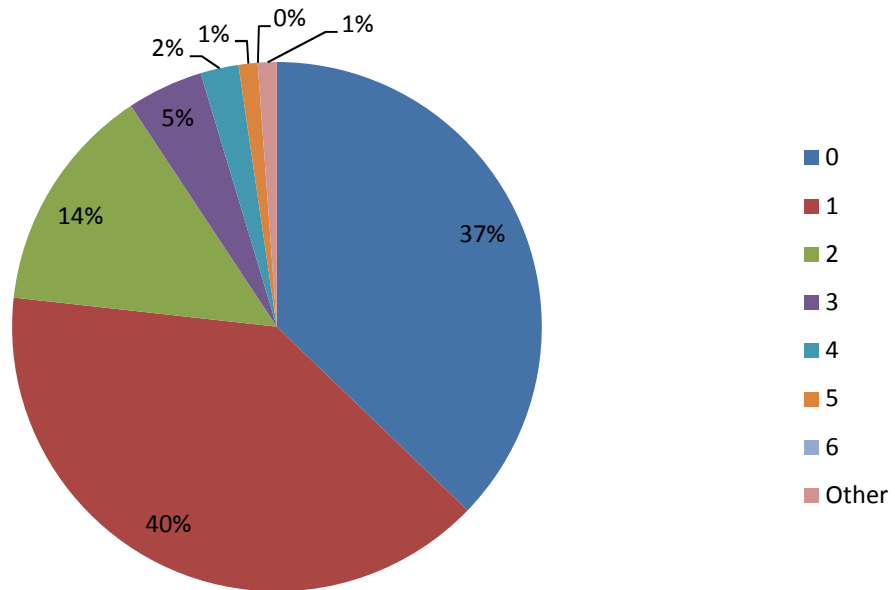
## dogs

How many dogs live at home with you?



## cats

How many cats live at home with you?



## other animals

How many other pets (other than cats or dogs) live at home with you? List the type of animal and how many you have (example: 2 fish, 1 rabbit).

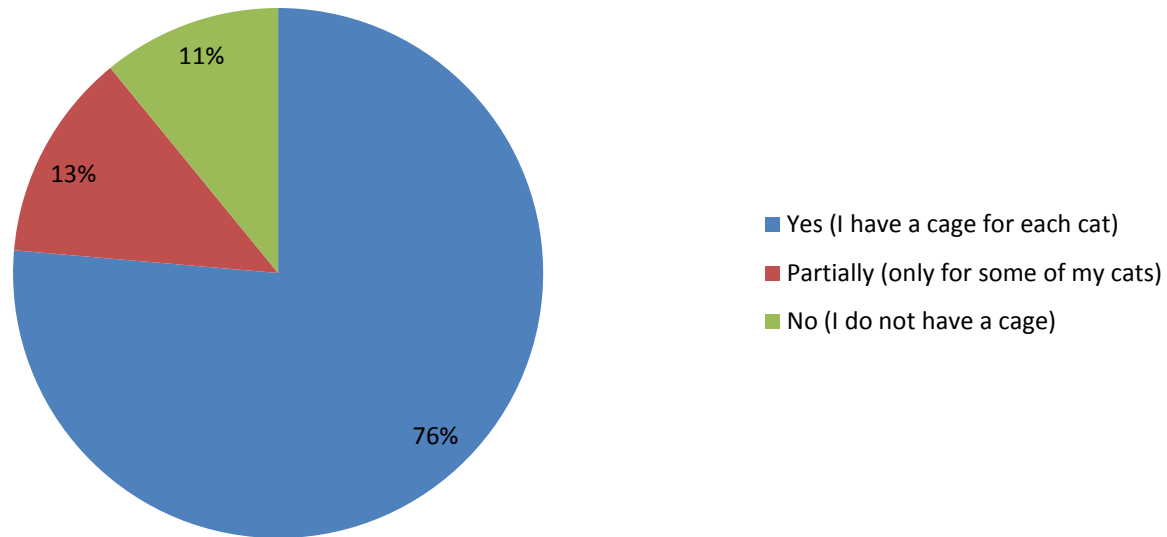
- 3 fish
- Goldfish
- 2 rabbits
- 1 duck
- 5 goldfish
- 1 cockatiel 1 rabbit, 1 guinea pig, 2 fish, 2 birds, 1 turtle
- 1 guinea pig
- 1 budgie
- 25 pond fish and 10 aviary birds
- 3 fish
- 1 Lorikeet
- 2 fish
- 2 fish
- 4 rabbits
- 1 foster rabbit
- 1 foster kitten
- 6 goldfish
- 2 budgies
- 1 fish
- 2 fish
- 3 fish
- 1 fish
- 8 fish
- 17 budgies and 1 cockatiel
- 1 bird

Some respondents also listed farm animals and livestock including horses, donkeys, chickens, pigs etc but these are outside the scope of the research.



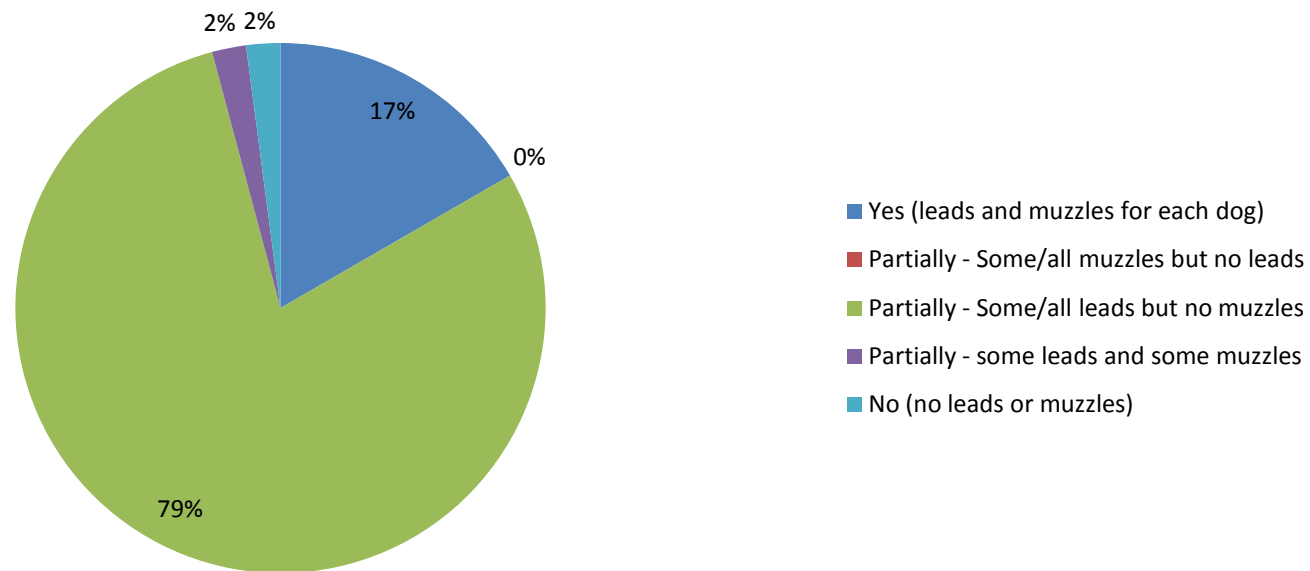
## cat pet carriers

If you have cats, do you have a pet carrier (cage) for each animal?



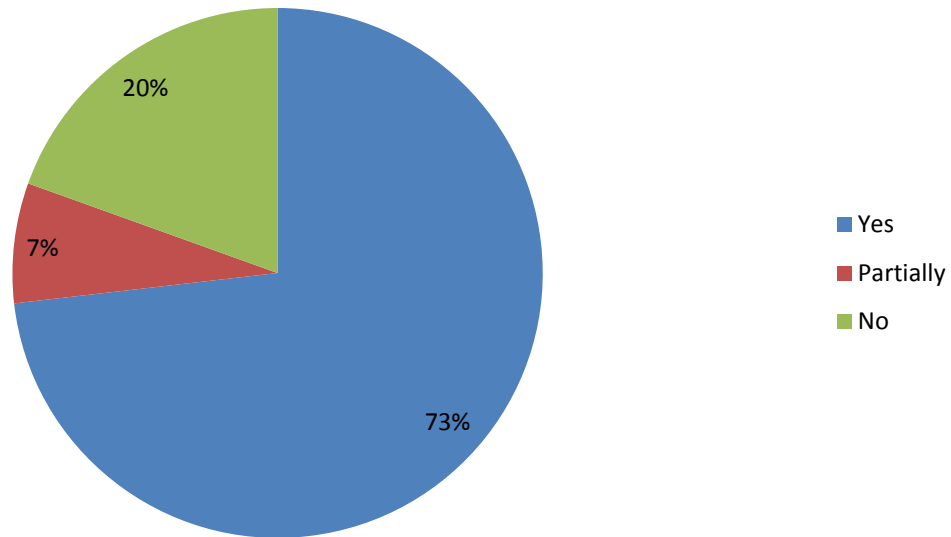
## dog muzzles and leashes

If you have dogs, do you have a muzzle and leash for each dog?



## vaccination status

Do you have a current Vaccination Certificate (that are can access and evacuate now with) for your cats and/or dogs?



## part of the family

Please indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement: "Pets are part of the family".



## leaving pets behind

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

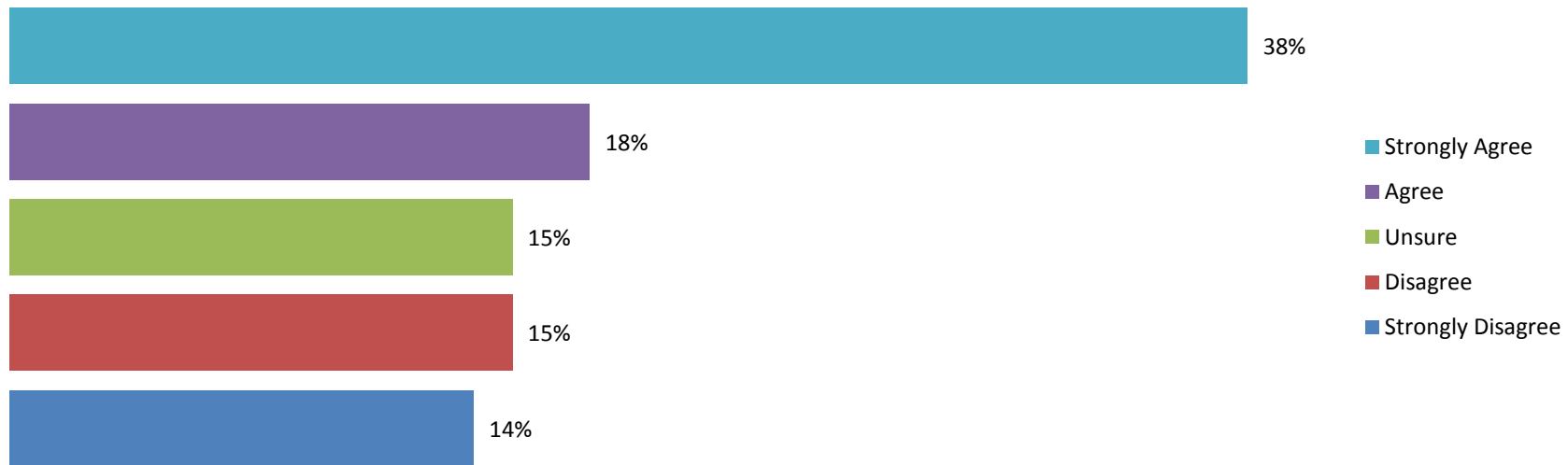
*I would be prepared to leave my pets behind.*



## evacuating without pets

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

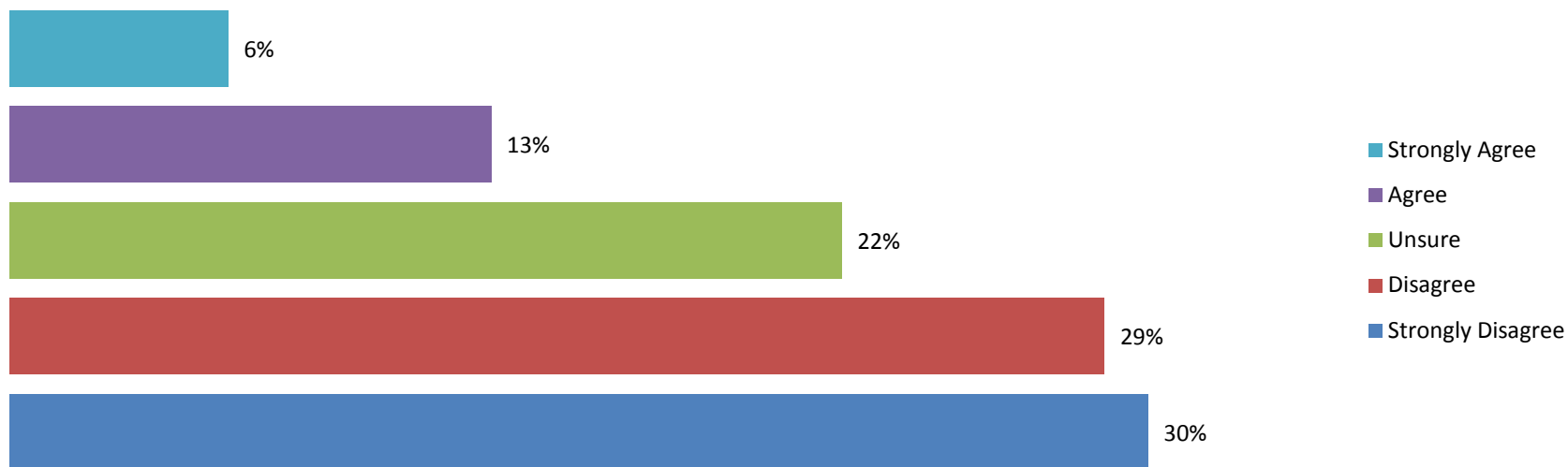
*I will not evacuate unless I can take my pets with me*



### officials power to destroy

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

*Officials should be able to destroy pets left in the evacuated area if required*



## ongoing care

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

*When evacuated, I would like to be involved in the ongoing care of my pets*

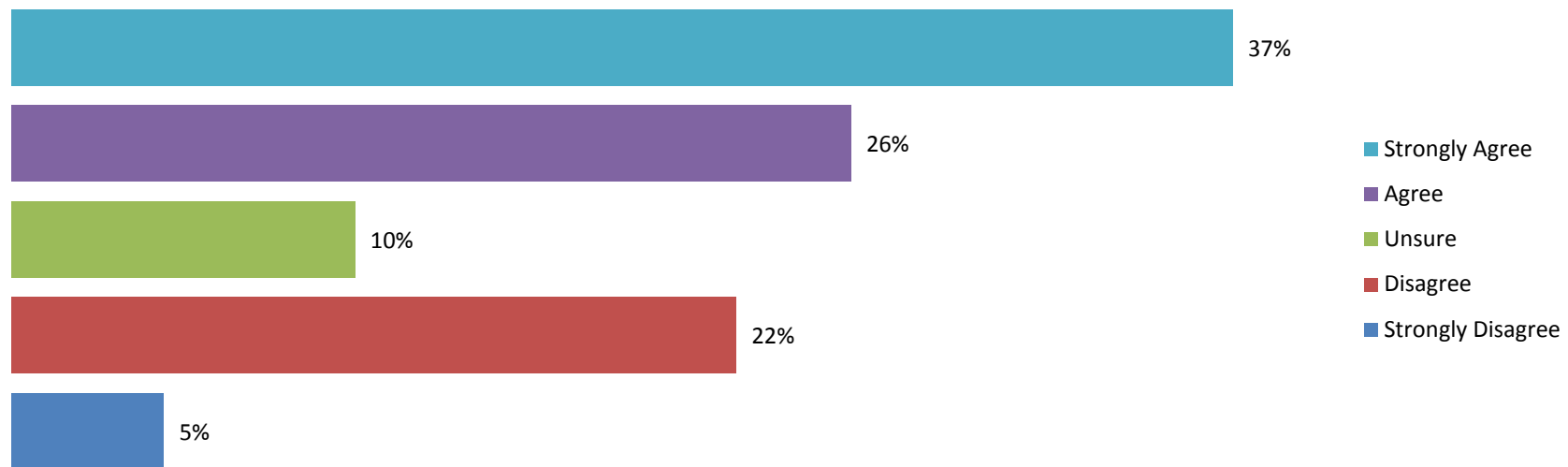




### coping mechanism

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

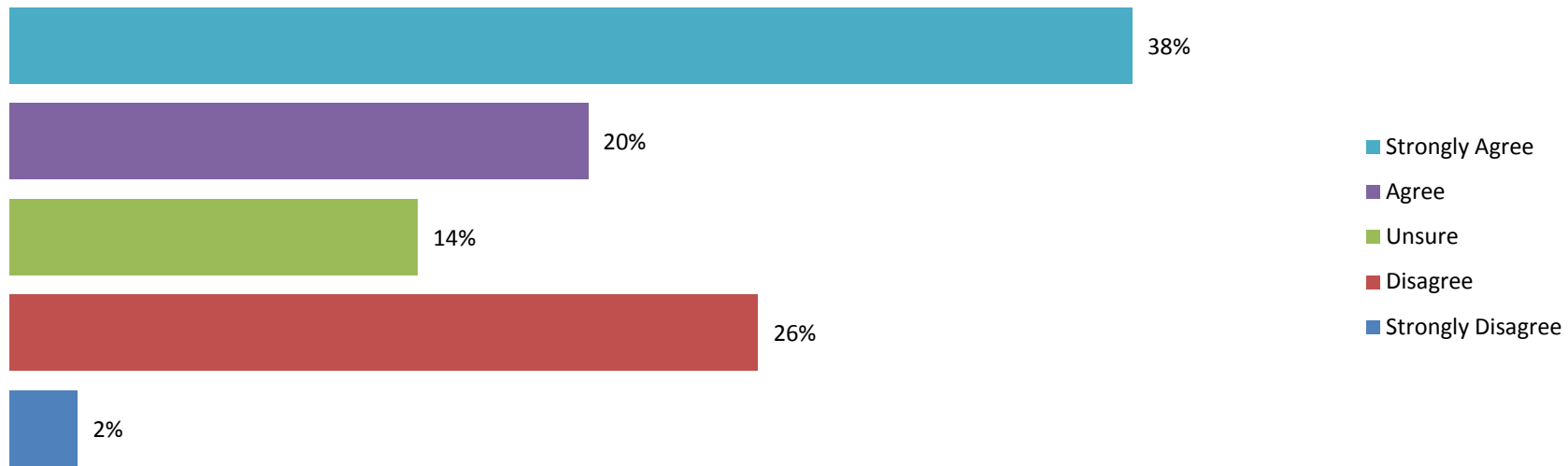
*My pets are an important coping mechanism for me (i.e. I talk to them when stressed)*



### return to retrieve pets

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

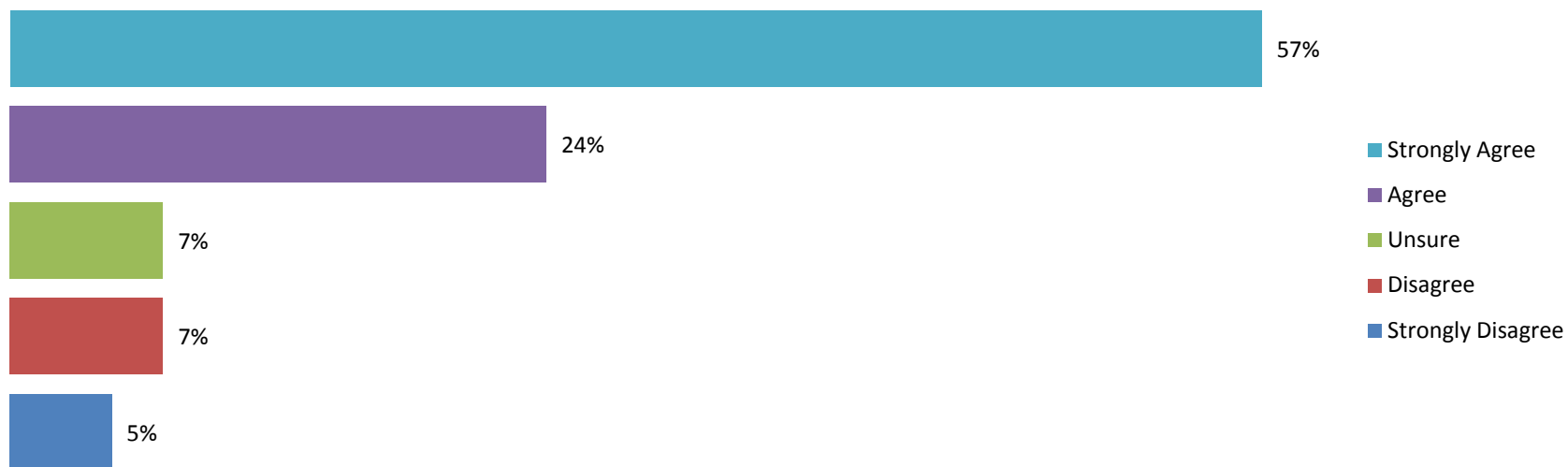
*I am likely to return for my pets if evacuated without them despite official directions*



## pet friendly shelters

If there was an emergency (such as a flood, chemical spill etc) and you were asked to evacuate, indicate whether you agree or not with the following statement:

*I am more likely to comply with evacuation if there are civil defence centres/welfare centres that cater for pets too*



### cost of emergency accommodation

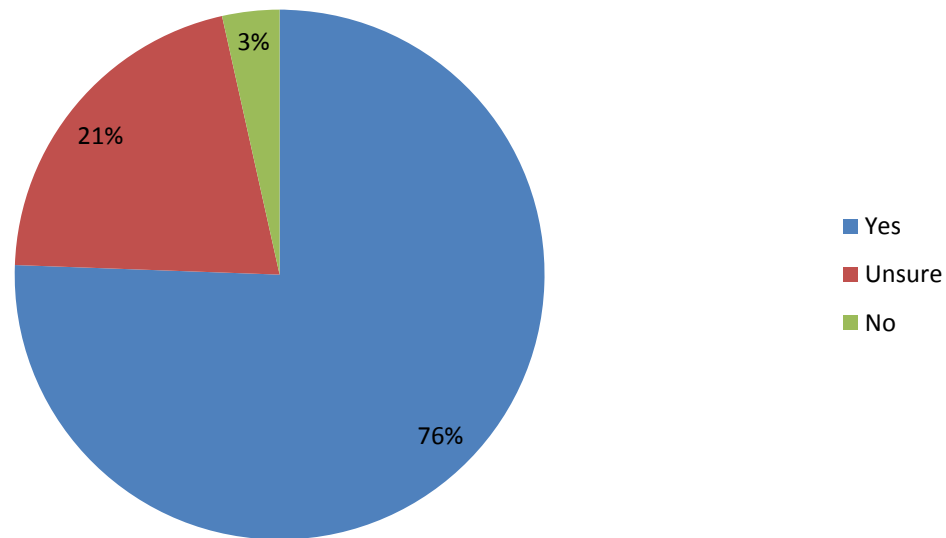
If your pets were relocated to a boarding establishment away from where you are being sheltered for three days, would you be able to pay for their accommodation.

*Based on the following typical rates:*

*Cats: \$12 per day, per cat.*

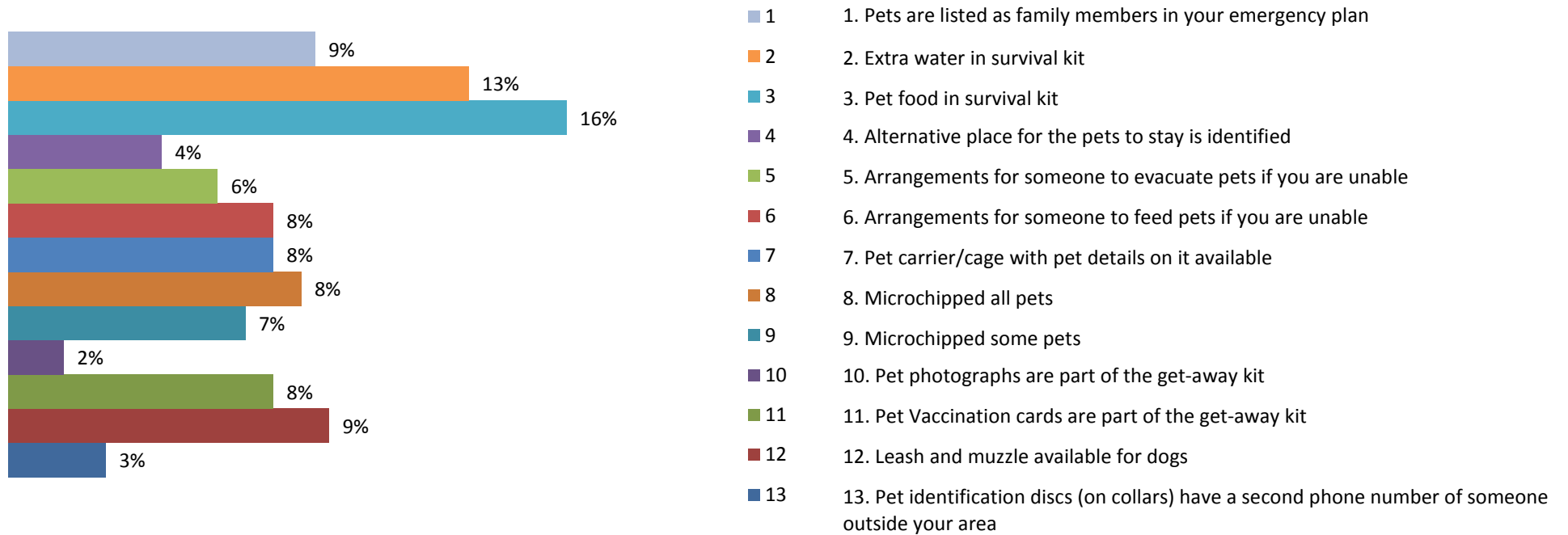
*Dogs: \$20-35 per day, per dog*

*Rabbits and other small animals: \$12 per animal pet day.*



## pet specific emergency preparedness

What extra steps have you taken (if any) to include your pets in your emergency survival preparations?



## acknowledgements

Mercalli Disaster Management Consulting would like to acknowledge the support from the following organisations and individuals who contributed to this survey project:

- Ritchie Dawson, Chief Animal Welfare Inspector, Wellington SPCA
- Desiree Paulsen, Emergency Management Officer, Taranaki Regional Council
- Blair Hillyard, Rescue Officer, Animal Rescue Unit, Wellington SPCA
- The Barry family of Bell Block, New Plymouth.

## contact

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**"Pets are one of the family and it is not okay to leave them behind when evacuating"**

## annex 1: survey flyer

# WANTED: PET OWNERS

## Pet owner emergency preparedness survey

Mercalli Disaster Management Consulting is currently conducting an online survey on pet owner emergency preparedness.

The survey is supported by the Taranaki Regional Council for the purpose and benefit of its emergency management functions, and by the Wellington SPCA.


The results of the survey will be used to help develop Civil Defence training programmes and resources to help with the protection of pets during emergencies.

If you are a pet owner in either Taranaki or Wellington, we ask you to help by completing this online survey (It is anonymous and confidential). Visit:

<http://tiny.cc/4LKiY>

For further information please contact [info@mercalli.co.nz](mailto:info@mercalli.co.nz)

For information on how you can prepare for an emergency visit:



[www.getthru.govt.nz](http://www.getthru.govt.nz)