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February 23, 1999

For Immediate Release

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ARIZONANS PREPARE FOR Y2K CRISIS

Arizonans have heard a great deal about the Year 2000 computer bug problem and most believe that they will personally be affected by Y2K-related problems, according to a survey recently conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University. Many people in Arizona are beginning to prepare for the possible crisis by obtaining copies of financial records, avoiding airplane travel on the first day of the new year and withdrawing money from their bank accounts. Some people are preparing for a situation that can possibly turn people against each other, while others believe this as an opportunity to work with their neighbors to create a community-oriented response.

The statewide telephone survey of 435 randomly selected Arizonans was conducted between February 8 and 12, 1999. The results are accurate at a +/- 5% margin of error with a 95% confidence level.

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Y2K TAKEN SERIOUSLY IN ARIZONA

Almost 90 percent of adults in Arizona have heard about the Year 2000 computer bug problem. More than a majority of adults (54%) have heard a great deal about this problem. Arizonans seem to be more informed than the rest of the nation as a USA Today/Gallup Poll survey conducted in December, 1998 found that just 79% of people across the nation have heard about Y2K, with 39% having heard a great deal about this problem.

The Year 2000 computer bug problem involves a computer hardware and software problem whereby many systems will not correctly recognize the changeover in dates that will occur as the world enters the year 2000. Many systems are likely to fail because they will read the short hand the two-digit date 00 used in software as 1900, not 2000.

Almost half of all adults in Arizona (46%) are concerned about the Y2K computer bug problem. Eighteen percent believe major problems will occur from this problem and 64 percent believe minor problems will occur. Two-out-of-three Arizonans (64%), however, think they will be personally affected by the problem. Ten percent think they will experience major problems as the Year 2000 rolls around and slightly more than half (54%) think they will experience minor problems from Y2K. In the USA Today/Gallup Poll survey, 67 percent of adults across the nation thought they would be personally affected by Y2K-related problems.

Fred Solop, director of the survey, had this to say about the results, "Y2K frenzy is beginning to sweep the state. Hardly a day passes now that we don't hear about a news story about potential Y2K-related problems. People in Arizona are listening closely to these reports.

They are taking the threat of computer-related problems very seriously and are starting to think about how they will personally be affected by this problem in the new year.”

Y2K PREPARATIONS ARE UNDER WAY

People in Arizona are planning on protecting themselves against potential Y2K problems in a variety of ways. Two-thirds of Arizonans (64%) are planning on obtaining copies of bank account balances or other financial records before January 1, 2000. They fear that computer managed financial records may either not be available or will not accurately reflect accumulated funds in the Year 2000. Almost half of Arizonans (46%) are planning on avoiding airplane travel on or around January 1, 2000 and almost half are planning on withdrawing and setting aside cash from the bank (45%).

Forty percent of adults in Arizona will work with their neighbors to plan for possible Y2K-related problems. “Many people see Y2K as a crisis and are planning on protecting themselves and their families in the new year. For some, Y2K opens up an opportunity to talk with their neighbors, maybe for the first time, to discuss how to work together to weather the upcoming storm,” said Fred Solop.

One-third of Arizonans (34%) will stockpile food and water before the new year begins. Eighteen percent will arm themselves, believing, perhaps, that Y2K problems will cause people to turn against each other. Eleven percent will buy a generator, anticipating that the electric power grid will go down due to Y2K.



February 23, 1999

Social Research Laboratory
Northern Arizona University

BACKGROUND MEMO

2-NAU014/Spring

The Arizona statewide survey was conducted between February 8 and February 12, 1999. A random sample of 435 Arizonans was interviewed by telephone. Figures of this sampling size are subject to a sampling error of about +/- 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from the population. Sampling error does not take into account additional sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The data referred to in this release are presented below. National comparisons are made to data generated in a USA Today/Gallup Poll taken in December 1998.

Do you think that computer mistakes due to the Year 2000 issue will cause major problems, minor problems, or no problems at all?

	Arizona	U.S.
Major Problems	18%	34%
Minor Problems	64%	51%
No Problems At All	11%	10%
Don't Know	7%	5%
Refused	----	----
Totals	100%	100%

Do you think that computer mistakes due to the Year-2000 issue will cause major problems, minor problems, or no problems at all for *you personally*?

	Arizona	U.S.
Major Problems	10%	14%
Minor Problems	54%	53%
No Problems At All	32%	30%
Don't Know	5%	3%
Refused	----	----
Totals	101%	100%

How much have you seen or heard about the Year 2000 computer bug problem, sometimes called the Millennium bug or the Y2K bug – a great deal, some, not much or nothing at all?

	Arizona	U.S.
A Great Deal	54%	39%
Some	34%	40%
Not Much	8%	13%
Nothing At All	4%	8%
Don't Know	----	----
Refused	----	----
Totals	100%	100%

Overall, how concerned are you about the Y2K computer bug problem – are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

	Arizona	U.S.
Very Concerned	9	16
Somewhat Concerned	37	40
Not Too Concerned	41	31
Not At All Concerned	12	13
Don't Know	1	----
Refused	----	----
Total	100%	100%

For each of the following, please say whether this is something you probably will or will not do in order to protect yourself against problems associated with the Y2K computer bug. Will you ...

	(Arizona) Will Do	(U.S.) Will Do
Obtain copies of bank account balances or other financial records?	64%	65%
Avoid travel on airplanes on or around January 1, 2000?	46%	47%
Withdraw and set aside cash from the bank?	45%	31%
Work with your neighbors to plan for possible problems?	40%	NA
Stockpile food and water?	34%	26%
Arm yourself?	18%	NA
Will you buy a generator?	11%	17%