

Pre-Course Assignment

Best Practices in Community Risk Reduction

Welcome to the two-day “Best Practices in Community Risk Reduction” (BPCRR) course.

BPCRR will empower you with an understanding of nationally recognized principles that, when used appropriately, can lead to the development of effective and efficient community risk-reduction programs.

To be effective, community risk reduction must be conducted in a strategic manner. Through exploration of case studies, you will develop a thorough understanding of what constitutes strategic risk reduction.

The following strategies will be explored as part of the BPCRR course:

- Define what are considered industry “best practices” for the development, delivery, evaluation and sustainment of risk-reduction programs.
 - Explore risk-reduction programs that have proven successful to learn how:
 - Data was used to build a rationale for developing the program.
 - A risk assessment was used to identify and prioritize the root causes of the problem.
 - Potential target populations were identified.
 - A problem statement was developed.
 - Stakeholders were identified and engaged.
 - A sense of urgency was created for action to be taken.
 - Buy-in from the community was achieved.
 - An action/evaluation plan was developed to address the problem.
 - The program was deemed to be a cost-effective investment.
 - A strategy was created to sustain the program over the long term.
 - Evaluation was used to monitor the development, outreach, impact and long-term outcome of the program.
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The BPCRR course includes four units of instruction.

- Unit 1: Describing Strategic Community Risk Reduction. Students will be able to describe strategic community risk reduction.
- Unit 2: Assessing Community Risk. Students will be able to summarize how to assess risks within the community.
- Unit 3: Developing Intervention Strategies. Students will be able to propose intervention strategies to include in a program that addresses a specific risk issue.
- Unit 4: Resources. Students will be able to illustrate the value of investing resources into community risk reduction.

At the end of the course, you will be evaluated through a 25-question multiple choice examination. A final grade will be provided to you. The minimum score needed to pass the course is 70.

To prepare for attending the course, please take time to perform six simple actions:

1. Acknowledge that taking a strategic approach to fire prevention is **not** a new concept. Using a strategic approach to prevention has been mentioned in previous national fire protection plans dating back to 1913. In 2006, an ad hoc group of individuals and representatives from organizations with a history and shared mission focused on improving fire prevention efforts in the United States, initiated a project entitled Vision 20/20. These veteran fire service leaders recognized that although fire loss statistics in the U.S. had improved since the 1970s, progress had not equaled what was occurring in other industrialized nations.
2. Please visit the Vision 20/20 website located at <http://strategicfire.org/>.

Once arriving at the site, please explore the About Us, Strategies, and Fire Prevention Advocacy sections. Several short videos are available for download. These videos are intended to assist in your understanding of community risk-reduction concepts, provide tools to help departments advocate for a balanced prevention program, and emphasize the importance of evaluating prevention programs. You will find the videos under the “CRR” and “Resources” tabs. In preparation for the course, take time to view one of the following videos: “Prevention Saves,” “Advocate for Fire Prevention,” or “Model Performance Measures.” If you have more time, please look over the entire website, as it will be used extensively during your upcoming National Fire Academy (NFA) course.

3. Fire is Everyone's Fight™ is a national tagline designed to unite the fire service and others in a collaborative effort to reduce home fire injuries, deaths and property loss. It invites fire departments, safety advocates, community groups, schools and others to rally behind a common and compelling theme. By doing so, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and its partners will communicate and reinforce key lessons across fire safety and prevention initiatives and programs.

Prior to attending your upcoming NFA course, please visit the USFA website at http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/fire_is_everyones_fight/. Once there, you can find out more about the initiative and how you can become involved. You can also register for the graphic that is being used nationally. Once you register, you will be provided with access to several resource pages containing the different graphic formats, the graphic usage guidelines, public service announcements (PSAs), and downloadable and customizable materials to use in your own programs.

4. Consider taking a short self-study NFA Online course titled "Community Safety Educators." The course guides you through the basic steps of conducting community risk reduction. The course is accessible at <http://apps.usfa.fema.gov/nfacourses/catalog/details/68>.
5. Next, consider three risks that are currently a problem in your community. You will select one to focus on while attending the BPCRR course.
6. Finally, please consider a risk-reduction program or activity that your department currently delivers. Be prepared to discuss it with your peers as part of the NFA experience.

Thanks for your interest in furthering your education in fire prevention and community risk reduction. We look forward to your participation in the BPCRR course.
