FEMA

R359

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

Congratulations on your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy's *Discovering the Road to High Risk Audiences--One Week* course. This 6-day course looks at each of the major community audiences that are most at risk from fire according to the USFA's National Fire Data Center. Topics include the impact of social and economic diversity on the fire problem, fire and life safety for people with disabilities, the aging process and fire risk, and the effect of fire on very young children.

The class is taught from a community-based "down home" perspective. Each high-risk audience is analyzed for what makes the audience vulnerable, solutions are discussed for reaching each group, and program planning needs address several issues at local levels. Some of the most powerful and emotional messages are delivered through videos and interactive class learning activities. Both inner-city and rural audiences and settings are woven through the course.

While at the Academy, you will work on a project concerning your own community. This project will enable you to examine your own community and various projections for its high-risk groups, and how to better serve the high-risk groups for the purpose of reducing your community's fire and life safety problems.

Enclosed with this letter is a pre-course assignment that you must complete and submit to the Academy three weeks prior to the start of the class. You may fax or e-mail the completed pre-course assignment. Please see the enclosure for mailing information.

Discovering the Road to High-Risk Audiences--One Week is challenging and innovative. The course is designed to maximize interactivity among participants and instructors. A variety of instructional methods are employed. We look forward to having you as a class participant.

At some point during the course, members of the class will share some of their programs with other students. You are encouraged to bring with you samples of programs, courses, campaigns, etc., developed by you or your organization. Items may include, but not be limited to, media products, course manuals, handouts, or other appropriate materials. You are also encouraged to bring some local brochures containing information or programs about these high-risk populations which your organization or other organizations currently use.
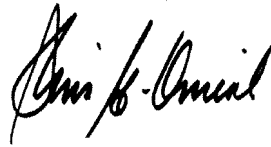
It is important to note that this is a 6-day class, and the first day of class will begin on Sunday at approximately 8 a.m. just after orientation. Orientation will normally commence at 8 a.m.; however, make sure you confirm this when you check in. Subsequent classes will meet daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with graduation occurring on Friday at 4 p.m. Because of this schedule, you will be provided lodging for Friday night. Evening classes may be required.

End-of-class graduation ceremonies are an important part of the course and you are expected to attend. Please do not make any travel arrangements to leave campus until after you and your classmates graduate.

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 is 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 or have questions pertaining to course content or requirements, you should contact Mr. Gerry Bassett, Fire Prevention Public Education Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1094 or email at gerry.bassett@dhs.gov

Sincerely,

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

Enclosures

Pre-Course Assignment
for
Discovering the Road to
High-Risk Audiences--One Week

PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENT

Part 1

Note--An example of a completed precourse assignment can be viewed on the Web at http://www.usfa.dhs.gov

In addition, please download, print, and read three documents: *America Burning*, *Solutions 2000*, and *Beyond Solutions 2000*. These documents can be located at: www.usfa.dhs.gov

America Burning: http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/publications (type in "America Burning" under publications search).

Solutions 2000: http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/solutions2000.pdf

Beyond Solutions 2000: http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/beyondsolutions2000.pdf

After reading the above texts, please come to NFA prepared to discuss the following. You may bring notes with you to class on the following questions:

- How did the *America Burning* report originate?
- What national recommendations came from the *America Burning* report?
- What was the purpose of the symposium that led to the creation of the *Solutions 2000* report?
- Summarize the goals of *Solutions 2000* and explain how they are to be reached. Why are the logistics for reaching these goals complex?
- Why is the fire death rate so much greater in the U.S. than in other nations?
- What was the rationale for conducting the followup symposium--*Beyond Solutions 2000*?
- Summarize the major goals identified during the *Beyond Solutions 2000* symposium.
- In your opinion, how well are we reaching the goals identified in both *Solutions 2000* and *Beyond Solutions 2000*?
- If we are not being successful in reaching the goals, why?
- Why do both reports suggest a comprehensive and integrated approach to risk mitigation using **all** levels of prevention interventions?
- How can you become change agents who will make the goals outlined during the two symposiums possible at the local, State, and national level?

You also are encouraged to bring information about current programs and strategies your organization is using to address fire risk among high-risk populations.

Part 2: Home Community Data

Knowing one's community, its people, and its associated risks are critical to the process of effective risk reduction.

The information collected during this assignment will help in developing a profile of the community you protect. You will use the information to develop a rationale for addressing fire risk among specific populations.

A big caution: Do your best to obtain an accurate profile for each section. The end-result will be well worth the effort! Possible sources of information for local fires risks and community demographics are included at the end of the assignment.

Please mail, email or fax this assignment so that it is received **3 weeks prior** to the start of the class.

This form is fillable for your convenience.

Mr. Gerry Bassett
Training Specialist
United States Fire Administration
National Fire Programs Division
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727
Phone: 301-447-1094
Fax: 301-447-1178
Email: gerry.bassett@dhs.gov

Home Community Data

I.   Community Demographics

      A.   Name of community: _____

      B.   Total population of your community: _____

      C.   Please identify the current and projected population size of the following groups:

	Current	**Projected Growth**

          1.   Children age 5 and under:

          2.   Adults over age 65:

          3.   People with disabilities:

          4.   People living in poverty:

II.   Fire Experience Profile

      A.   Using **local** fire experience data, identify the five leading fire causes in your community. List in the order of frequency with which they occur.

          1.

          2.

          3.

          4.

          5.

B.   What is the leading cause of fire-related injury in your community?

C.   What is the leading cause of fire death in your community?

III.   Specific High-Risk Population Profile

A.   Briefly describe how your leading fire-risk issues are affecting the following populations: (Note: bullet-point-type summaries will be sufficient.)

        1.   Young children (age 5 and under):

        2.   Older adults (age 65 and over):

        3.   People with disabilities:

        4.   People living in poverty:

B.   Briefly describe what past and present strategies your organization uses to address fire risk among the following populations: (Note: bullet-point-type summaries will be sufficient.)

1.   Young children (age 5 and under):

2.   Older adults (age 65 and over):

3.   People with disabilities:

4.   People living in poverty:

C.   Based on your demographic, fire experience, and risk profile, describe what future fire-risk challenges you expect to face among the following populations: (Note: bullet-point-type summaries will be sufficient.)

1.   Young children (age 5 and under):

2.   Older adults (age 65 and over):

3.   People with disabilities:

4.   People living in poverty:

Possible Information Sources--Local Fire Experience

- National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS);
- State fire reporting systems;
- local "in house" departmental records and databases; and
- examination of emergency incident response reports.

Possible Information Sources--Community Demographics

There are many sources for obtaining information on local community demographics. One **very** reliable source is the U.S. Census Bureau. Their Web address is www.census.gov Once reaching the site, look on the left column and find *American Fact Finder*. Search AFF for the desired information. Caution: consider a search by city or community name first, as ZIP code areas may encompass a large geographical area. Also, many cities have more than one ZIP code. **Another Web site that may assist greatly with this assignment is City-Data.com Their Web site is http://www.city-data.com**

Possible sources for obtaining information on **local** community demographics also include

Children age 5 and under: Office of Community Development, Board of Education/school districts, Head Start Programs, child care associations

Adults over age 65:   Office of Community Development, Commission on Aging, older adult advocacy agencies

People with disabilities: Office of Community Development, people with disabilities advocacy agencies

People living in poverty: Office of Community Development, Office of Housing and Urban Development, social service agencies, Community Action Councils, advocacy agencies for low-income families

EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENT

EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENT

I.   **Community Demographics**

     A.   **Name of community:** Anytown, USA

     B.   **Total population of your community:** 18,000

     C.   **Please identify the current and projected population size of the following groups:**

		Current	5-yr. Projection	10-yr. Projection
1.	**Children age 5 and under**	1,200	1,250	1,275
2.	**Adults over age 65**	4,800	5,100	5,450
3.	**People with disabilities**	900	950	1,200
4.	**People living in poverty**	1,800	1,825	1,950

II.   **Fire Experience Profile**

     A.   **Using local fire experience data, identify the five leading fire causes in your community. List in the order of frequency with which they occur.**

        1.   Unattended cooking--causes 40 percent of all structure fires.

        2.   Electrical fires.

        3.   Arson--includes juvenile firesetting.

        4.   Portable heating appliances.

        5.   Improper disposal of tobacco products.

B.   **What is the leading cause of fire-related injury in your community?**

Thirty-eight percent of fire-related injuries are caused by inappropriate response to range-top fires. The typical injury involves a person who has attempted to carry a flaming pan outdoors.

C.   **What is the leading cause of fire death in your community?**

Fires resulting from the improper disposal of tobacco products. Anytown has not experienced a fire death in the past 5 years.

III.   Specific High-Risk Population Profile

A.   **Briefly describe how your leading fire risk issues are affecting the following populations** (Note: bullet-point-type summaries will be sufficient.):

1.   Young children (age 5 and under):

a.   Juvenile firesetting causes the greatest number of fire-related injuries for this population.

b.   Most fires caused by this population are curiosity-related incidents.

c.   Thanks to proactive prevention efforts, the occurrence of juvenile firesetting has declined 50 percent over the past 3 years.

2.   Older adults (age 65 and over):

a.   Unattended cooking is the leading cause of fire and fire-related injury among this population.

b.   Thirty percent of the community's cooking fires occur in city-owned housing units. Many of the units are occupied by older adults.

3.   People with disabilities:

Thermal burns resulting from tobacco products dropped on clothing and bedding are the leading cause of fire-related injury and death to this population. Although incidents of this type historically have been infrequent, the fire department has concerns about future risk situations that may face this population.

4. **People living in poverty:**

    a.   Unattended cooking is the leading cause of fire and fire-related injury among this population.

    b.   Thirty percent of the community's cooking fires occur in city-owned housing units. Many of the units are occupied by citizens living in or near poverty levels.

B. **Briefly describe what past and present strategies your organization uses to address fire risk among the following populations** (Note: bullet-point-type summaries will be sufficient.):

1. **Young children (age 5 and under):**

    a.   Annual fire safety programs at all child-care centers.

    b.   Fire safety education is integrated into primary school essential curriculum.

    c.   Firefighters discuss safety for young children during annual door-to-door community-based safety campaign.

    d.   Ongoing media campaign to encourage proper adult supervision of young children.

2. **Older adults (age 65 and over):**

    a.   Annual door-to-door community-based safety campaign.

    b.   Safety workshops are conducted in city-owned housing units upon request.

3. **People with disabilities:**

    a.   Annual door-to-door community-based safety campaign.

    b.   Fire safety programs are presented at facilities that serve disabled clients upon request of the facility.

4. **People living in poverty:**

    a.   Annual door-to-door community-based safety campaign.

    b.   Annual fire safety programs held each summer in community housing units.

c.   Special note: the fire department opens fire-damaged structures to the public after a serious fire has occurred. Neighborhood safety canvasses are held postfire. As with the door-to-door community-based safety campaign, this strategy serves all populations.

C.   Based on your demographic, fire experience, and risk profile, describe what future fire-risk challenges you expect to face among the following populations (Note: bullet-point-type summaries will be sufficient.):

1.   Young children (age 5 and under):

Concern about young children who reside in or near poverty conditions. Lack of adequate safety resources, living conditions, and adult supervision are a risk to this population.

2.   Older adults (age 65 and over):

a.   While the population size of Anytown is slowly shrinking, the age of residents is increasing.

b.   Without adequate intervention, the existing cooking fire problem may worsen among this population.

c.   Many members of this population reside at or below poverty level. Many reside independently without a stable support system to evaluate/maintain safety equipment.

3.   People with disabilities:

a.   The fire department is concerned about the number of residents who may become disabled through the aging process.

b.   The population size of disabled citizens living without an adequate support system is growing due to the closing of a government funded care/housing system that served this population in Anytown.

4.   People living in poverty:

a.   Sixty percent of the households in Anytown are occupied by renters. Many reside at or below poverty level. Since this population is often transient, it is sometimes a challenge to reach them with safety messages.

b.   Community deterioration is evident in the housing units owned by the City of Anytown. Without increased intervention, the existing cooking fire problem is expected to worsen among this population.