



Dear National Fire Academy Student:

Welcome to the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy's (NFA) *National Fire Incident Reporting Systems: Standards of Cover* (NFIRS:SOC) (R492) course. The goal of this course is to enable you to successfully use National Fire Incident Data and analysis tools with the Standards of Cover Methodology to document the distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources and develop an acceptable model to meet community performance and outcome standards and to guide future growth discussions. This 6-day course will allow you to apply knowledge learned during the course in small group sessions.

To ensure maximum application of your knowledge, you will need:

- An active user account in the NFIRS online database at USFA. Your State NFIRS Program Manager can create the user account.
- At least, the following user account permissions:
 - Startup
 - Read Incidents
 - Write Incidents
 - Version Updates
 - File Transfer
 - User Validation
 - Web Page Area
 - Log Retrieval
 - Report Submit
 - Report Fetch
 - Report Templates
 - Report Generate
 - Bulk Export
- To bring on CD a database or file(s) containing all incidents for at least 1 year. Acceptable formats are:

- NFIRS Version 5 Transaction Fire Format (export file to the State)
- NFIRS Version 4.1 Transaction File Format
- NFIRSdataV54.mdb (with an active off-line user account in the database)

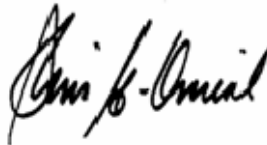
Students using acceptable 3rd-party NFIRS software (FireHouse, FirePrograms, Tiburon, etc.) can bring a copy of their 3rd-party NFIRS databases on CD, along with one of the three options above. A list of acceptable 3rd-party NFIRS vendors can be found at www.nfirs.fema.gov/vendors

- To contact your State NFIRS Program Manager within 1 month prior to class. Please advise your Program Manager that you will be attending the NFIRS course at the NFA; you may call concerning data issues. A list of State NFIRS Program Managers can be found at www.nfic.org

Increasing numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers to campus. You alone are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The Academy cannot provide you with computer software, hardware, or technical support to include disks, printers, scanners, etc. There are a limited number of 120 Volt AC outlets in the classrooms. A Student Computer Lab is located in Building D and is available for all students to use. It is open daily with technical support provided in the evenings. This lab uses Windows XP and Office 2003 as the software standard.

Should you need additional information related to course content or requirements, please feel free to contact Ms. Colleen Heilig, Planning and Information Management Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1613 or email at Colleen.Heilig@dhs.gov.

Sincerely,



Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration

NFIRS Standards of Cover
PRECOURSE MATERIALS

Precourse Readings

There are five precourse reading assignments.

1. *How to Think with Your Gut*, by Thomas A. Stewart for CNNMoney Business 2.0. (Click on the article name above to download the article.
http://money.cnn.com/magazines/business2/business2_archive/2002/11/01/331634/index.htm)
2. Anatomy of Excel Data Analysis: Advanced Graphs and PivotCharts, by Scott Lowe.
3. Anatomy of Excel Data Analysis: Restructure Information with Pivot Tables, by Scott Lowe.
4. Anatomy of Excel Data Analysis: Sorting and Filtering Information
5. 75 Essential Excel ® Tips, compiled by Jody Gilbert and Bill Detwiler.

Articles 2-4 can be accessed by logging into the TechRepublic site at: <http://techrepublic.com.com/2001-6240-0.html>. Copyright ©2005 CNET Networks, Inc. All rights reserved. You will need to create a new user account and search for the four articles listed above by name.

Pre-course Data Assignment

Complete the [PreCourse Data Collection spreadsheet](#) with information from your local area. Be sure to fill in all five sheets of the Excel workbook.