



**FEMA**

N0670

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

Congratulations on being selected to attend the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA's)/National Fire Academy's (NFA's) Community Risk Reduction: A Policy Approach" (CRR: PA) course.

The purpose of the course is to empower students with the ability to create, evaluate, and defend public policy in their home community. The course is also designed to facilitate understanding of how codes and regulations can be used as an effective component in fire prevention, fire mitigation, and overall community risk reduction.

There is a graded pre-course enclosed to prepare you for the course. This assignment is worth 20 percent of your final grade. It is to be submitted the first morning of class in a binder for grading. The assignment will be used throughout the course.

This class is a six day class with evening classes possible. Check with your host site for the schedule.

The Student Manual (SM) for this course is now available in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) format which will function on any electronic device. Please see the page following this letter for complete instructions on successfully downloading your SM. Please note: If you plan to bring/use an iPad, you may experience issues saving/storing/printing course assignments since there is no USB/thumb drive capacity for these devices.

If you need additional information related to your course's content or requirements, please contact Mr. Michael Weller, Fire Prevention Management Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1476, or by email at [michael.weller@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:michael.weller@fema.dhs.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eriks J. Gabliks".

Eriks J. Gabliks, Superintendent  
National Fire Academy  
U.S. Fire Administration

Enclosures

## **National Fire Academy Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Course Materials/Download Instructions**

If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) before you travel to class and bring the preloaded device with you.

The **first step** is to download ADOBE Reader to your device. This will enable you to read and manipulate the course materials. ADOBE Reader can be used to comment and highlight text in Portable Document Format (PDF) documents. It is an excellent tool for note-taking purposes.

### **For Laptops and Computers**

ADOBE Reader can be downloaded from [www.adobe.com/downloads/](http://www.adobe.com/downloads/). It is a free download. Please note that depending on your settings, you may have to temporarily disable your antivirus software.

### **For Tablets and Other Similar Hand-Held Devices**

ADOBE Reader can be downloaded onto devices such as iPads, android tablets, and other hand-held devices. ADOBE Reader for these types of devices can be found in the device's Application Store using the search function and typing in "ADOBE Reader." Follow the instructions given. **It is a free application.** Note: In order to have the editing capabilities/toolbar, the document needs to be "opened with ADOBE Reader." There should be a function on your device to do this.

After you have successfully downloaded the ADOBE Reader, please use the following Web link to download your N0670, "Community Risk Reduction: A Policy Approach" (CRR: PA) SM. (You may copy/paste this link into your Web browser.)

[https://nfa.usfa.fema.gov/ax/sm/sm\\_n0670.pdf](https://nfa.usfa.fema.gov/ax/sm/sm_n0670.pdf)

Note: Please make sure you download the ADOBE Reader first. To open the SM, you will need to open the ADOBE Reader and then open the SM through the ADOBE Reader in order for the note-taking tools to work properly.

If you need assistance, please contact [nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov).

March 2018

# **COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION: A POLICY APPROACH**

## **PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENT**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION: A POLICY APPROACH COURSE

Welcome to Community Risk Reduction: A Policy Approach (CRR: PA). CRR: PA empowers students with the ability to create, evaluate and defend public policy in their home community.

The course is designed to facilitate understanding of how codes and regulations can be used as an effective component in fire prevention, fire mitigation and overall community risk reduction. The course will address how to:

- Use a community risk assessment to prioritize risk.
- Develop a problem statement and recommend a strategic prevention intervention using public policy.
- Design a strategy to build support for a public policy.
- Develop and submit a proposal for a public policy.
- Understand the public policy issue resolution process.
- Educate, apply and evaluate a new or modified public policy.

Public policy is a potentially effective but often underutilized component of risk reduction. Recall that the most effective risk-reduction strategies employ use of combined prevention interventions to include:

- Public Education.
- Engineering and Technology.
- Enactment and Enforcement.
- Economic Incentives to Support Prevention.
- Emergency Response.

Public policy has been recognized for many decades as a key component of an integrated risk reduction strategy. The 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention called for use of public policy as a component for reducing the impact of fire. That recommendation was echoed again during the first Wingspread Conference in 1966 and three additional times during subsequent Wingspread Conferences.

Perhaps the strongest recommendation to use public policy as a means of preventing or mitigating the effects of fire came in the benchmark report "America Burning," published in 1973. These recommendations were also stressed in subsequent reports that have occurred nearly every decade since. The most recent call for use of public policy as an integrated component of prevention/mitigation of risk appears in the Vision 20/20 report.

If you are not familiar with the 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention, the America Burning Series or the Vision 20/20 initiatives, please review these topics prior to attending National Fire Academy (NFA). The documents/initiative will be discussed in class, and you should be familiar with them. Information on the 1947 President's Conference and the America Burning series can be found on the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) website at [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov). Information on Vision 20/20 can be found at [www.strategicfire.org](http://www.strategicfire.org).

Public policy can play a critical role in risk prevention and mitigation because it may require the application of all types of prevention interventions. Because all members of our industry have a duty to help apply public policy at the local level, the target population for CRR: PA is broad. It includes fire marshals, building officials, public educators, inspectors, plan reviewers, investigators, officers and other public officials.

Most NFA courses require completion of a pre-course assignment. The assignment for CRR: PA is a multistep process that includes:

- Create a profile of the local community.
- Identify and profile risks in your community.
- Know your form of government.
- Identify the fire/building codes used in your jurisdiction.
- Research the process for proposing, adopting or modifying public policy in the community you serve.
- Attend or watch a meeting of the city council, county commission or township supervisors to explore local democracy in action.

**Completion of the pre-course assignment is mandatory for acceptance into CRR: PA.** Information from the assignment will be used to process in-class activities and ultimately develop a draft plan for using public policy as part of an integrated prevention/mitigation strategy in the community you protect. **You should bring the information collected as part of the pre-course assignment with you to the NFA.**

A checklist for the assignment is included for your benefit at the end of this document to serve as record of completion and a reminder of documents to bring to class. **Only send the completed checklist.** Directions on how to send the document are located on the checklist. **It is due no later than one week in advance of the course.**

Any questions about the pre-course assignment should be directed to Michael Weller, Training Specialist, 301-447-1476 or at [michael.weller@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:michael.weller@fema.dhs.gov).

## **PART 1: BUILDING A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF YOUR COMMUNITY**

### **Background Information**

A community profile describes the demographics of your community. The profile includes people-related data that includes:

- Demographic dispersion of the population.
- Demographic dispersion of confirmed (or potential) vulnerable groups.
- Economic profile of the community.
- Demographic dispersion of ethnic groups.
- Diversity of languages throughout community.

- The United States Census Bureau collects demographic data on every community in the country. All risk-reduction practitioners should be familiar with the information processed by the bureau.

Demographical information can be obtained for all communities in the U.S. by visiting the U.S. Census Bureau at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). Try using the census bureau website to get experience using this resource. You are also encouraged in Part 1 to research other resources to help you obtain additional information about your community.

## Assignment for Part 1

### Use American FactFinder

1. Go to the U.S. Census Bureau website at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). Click on Data on top of the page. On the drop-down menu, click on American FactFinder. Put the name of your city or town to gather demographic information about your city or town. Use American FactFinder to build a **current** demographical profile of your home community. Develop a profile of the people who live in your community (age, gender, race, ethnicity, incomes, poverty, etc.). Perform the same actions for housing (type of homes, age, owner versus renter, etc.). A profile of employment should also be explored. **A worksheet (with prompting questions) is provided to assist you.**
2. You may live in a city or town that has multiple census tracts. You are encouraged to seek out someone in your community who has expertise working with the U.S. census. This person can help you obtain information about specific census tracts. This is your opportunity to understand how the census can assist you in compiling demographic information about your community. You are again encouraged to explore no more than four census tracts in your community. It might be advantageous to select areas where more fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls are run to obtain data about those specific areas.
  - The demographical information will be used throughout the CRR: PA course.
  - You **must** have this information available throughout the CRR: PA course in order to process the in-class activities. Saving the information on a memory device or printing hard copies is highly recommended. All FactFinder categories can be downloaded or printed.
  - Being able to **explain and use** the demographical, social and cultural development of your community is essential to the effectiveness and credibility of a public policy development team.

3. Additional sources that may be helpful in locating demographic information includes but is not limited to:

- [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com).
- City and County Planning Departments.
- Office of Community Development.
- Housing Authority.
- Economic Development Commission.
- Chamber of Commerce.
- Community Action Council.
- Local schools, hospitals and health departments.
- Head start programs and child care organizations.
- Department of Social Services.
- Commission on Aging.
- Advocacy Groups.
- Neighborhood Associations.
- Houses of Worship.

**DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHEET**

Use American FactFinder and other resources to build a demographical, social, economic and housing profile of your community. **Bulleted summary statements are acceptable.**

Category	Description	Questions to answer — your community
Demographical (people-related information):	Population size, distribution, age, ethnicity and cultures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the total population of your community?</li> <li>• Try to determine the population of at least four census tracts.</li> <li>• Try to determine which of these census tracts have greatest concentration of the following vulnerable populations:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children under 5?</li> <li>- Older adults?</li> <li>- People challenged by poverty?</li> <li>- People with disabilities?</li> <li>- People who speak little or no English?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Social characteristics:	Education levels and family profiles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the demographics of education levels throughout your community?</li> <li>• Try to determine what census tracts include the greatest populations of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single-parent homes?</li> <li>- Two-parent homes?</li> <li>- People living alone?</li> <li>- Older adults living alone?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Economic characteristics:	Employment profile and rates, income levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the employment profile of your constituency?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Types of jobs?</li> <li>- Work in community or commute?</li> <li>- Major <b>local</b> employers?</li> <li>- Unemployment rate?</li> <li>- Income level ranges?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHEET**

Category	Description	Your community
Housing profile:	Age of homes and occupants, types of residential occupancies, home ownership versus rental properties, transience among residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the overall housing profile of your community?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Average age of homes?</li> <li>- New (or recent) construction?</li> <li>- Homes with automatic detection <b>and</b> suppression equipment?</li> <li>- Types of residential construction?</li> <li>- Types of residential properties (single-family, duplex, multiunit)?</li> <li>- Renter versus owner occupied?</li> <li>- Transience? (How often do people relocate to another residence?)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Develop a <b>general overview</b> of your community's housing profile.</p>
Growth trends:	Project growth trends for your community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use bullet points to profile how your community has changed over the past 10 years and what its profile may look like 10 years from now.</li> </ul>

## **PART 2: BUILDING A RISK PROFILE OF YOUR COMMUNITY**

### **Background Information**

Community risk can be human-created or naturally occurring. Human-created risks are those that have some form of human involvement at their core. Examples include cooking fires, car crashes and ground level falls. Naturally occurring risks are those that develop without a human component. Examples include earthquakes and severe weather events.

Traditionally, the following factors are considered when prioritizing a community risk to address:

- Frequency of occurrence (how often the risk happens).
- Injuries and deaths caused by the risk.
- Property loss caused by the risk.
- Are the number of incidents rising or falling?
- Where are incidents occurring and who is at greatest risk?

### **Assignment for Part 2**

Use the risk profile sheet located on the next page to identify priority risks and consider if use of public policy may be an appropriate component of a risk-reduction strategy.

RISK WORKSHEET

<b>Type of Risk</b>	<b>Why is it being identified as a priority risk?</b>	<b>Where does the risk occur most frequently and what populations are most affected?</b>	<b>Is there currently a public policy in place that addresses the risk?</b>	<b>Could public policy be utilized to help prevent/mitigate the risk?  Why or why not?</b>

## **PART 3: PUBLIC POLICY IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

### **Background Information**

As members of the public safety industry, each of us has some level of experience with the development or application of local public policy.

If you have ever served on a committee to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for your organization, you have helped create a form of policy. Perhaps you helped create policy that was applied in the community, such as a smoke alarm or sprinkler ordinance.

At a minimum, every public servant applies a form of public policy when delivering emergency response, as local government is responsible for protecting its citizens. If you provide plans review or inspection services, you apply policy each time a code or standard is interpreted and enforced.

As a student in CRR: PA, you will learn how to conduct environmental scanning. This process entails analyzing the community to assess stakeholder/public interest and opinion of a proposed public policy. To prepare for the CRR: PA course, please perform the assignment for Part 3.

### **Assignment for Part 3**

1. Know your form of government. (Examples include weak/strong mayor; city manager/administrator; board of supervisors or commission, etc.)
2. Identify the fire/building codes utilized in the community you serve.
3. Know the process for proposing, adopting and modifying public policy in the community you serve.
4. Bring an example of a local ordinance.
5. If your jurisdiction uses a standard ordinance template, bring a copy to class.
6. Attend in person or watch via cable a meeting of your local legislative body.

## **PART 4: FIRE IS EVERYONE'S FIGHT**

Sign up for Fire is Everyone's Fight™. This national effort is led by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to lower the number of home fires and home fire injuries in America. Along with USFA and partner organizations across the country, the fire community is speaking out with a unified message of fire prevention and safety to the public. The goal is to change how people think about fire and fire prevention, using social marketing strategies to address the broadest audience.

### **Assignment for Part 4**

Go to <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/fief/>. Scroll down a couple lines, and click on Fire is Everyone's Fight. Continue scrolling down the page until you see the box on the right to register as a partner to use the Fire is Everyone's Fight logo on materials you create. The Fire is Everyone's Fight logo is trademarked, so we require that you complete a simple registration form to use it. Once you register, you'll have access to various versions of the logo optimized for website, print and online materials.

You are encouraged to download the Fire is Everyone's Fight Guide at: [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/fief/fief\\_outreach\\_guide.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/fief/fief_outreach_guide.pdf). This will help you develop creative ways to engage your community.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note date completed	<b>Pre-course Assignment Checklist</b>
	<b>Your Title:</b>
	<b>Years of Public Policy Experience:</b>
	<b>Part 1: Building a Demographic Profile of Your Community</b>
	Create a demographical, social, economic and housing profile of your community.
	Profile how your community has developed and changed over the past 10 years.
	Predict what your community may look like 10 years from now.
	<b>Part 2: Building a Risk Profile of Your Community</b>
	Identify and profile five priority risks in your home community.
	<b>Part 3: Public Policy in Your Community</b>
	Bring an example of a local ordinance.
	Identify the fire/building codes utilized in the community you serve.
	Know the process for proposing, adopting and modifying public policy in the community you serve.
	Bring an example of a local ordinance.
	If your jurisdiction uses a standard ordinance template, bring a copy to class.
	Attend or watch via cable a meeting of your local legislative body.
	<b>Part 4: Fire is Everyone's Fight</b>
	Signed up for Fire is Everyone's Fight.
	<b>Attach this to the front of your graded pre-course assignment and bring to class at NFA.</b>