

WHAT DOES ONE REALLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A NATURAL HAZARD TO ENCOURAGE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES?

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While geoscientists aspire to educate the public about underlying processes that control natural hazards, connections between these underlying processes and the information required for reducing risk/increasing resilience are typically complex and multidisciplinary. This leads to a disconnect between the documentation and quantification of hazards and developing broad-based public and political support for actions and investments to increase community resilience. To better equip citizens and policymakers with relevant, applicable information, we should emphasize the life-cycles of individual hazards and illustrate the range of threats and consequences through the lens of 'worst case scenarios'. These discussions should seek to clarify the scientific view of uncertainties and probabilities vs. public perceptions of these quantities, due to the importance of the consequences of an extreme event in the eyes of the public relative to a more abstract probability of event occurrence.

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