



R0233

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

By now you should have received an email notification from the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Admissions Office. This notification indicates your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), National Fire Academy (NFA) “Chemistry for Emergency Response” (CER) course.

Congratulations on being selected to attend the USFA’s/NFA’s CER course.

This course is designed for emergency services personnel and inspection personnel who have an interest in understanding how and why materials act in relation to the application of science to a hazardous materials/Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Enhanced incident. It seeks to convey to responders or inspectors a sound understanding of the basic chemistry of hazardous materials in order to permit them to correctly assess a potential threat and make “risk-based” decisions.

The focus of the course is on response chemistry, using a building-block approach for each chemical family, beginning with basics and adding and applying skills as the course progresses.

Prior to your arrival, you should complete the “Foundational Concepts of Chemistry” (Q0228) self-study course. This course is available through NFA Online at <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/courses/online.html>.

This course combines lecture, discussion, group and individual activities with problem solving sessions and proficiency-based assignments. A 2-hour evening practice session is expected every day. There are quizzes every morning on material covered the previous day. Students are expected to participate and actively engage in the interactive course methodology throughout the 2 weeks, complete nightly homework assignments, and study for quizzes and exams. **Students should bring a calculator to class.**

To alleviate some of the time necessary to learn the material, it is advised that you memorize the following chemical symbols.

| | | | |
|-----------|----|------------|----|
| Hydrogen | H | Mercury | Hg |
| Sodium | Na | Tin | Sn |
| Lithium | Li | Copper | Cu |
| Potassium | K | Chromium | Cr |
| Magnesium | Mg | Carbon | C |
| Calcium | Ca | Nitrogen | N |
| Barium | Ba | Phosphorus | P |
| Boron | B | Oxygen | O |
| Aluminum | Al | Sulfur | S |
| Lead | Pb | Fluorine | F |
| Cobalt | Co | Chlorine | Cl |
| Iron | Fe | Bromine | Br |
| Iodine | I | | |

The class graduation ceremony is an important part of the course. You are expected to attend this event. All departing travel arrangements should be made so that you do not leave campus prior to the class graduation.

The NFA classroom environment is computer based. Increased numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers or other electronic devices to campus; you are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The NFA cannot provide computer software, hardware (which includes disks, printers, scanners, monitors, etc.), or technical support for your device. For your convenience, we do provide surge protector power strips at each classroom table.

Should you need to access the Student Computer Lab, it is located in Building D and is available for all students to use. The lab is open daily with a technician available Monday through Thursday from 1700 to 2100 (5 p.m. to 9 p.m.) and on Saturdays from 0800 to 1200 (8 a.m. to noon). The lab uses Windows 7 and Office 2013 as the software standard.

If you need additional information related to your course's content or requirements, please contact Mr. Wayne Yoder, Hazardous Materials Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1090, or by email at wayne.yoder@fema.dhs.gov. Good luck, and I hope to see you on campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tonya L. Hoover". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Tonya L. Hoover, Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration