R2274

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

The faculty and staff of the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy (NFA) are pleased that you have been accepted into the *Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction* (EACRR) course. This course is designed for the executive level administrators and officers, focusing on the skill and attributes of leadership at the executive level. This course will explore the role of the executive officer in leading and facilitating the community risk reduction process.

For the purposes of this course, community risk reduction can be defined as those programs, initiatives, and services that prevent and/or mitigate the risk of, or effects from fire, injuries, natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents, acts of terrorism, etc. Traditional fire prevention programs are part of community risk reduction strategies. The course offers the opportunity to enhance both personal and organizational development and capacity in community risk reduction by incorporating a combination of theory, case study analysis, discussion and feedback.

As you are aware, there is an intensive precourse assignment. This is required in order to properly prepare for the EACRR course. This assignment must be submitted prior to the start date. Failure to complete and submit this assignment by the stated due date will remove your eligibility to attend this EACRR course offering. Please follow the instructions for submitting the precourse assignment checklist. Your assignment is extensive but the information will be used throughout the EACRR experience.

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 2007 as the software standard.

Should you need additional information related to course content or requirements, please feel free to contact Ms. Mary Marchone, Fire Prevention Management Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1476 or email at mary.marchone@fema.dhs.gov

Sincerely,

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

February 2013

EXECUTIVE ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENT

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Welcome to *Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction* (EACRR), the second course in the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) series. The focus of this course is to enhance the skills needed by an Executive Fire Officer (EFO) to implement and lead community risk-reduction initiatives.

Fire department leaders are acutely aware of national standards pertaining to fire suppression, i.e., fire officer, firefighter operator, hazardous material technician, etc. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) promulgates and updates a standard that pertains to community risk reduction: NFPA 1035, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Public Fire and Life Safety Educator*, provides job performance requirements for delivery, development, and leadership of community risk-reduction initiatives. Three other Standards, NFPA 1201, *Standard for Providing Emergency Services to the Public*; 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*; and 1600, *Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs*, also contain components of community risk mitigation.

The goal of EACRR is to develop leaders in comprehensive multihazard community risk reduction. As an EFO candidate, you will apply a strategic process to address risk challenges present in your home community. While a primary focus should be placed on your **local** fire problem, it is prudent to consider two overall categories of challenges:

1. Human-created and naturally occurring risks that affect your community on a regular basis. Examples include fires, preventable injuries, and frequently occurring forms of severe weather.

2. Human-created or naturally occurring risks that may happen only once every 5, 10, or even 20 years **but** have the **potential** for a devastating outcome. To qualify for this category, the risk should have affected your community in the past or be a major emerging issue. Examples include major hazardous materials release, domestic terrorism, hurricane, earthquake, etc.

The process of addressing your local risk(s) begins with precourse research, continues through guided practice while at the National Fire Academy (NFA), and culminates in actions implemented upon returning home. The ultimate goal is for you to implement a plan to reduce preventable occurrences and/or mitigate loss from risks that cannot be stopped.

In addition to empowering you with a proven risk mitigation process to follow, this course is designed to develop the skills necessary to achieve the goals of the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA):

- reduce risk at the local level through prevention and mitigation;
- improve local planning and preparedness;
- improve the fire and emergency services' capability for response to and recovery from all hazards;
- improve the fire and emergency services' professional status; and
- lead the Nation's fire and emergency services by establishing and sustaining USFA as a dynamic organization.

You may wonder, "Why is community risk reduction so important?" There are several components to the answer. Let's begin by looking briefly at the current fire problem in this country.

Each year in the United States over 4,000 people are killed by fire and as many as 22,000 people are injured from fire. For the young, old, disabled, impoverished, and challenged populations, fire remains one of the leading causes of death. While these statistics are better than those of 20 years ago, they are **still the highest among developed nations**.

With advances in fire suppression equipment, wider adoption of fire codes, and more and more public education programs, the loss from fire should be steadily declining. Why is that reduction not happening? There are numerous reasons, but the most obvious is that the fire service has more work to do in the area of prevention.

Prevention has been recognized for many decades as a key to reducing the effect of fires. The 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention cited prevention as a viable and important strategy for reducing the impact of fire. Again, in 1966, fire service leaders recognized prevention as an important strategy for the fire service during the first Wingspread Conference. That belief in prevention has been reaffirmed at three subsequent Wingspread Conferences.

Perhaps the strongest endorsement of prevention programs came in the benchmark report *America Burning*, published in 1973. The report stressed two important facts. First, there is not enough focus on prevention by the fire service. Second, prevention has the potential to make a tremendous impact on the fire problem when implemented in partnership with suppression.

Prevention initiatives cannot take the form of a "canned" program, meant to be everything to everybody. Rather, **each community must develop a specific plan to address the unique fire problems of that community through a combination of combined preventive interventions**. This is what community risk reduction is all about--a community assessing its unique fire risks and hazards, and then developing and implementing specific intervention strategies to address those risks and hazards.

To be effective at leading a risk-reduction process, an EFO must understand both his community **and** organization. EACRR will help you develop that understanding and create a strategy to reduce risk effectively in your home community.

EACRR is the second course in the EFO series. EACRR is intended to prepare the fire service executive for leading strategic risk-reduction initiatives in the 21st century. Executive traits must include the leader as a learner, one who can anticipate future trends. The effective EFO of tomorrow will be the person who knows himself or herself, as well as his or her organization, community, and risks.

EACRR goes beyond simply teaching skills. The course provides insight into the steps necessary to carry out a successful community risk-reduction process. Further, it is designed to impart a set of specific key concepts and attitudes that are needed to lead the community risk-reduction process.

KEY CONCEPTS FOR RISK-REDUCTION LEADERS

- Risk is influenced by social and economic issues. If community risk reduction is to be effective at improving community vitality, the community risk-reduction process must address socioeconomic issues.

- Risky behaviors result in consequences, e.g., residential fires, car crashes involving drunk drivers, etc. These consequences are the events to which fire departments and emergency medical services (EMS) agencies respond on a daily basis. Therefore, the purpose of community risk reduction is to prevent or minimize these events.

- Any effective community risk-reduction strategy integrates emergency response; code enforcement; legislative processes to adopt codes, standards, and prevention-related ordinances; plans review and design; fire and life safety education; public information and public relations; risk-reduction-related economic incentives; and other mitigation activities.

- Prevention and response functions within an organization must be integrated into one team. In many organizational cultures the prevention function is viewed as separate and distinct from the response mission. In fact, **both response and prevention have the same goal*: to prevent or reduce harm to the public from fire, preventable injuries, etc.** Same mission. Same team. Same organization. Same community. The synergy that results from integrating operations and prevention make both functions considerably more effective.

- Risk is a community problem. The process of community risk reduction also must involve the community: its leaders, its groups, its neighborhoods, etc. Any community risk-reduction process that fails to engage the community and its citizens is doomed to fail.

- There may be some communities where the chief officer is unable to gain community endorsement for a risk-reduction process. However, **every** chief officer can apply the process to his or her own organization to create a culture that embodies the philosophy of community risk reduction. The organization then is prepared when an opportunity for community change occurs.

- Community vitality is the product of numerous factors, including the absence of fires, absence of injuries, physical health, economic health, etc. A community risk-reduction process must apply risk management to all those areas that affect community vitality. This includes fires, injuries, terrorism, natural hazards, social crises, and environmental hazards.

Becoming a Proactive Champion of Risk Reduction

The role of the EFO is to **lead and facilitate** the community risk-reduction process. Some chief officers lose their ability to influence risk reduction when they become involved in the day-to-day mechanics of the process. The chief officer must be the vanguard of community change--the **strategic** heart and soul of the process.

There are five critical attitudes for successful risk reduction:

1. **The EFO must have a positive vision for the community risk-reduction program**. Personal, organizational, and community change always begin with a vision of what the future can be. Great movements throughout history have begun with one person's vision. The vision is of a safer community where fire risks, and other hazards, have been addressed through a community risk-reduction process. This vision will be used as a target or benchmark when developing the risk-reduction plan.

2. **The EFO must become a catalyst within the community to make the vision a reality**.

3. **The EFO must be committed personally to the philosophy of prevention (preparedness and mitigation)**. The mission of the fire service must be to prevent harm in the community. A safe and vital community will be created only if this commitment **is expressed through action**, not simply intellectual understanding.

4. **The EFO must be an active member of his or her community**. This includes participating in community organizations, being involved with community events, and meeting with community leaders to learn about pertinent issues facing the different groups and neighborhoods.

5. **The EFO must be a champion of community risk reduction**. He or she also must recognize **and** support others, especially subordinates, who are potential catalysts for risk mitigation.

Benefits of Community Risk Reduction

There are many benefits to implementing a community risk-reduction process. In fact, the benefits go beyond reducing the impact of fire:

- The use of integrated risk-reduction interventions lead to reduced incident occurrence, fewer injuries, fewer deaths, and reduced property loss. These outcomes are truly the bottom line for community risk reduction.

- The balance between risk and resources dedicated to risk reduction is established by a comprehensive process. Through this process an acceptable level of risk is established by the community and resources then are applied to ensure the level is achieved.

- The community is engaged and involved in improving the quality of life of the citizens. The process brings a diverse group of people and organizations together with a common cause. Relationships are established that are beneficial in other community programs and initiatives.

- The local fire department gains influence in the community by demonstrating its proactive commitment to the safety and well-being of the citizens. Those involved in the process recognize fire department leaders as change agents in the community. This new perception of the EFO provides influence in other issues.

- There also are benefits to the organization and its members. The community risk-reduction process increases the credibility and influence of the fire department. This influence can be used in a variety of ways including improved funding for programs and higher firefighter salaries; the fire department also can be more successful at achieving its mission to the community.

- Finally, the risk to firefighters from emergency operations is reduced, as the frequency and severity of fires and other incidents are reduced as a result of community risk reduction.

Keys to Success

There are several keys to the success of any community risk-reduction process.

There is strong leadership in the fire department for the community risk-reduction process. Leadership begins at the top with the fire chief and involves all the department's EFOs. **If the organization's leadership is not solidly behind community risk reduction and does not provide active leadership during the process, the rest of the department will not have a passion for risk reduction**.

The community must be engaged in the process. In reality, any community risk-reduction process must belong to the community. The fire department is a partner with the community. **Ultimately the community's organizations, leaders, and elected officials will determine the acceptable level of risk**. The leaders of the process must reach out to the community and get decision-makers and target organizations involved in the planning, goal setting, marketing, etc.

The community risk-reduction plan must be tailored to local problems and local resources. This requires a comprehensive assessment of local risks and identifying interventions that will work with the local population groups.

The road to institutionalizing risk reduction should be a planned journey that involves collaboration between individuals, organizations, and the community. Research builds the foundation to get started on the right track.

EXECUTIVE ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY RISK-REDUCTION
PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENT

Introduction

Each EFOP course requires completion of an Applied Research Project (ARP) related directly to the course just completed. **Research conducted during the EACRR precourse assignment will be used during the NFA experience, for the ARP, and ultimately in your home community**.

Save all EACRR precourse information as it will be pertinent to the third year EFO program, *Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management* (EAFSOEM).

Completion of the precourse assignment is mandatory for acceptance into EACRR. Information from the assignment will be used to process in-class activities and ultimately to develop a draft plan for a risk-reduction initiative that can be used in the home community. You may find that your draft plan lends itself well to building a foundation for your applied research project that applies to EACRR.

Some of the material you will read dates back several years (or even decades in the case of the original *America Burning*). It is important to process all of the readings carefully as they will provide a foundation and rationale for **why** this course was created.

The precourse assignment for EACRR is comprehensive--and for good reason. Reducing and mitigating community risk is the fire service's **ultimate** responsibility. Accomplishing the task successfully demands a strong foundation of knowledge. This knowledge base will be developed through completion of the precourse assignment and the EACRR experience.

You will be collecting and analyzing a considerable amount of **local** data as part of the precourse assignment. It is permissible (and encouraged) to have colleagues or staff assist you with data collection and interpretation.

You should budget approximately 2 months of intermittent development time for completing the precourse assignment. Each of the assignment's sections includes an estimate of the minimum amount of time you should budget to complete the directives. Each section also includes a brief rationale of why you are being asked to complete the work and how it will apply to the EACRR course.

A checklist for the assignment is included for your benefit and to serve as a record of completion. Please forward the completed checklist to Linda Pecher at the NFA. It is due no later than 2 weeks in advance of attendance at the NFA.

Name: _____

Class Date: _____

Please Note Date Completed	**Precourse Assignment Checklist**
	Part 1: Examination of America's Continuing Fire Problem
	Download and **examine** *American Burning* carefully; be sure to read page *x* in the introductory section
	Download and read *America at Risk*
	Part 2: Building a Demographic Profile of Your Community
	Practice using American FactFinder
	Create a demographic, social, economic, and housing profile of **your** community
	Profile how your community has developed and changed over the past 20 years
	Predict what your community may look like 10 years from now
	Part 3: Building a Risk Profile of Your Community
	Identify and profile the five leading causes of fire in your home community
	Identify and profile other human-created and natural risks that currently or have potential to threaten your community
	Part 4: Identifying Root Factors of Risk and Populations at Greatest Risk
	Create a population profile of high-risk groups in your home community
	Identify how fire and preventable injury are affecting each high-risk group at the local level

	Part 5: A Changing and Distracted America at Risk
	Read the section adapted from the *Changing American Family at Risk*
	Respond to the seven questions included in the section summary
	Part 6: Change Starts With the EFO
	Read the "Trends and Traditions" section
	Respond to the five questions that are included in the section summary
	Read *Understanding Community Policing*
	Part 7: The Process of Risk Mitigation
	Review the nationally recognized risk mitigation model
	Part 8: Send precourse checklist to NFA
	Linda Pecher/ZAI National Fire Academy 16825 South Seton Avenue Building H-109, Re: EACRR Precourse Emmitsburg, MD 21727 Email: linda.pecher@associates.fema.dhs.gov Fax: (301) 447-1651

PART 1: EXAMINATION OF AMERICA'S CONTINUING FIRE PROBLEM

Estimated time for completion of this section: 3 hours.

Information from this section will be used in Units 1 and 3.

Reading Resource	Location
America Burning	http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-264.pdf
America at Risk	http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-223-508.pdf

Part 1 Reading Assignments

The United States is the most prosperous developed country in the world. Yet, current fire experience data identify our national fire problem as one of the worst among developed countries.

One factor contributing to our stagnant fire loss rates is the fire service's failure to address risk reduction in a strategic manner. While many departments have excellent public education programs, a more strategic approach that includes combined prevention interventions is needed. EFOs possess the legitimate authority to lead this process.

To understand progress made and challenges yet to be conquered, please access the original *America Burning* report. Although the document is lengthy, please **examine** its content carefully. Be sure to read the "What this Report is About" section in the introductory area, page x.

PART 2: BUILDING A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Estimated time to budget for completion of this section: 10 hours.

Information from this section will be used in Units 1, 2, and 3.

Introduction

The National Fire Academy is an institution of higher education dedicated to serving the emergency services. Many NFA courses require completing a pre-course assignment. The purpose of this requirement is so you come to the academy with baseline information that can be utilized to enhance your learning experience and create an action plan to apply in your home community.

A core component of most precourse assignments includes a community risk assessment of the service area you are responsible for. This assessment entails locating, collecting, and evaluating both people and problem-related data.
This tutorial provides an introduction of how to gather both. Let's start with people-related data.

People-related Data

People-related data can create a demographic profile of your community. In addition to showing where people live, it can identify how they live. A good profile will explain the social, cultural, and economic composition of the area you protect.

One of the most reliable sources of demographic information is the U.S. Census Bureau. Data for the Decennial Census is collected by the Bureau every ten years. Data from the Decennial Census is utilized to determine congressional districts. The Decennial Census seeks to determine the *number of people* who live in a community.

A second type of census, the American Community Survey (ACS), is as an on-going task of the Bureau. The American Community Survey is mailed to over three million U.S. residents annually. The Bureau's goal is to survey each U.S. resident every seven years to create demographic profiles of local communities. ACS data is important to risk reduction specialists because it provides information about *where and how* people live.

Data from the American Community Survey is available to the public through the American FactFinder database. FactFinder is an important tool for risk reduction practitioners because it allows us to explore demographic data both community-wide and by census tracts. Census tracts are defined geographical areas within a city, town, county, or village. Each tract carries a numerical identification.

You may be from a geographical area that has anywhere from one to hundreds of census tracts. Most likely you will find risks in your community are confined to certain areas. **Base on your knowledge and experience select no more than four census tracts to analyze.**

You are also encouraged to use other local resources that may be useful in obtaining information on local community demographics. These can include Economic/Community Development, Board of Education/School Districts, Social Services, etc.

Census bureau data is collected and analyzed by trained professionals. It is made available for public use though the Bureau's website. Part One of this tutorial will show you how to use the Bureau's site.

1. To get started, go to the Bureau's website located at www.census.gov. Once you are there, you should see a screen that looks like the one displayed in the screen shot shown below. Go to the Data section on the top of the Census Bureau's home page. Click on the ***American Fact Finder*** link.
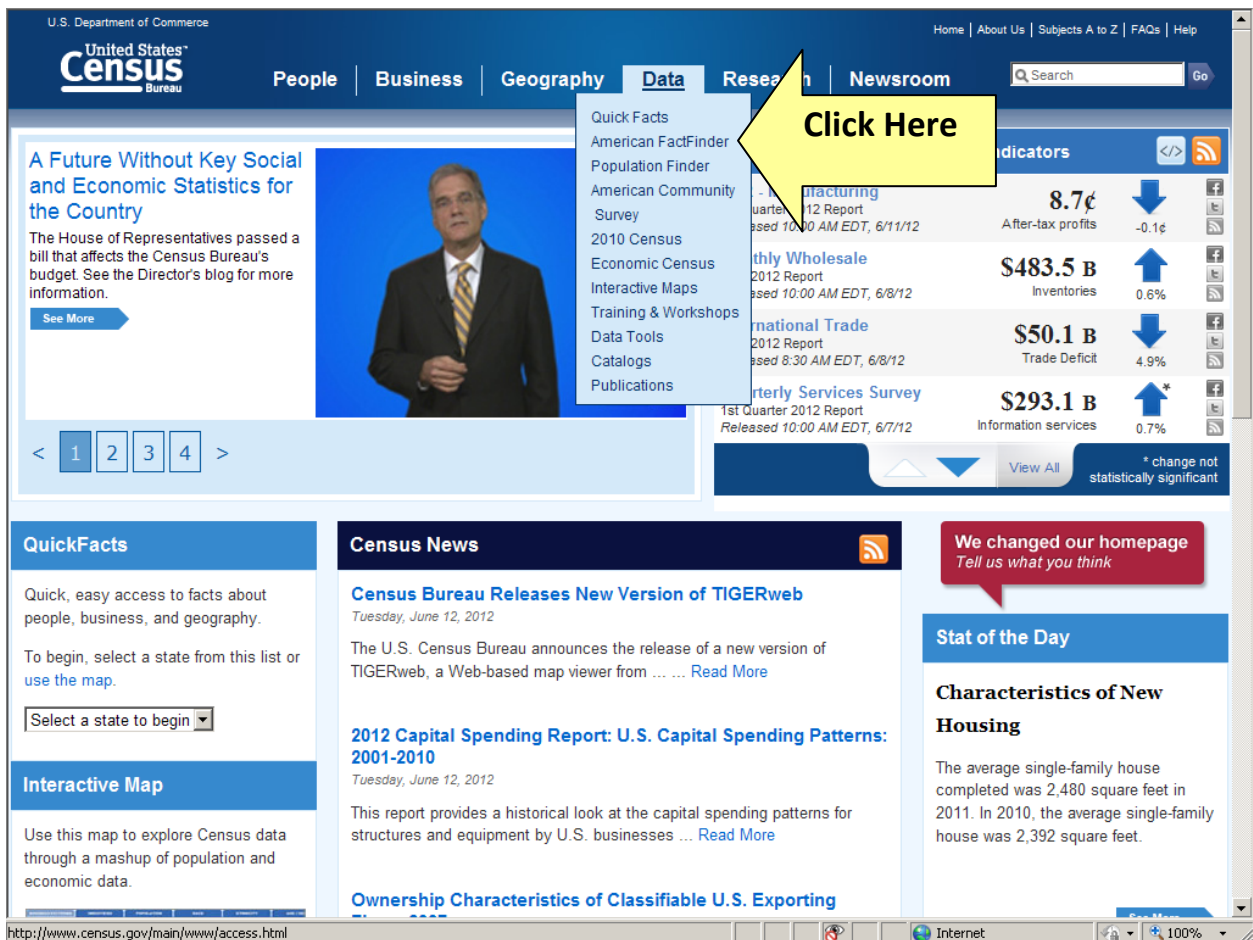
2. Upon arriving at the FactFinder site, you should see the screen displayed below. Enter the name of your community (city *or* county – plus the state); then hit Go.

3. For the sake of this tutorial, we entered Hagerstown, Maryland as the example community. The following series of screen shots will walk you through the various types of demographical data that is available about a community at-large.

   We will begin by examining data from the Decennial Census and then ascend to data from the American Community Survey.

4. The screen shot displayed below represents only a small portion of what is available pertinent to the 2010 Decennial Census. Be sure to scroll down and see all of the data available on both people and housing characteristics.

Upon completing the exploration of general census data, go to the top of the screen and click on the Back to Search function.

5. Next, click on each of the four sections that display data from the American Community Survey. The Census Bureau strives to update this data on an on-going basis. Each section will help you build an overall profile of your community at-large.

Note – a smart strategy is to print a hard copy of each section so you can examine and compare all of the data.

6. Now that you have developed a demographic profile of your community at-large, the next step is to learn how to find data on specific geographical areas known as census tracts.   Let's go back to the example on Hagerstown, Maryland.

Locate the Geography category located on the left side of the screen and click it.

7. When the screen that is displayed below appears, perform a three-step process:

   Step 1 – Locate the geographic type, click on it, and select Census Tract.

   Step 2 – Select your state.

   Step 3 – Select your county.

   Step 4 – Select the census tract you wish to explore.

   Step 5 – Click on Add to Your Selections

The field with census tracts for your county will become populated. You now have the option to explore your community by census tract. For this example, we will examine Census Tract 4 in Washington County, Maryland.

Note – you will need to know which census tract corresponds to the area of your community that you wish to explore. All census tracts in your entire county will be available for exploration.
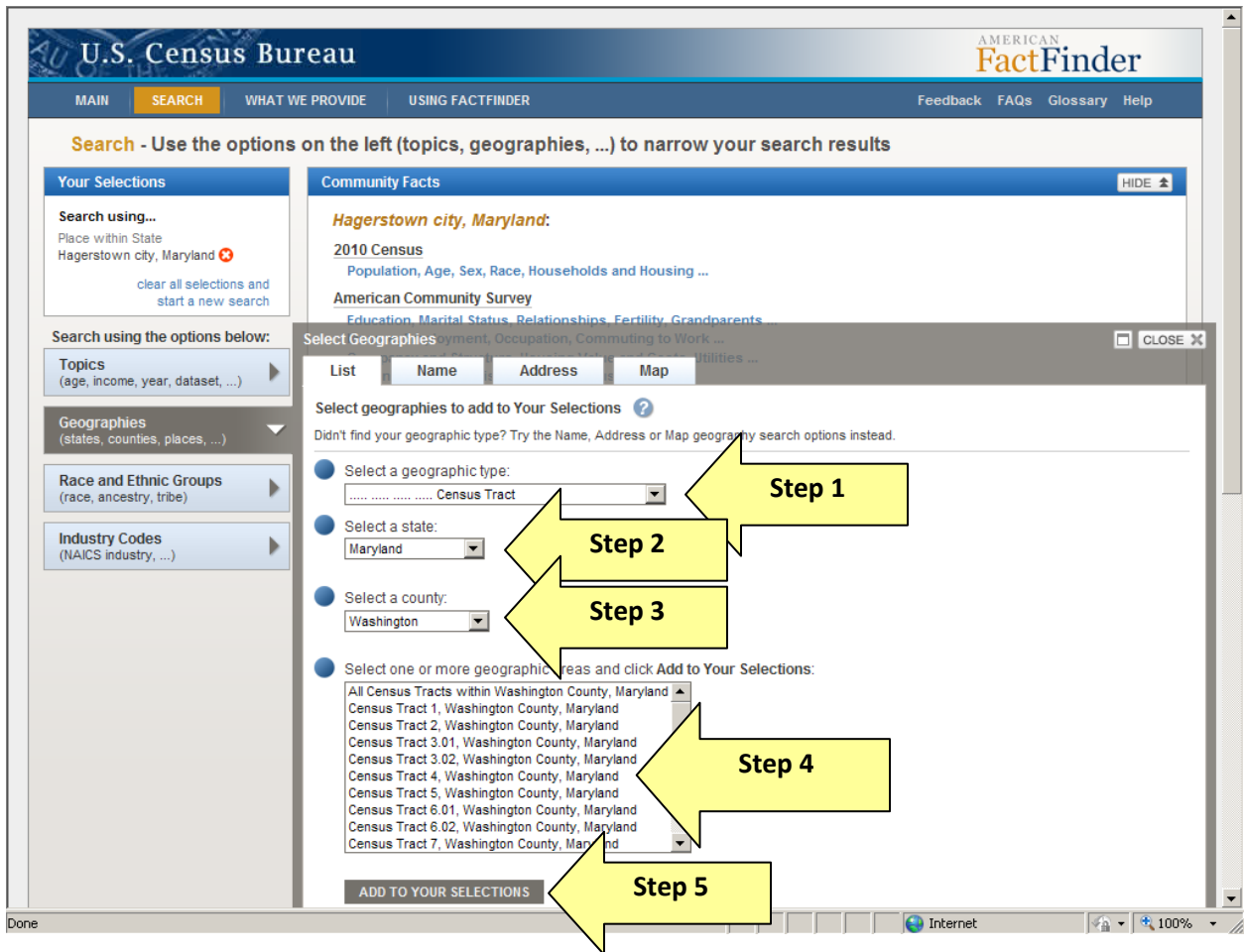
8. If you have done the process correctly, you will see your city and census tract displayed in the Your Selections section.

   Next, close the overlay screen that offers census tract options.
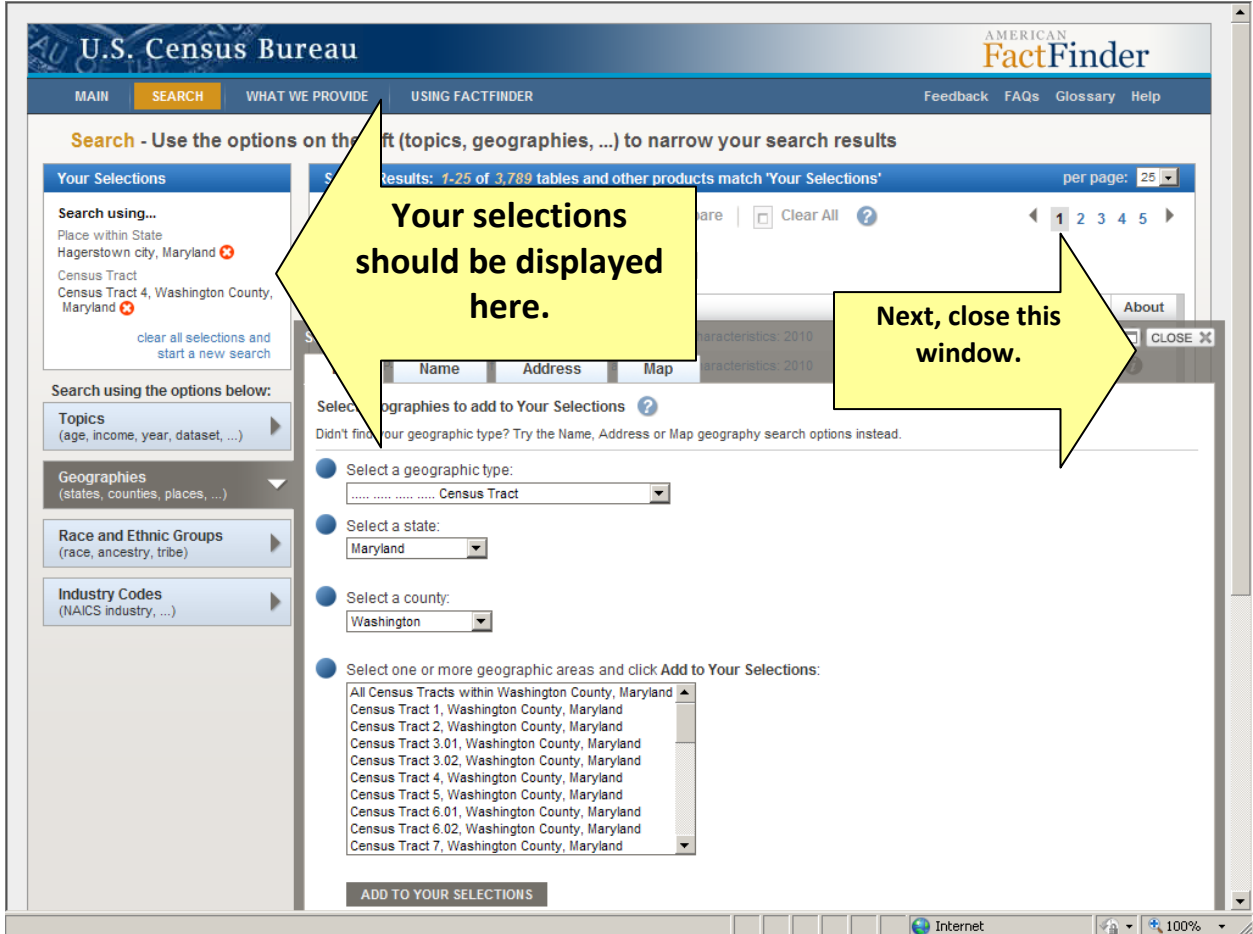
9. You should now see a screen that displays the data specific to the census tract you selected. In our case, it is for Census Tract 4 in Hagerstown, Maryland.
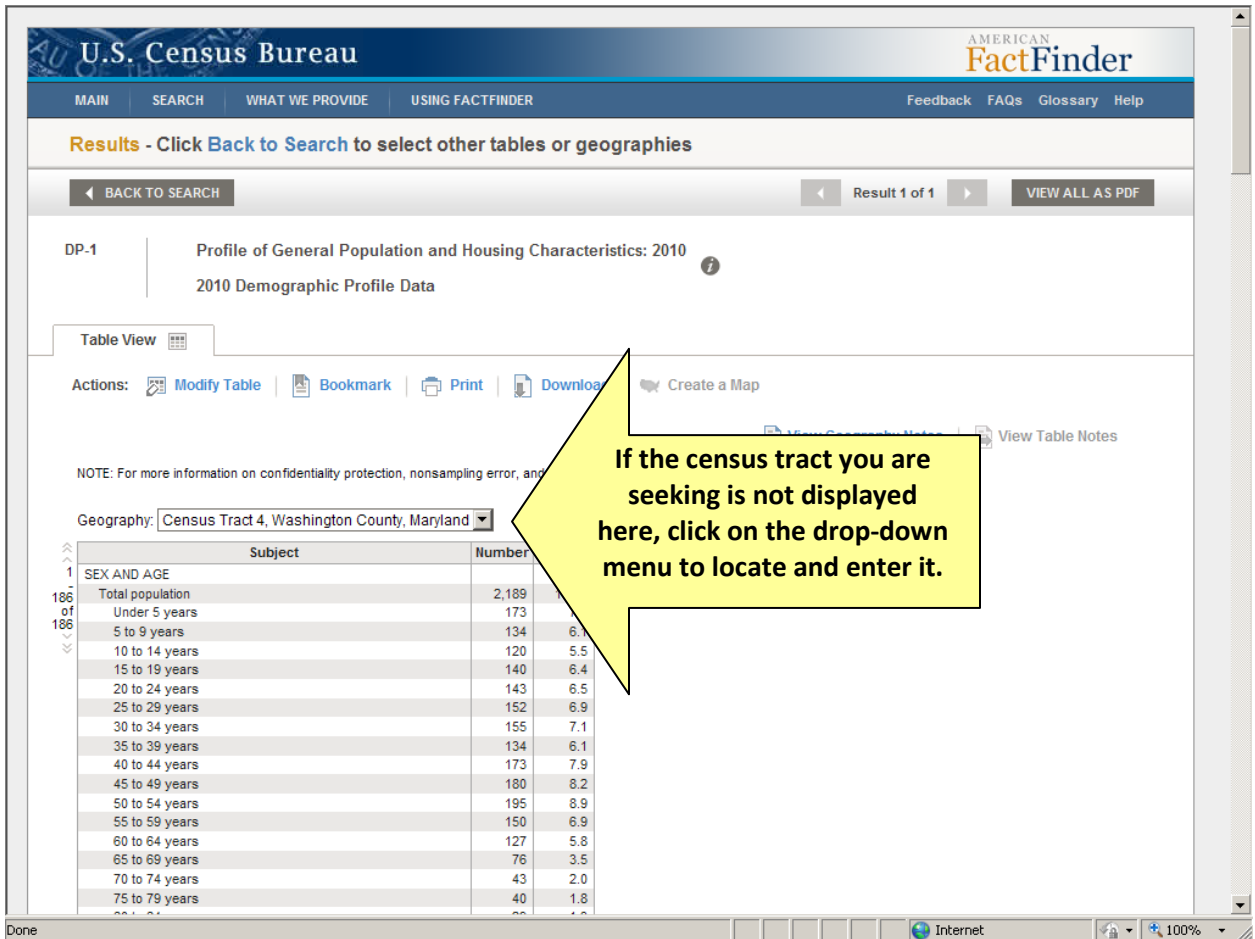
   Each specific category of data can now be explored by census tract. For this example, we will select the Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics 2010.

   Note – the selections that reference "United States" allow you to compare the census data with national statistics. <u>Your</u> *local* data will not have a "United States" reference.

10. You now have data for the specific census tract requested.

Note – if the census tract is not displayed in the Geography window, simply click on the drop-down menu to locate and enter it.

Special Section – Building a Map of Census Tracts

If you don't know the numerical designations of the census tracts in your community, you can build a map to identify them. Here's how:

Step 1 – Return to the Community Facts screen for your community.

Step 2 – Click on the Geographies feature.

Step 3 – Locate the Map feature on the Select Geographies menu and click on it.

You should now have the screen displayed below.

Step 1 – Locate the Boundaries and Features category and click on it.

Step 2 – Once the Boundaries and Features are displayed, click on both boxes for census tracts.

Step 3 – Click the Update button at the bottom of the screen. Note – this is not visible on the screen shot below.
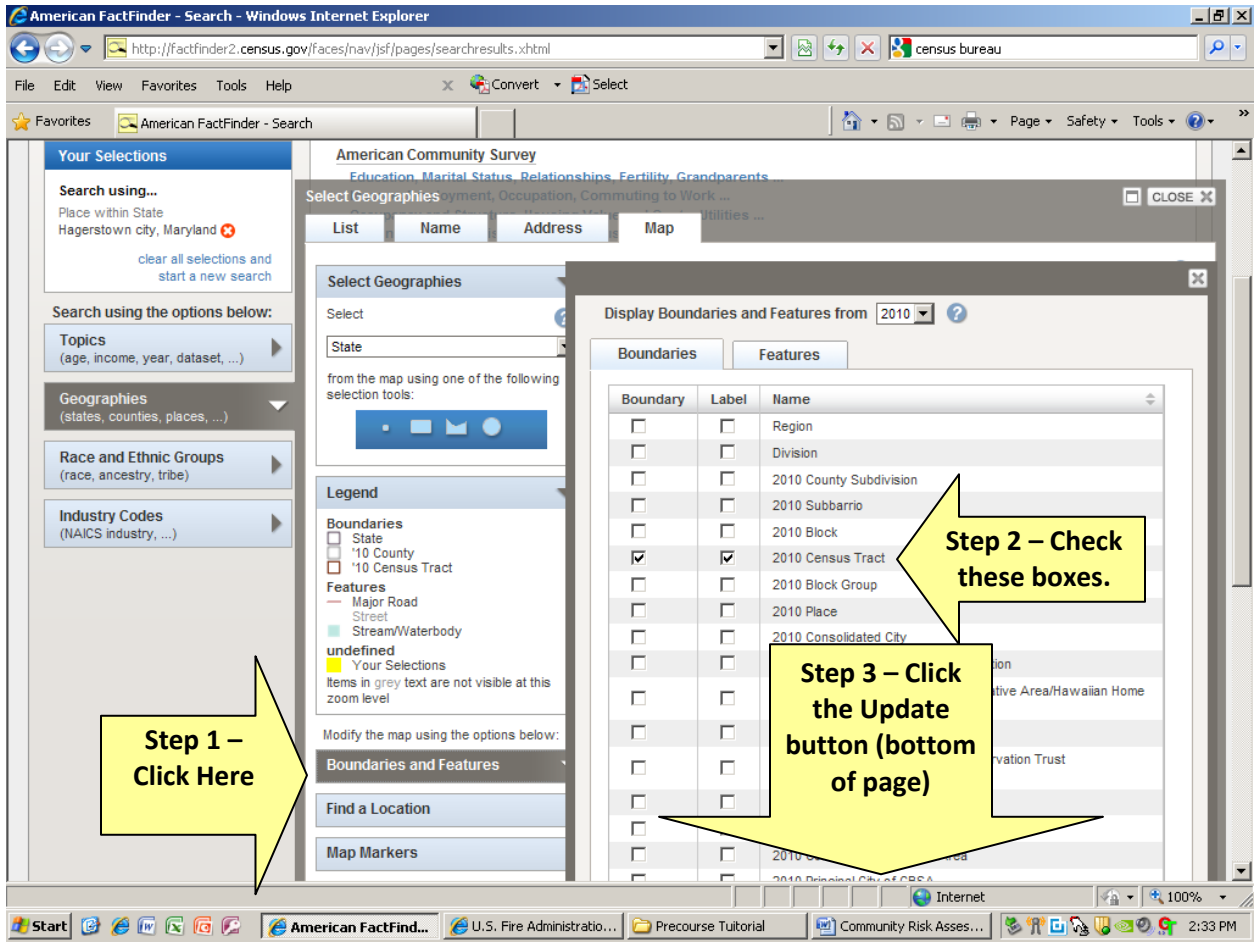
Your map with census tracts should appear. You may also print this map.
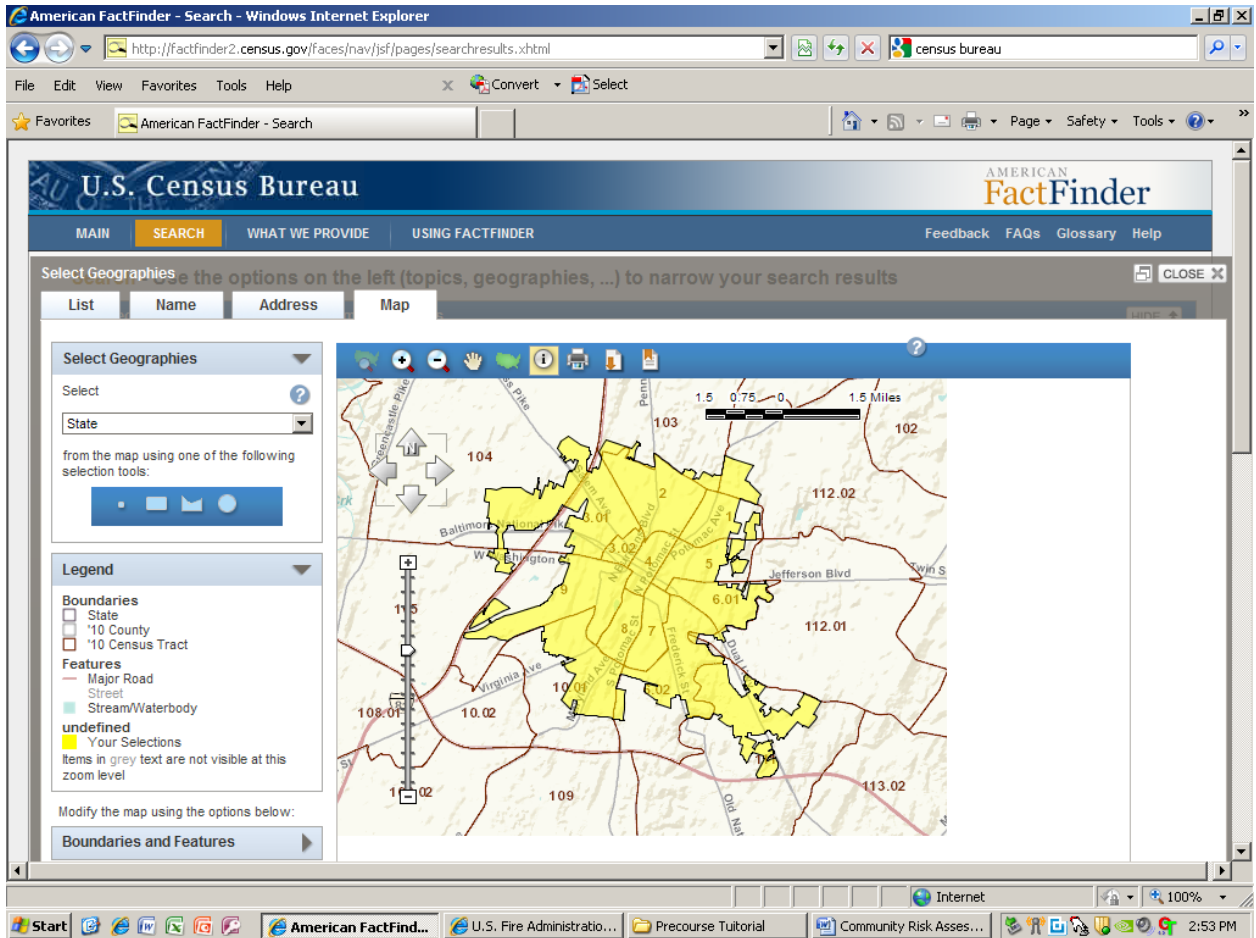
Summary of People-related Data

While the process of gathering data from the U.S. Census Bureau may appear intimidating at first, it is a task easily mastered with experience. Each time you work with the Bureau's database, the process will get easier.

The census bureau data analysis tools are very powerful instruments that can provide you with a wealth of information about the demographics of your local community.   As more resources become available, the bureau plans to incorporate enhanced capabilities that will allow communities to integrate Geographic Information System (GIS) tracking/mapping with local demographics.

Problem-related Data

Data on fire experience in the U.S. is available through the United States Fire Administration (USFA). USFA began the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) in 1975. Under NFIRS, local fire departments forward fire incident data to a state coordinator. The coordinator collates statewide fire incident data and reports information to the USFA.

The following is an overview of how to obtain and review NFIRS data for your local community.

1. Obtain an NFIRS Account.

   a. Request an NFIRS account from the person in your department responsible for NFIRS reporting. Your state NFIRS program manager or your local NFIRS person with an account with system administration permission assigns accounts. The NFIRS Support Center at the United States Fire Administration can provide you with the contact information of your state NFIRS program manager. Call (888) 382-3827 from 8:30 a.m. ET to 4:30 p.m. ET or email FEMA-NFIRSHelp@fema.dhs.gov.

   b. Your NFIRS account needs only the following four permissions: Startup, Report Submit, Report Fetch, and Report Generate.

2. Log in the NFIRS Summary Output Reports Tool (a.k.a. SORT).

    a. Go to the following website: www.nfirs.fema.gov.

    b. Select Web-based Tools from the menu bar.

3. Select Summary Output Reports Tool from the Web-based Tools menu.

4. Log in using your NFIRS account (i.e., state abbreviation, user name, and password).

5. Click OK from the USFA Banner Page to go to the next page.

6. You should see the screen that is displayed below. Click on the Available Reports option in the Reporting Menu section. Note the report types that are available for you to develop. Scroll down the list so you see all the choices.

Note – for the sake of this tutorial, we will be focusing on how to create and print the following reports: Summary by Incident Types, Tally, and Residential Structure Fire Causes.

7. Select the Summary by Incident Type report from Available Reports.

Residential Structure Fire Causes	The Residential Structure Fire Incidents by Fire Cause Category report summarizes fire incidents in residential structures. The rows of the report are broken down by computed cause code/categories. The information summarized includes the count and percentage frequency of each cause code, the count and percentage of both civilian and fire fighter injuries and casualties, and the count and percentage of property, contents, and total loss. The computed cause codes include such categories as smoking, heating, and cooking.	Fire Reports	📄
Structure Fire Causes	The Structure Fire Causes report summarizes structure fires by cause. The cause code may be either fire cause or priority cause category. Optionally, the results can summarized by a coded field within the cause code.	Fire Reports	📄
Structure Fires by Property Use	The Structure Fires By Property Use report summarizes structure fire incidents by several property use categories. The categories are residential property uses, public property uses and other property uses, which are displayed graphically using bar charts. The report ends with a numerical summary of the same categories further broken down by counts of fires, fire fighter deaths & injuries, civilian deaths & injuries, and property loss amounts.	Fire Reports	📄
Summary by Incident Type	The Summary by Incident Type report is a table of incidents categorized by frequency, percentage of total incidents,mutual aid statistics and exposures broken down by fires, EMS, and other incident types. The report also has a summary of dollar loss and casualties.	Incident Reports	📄
Tally	The Tally report lists several counts and percentages for a selected set of incidents that includes the frequency of occurrence, civilian and fire service injuries and deaths, and propery, contents and total loss. These are organized by one of a number of coded fields chosen by the user. Among these choices are incident type, property use, cause of ignition, and Hazmat disposition.	Incident Reports	📄
Unresolved Fire Incidents	The Unresolved Fire Incidents report contains a list of all fire incidents with a fire cause of "Undetermined" or "Investigating" with an incident date that occurred on or before a date given by the user. The report includes the FDID, the fire department name, the incident date, the incident number, the incident type, and the cause (which will be either Undetermined or Investigating). The report can be sorted either by FDID or fire dept. name and includes a sub-total of incidents for each one.	Investigation Reports	📄

Click Here

Privacy/Important Notices | USFA | Contact Us

An official web site of the Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Fire Administration, 16825 S. Seton Ave., Emmitsburg, MD 21727
NFIRS Support Center: (888) 382-3827

Trusted sites   100%

8. You should see the screen displayed below. Follow the directions listed at the bottom of this screen shot.

A. Enter the following parameters:

    1. From Date (format mm/dd/yyyy)

    2. To Date (format mm/dd/yyyy)

    3. Incident Status = All

    4. Incident Version = All

    5. Release Status = All

    6. Include Individual FDID Reports = blank

B. Select the fire department to include in the report.

     1. In the FDID Selection section, drill down to the fire department.

     2. Check the box next to the fire department.

C. Generate the report.

     1. Move down to the button named Generate Report.

     2. Select Generate Report.

D. Print the report.

     1. Select My Recent Reports from the Reporting Menu.

     2. View the status of the report.

          a. Submitted – the report is waiting to be processed.

          b. In Process – the report is being created.

          c. Completed – the report is created.

     3. If the status of the report is completed, select the PDF version of the report from the Report Format section.

     4. Open the report.

     5. View and print the report.

     6. Close the report after it prints.

Note – the report you ultimately generate will look similar to the one displayed below. The report should be populated with data pertinent to your department.

9. Next, return to the Available Reports screen and select the Tally category.

Residential Structure Fire Causes	The Residential Structure Fire Incidents by Fire Cause Category report summarizes fire incidents in residential structures. The rows of the report are broken down by computed cause code/categories. The information summarized includes the count and percentage frequency of each cause code, the count and percentage of both civilian and fire fighter injuries and casualties, and the count and percentage of property, contents, and total loss. The computed cause codes include such categories as smoking, heating, and cooking.	Fire Reports	🔴
Structure Fire Causes	The Structure Fire Causes report summarizes structure fires by cause. The cause code may be either fire cause or priority cause category. Optionally, the results can summarized by a coded field within the cause code.	Fire Reports	🔴
Structure Fires by Property Use	The Structure Fires By Property Use report summarizes structure fire incidents by several property use categories. The categories are residential property uses, public property uses and other property uses, which are displayed graphically using bar charts. The report ends with a numerical summary of the same categories further broken down by counts of fires, fire fighter deaths & injuries, civilian deaths & injuries, and property loss amounts.	Fire Reports	🔴
Summary by Incident Type	The Summary by Incident Type report is a table of incidents categorized by frequency, percentage of total incidents,mutual aid statistics and exposures broken down by fires, EMS, and other incident types. The report also has a summary of dollar loss and casualties.	Incident Reports	🔴
	The Tally report lists several counts and percentages for a selected set of incidents that includes the frequency of occurrence, civilian and fire service injuries and deaths, and propery, contents and total loss. These are organized by one of a number of coded fields chosen by the user. Among these choices are incident type, property use, cause of ignition, and Hazmat disposition.	Incident Reports	🔴
Unresolved Fire Incidents	The Unresolved Fire Incidents report contains a list of all fire incidents with a fire cause of "Undetermined" or "Investigating" with an incident date that occurred on or before a date given by the user. The report includes the FDID, the fire department name, the incident date, the incident number, the incident type, and the cause (which will be either Undetermined or Investigating). The report can be sorted either by FDID or fire dept. name and includes a sub-total of incidents for each one.	Investigation Reports	🔴

Click Here

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10. You should see the screen that is displayed below. Follow the directions listed at the bottom of this screen shot.

A. Select the Tally report from Available Reports.

B. Enter the following parameters:

    1. From Date (format mm/dd/yyyy)

    2. To Date (format mm/dd/yyyy)

    3. Incident Status = All

    4. Incident Version = All

    5. Release Status = All

C. Select the data field to display on the report.

    1. NFIRS Module = (e.g., Basic Module)

2. NFIRS Field = (e.g., Incident Type)

D. Select the fire department to include in the report.

1. In the FDID Selection section, drill down to the fire department.

2. Check the box next to the fire department.

E. Generate the report.

1. Move down to the button named Generate Report.

2. Select Generate Report.

F. Print the report.

1. Select My Recent Reports from the Reporting Menu.

2. View the status of the report.

a. Submitted – the report is waiting to be processed.

b. In Process – the report is being created.

c. Completed – the report is created.

3. If the status of the report is completed, select the PDF version of the report from the Report Format section.

4. Open the report.

5. View and print the report.

6. Close the report after it prints.

11. Next, return to the Available Reports screen and select the Residential Structural Fire Causes category.

12. You should see the screen that is displayed below. Follow the directions listed at the bottom of this screen shot.

A. Select the Residential Structure Fire Causes report from Available Reports.

B. Enter the following parameters:

1. From Date (format mm/dd/yyyy)

2. To Date (format mm/dd/yyyy)

3. Incident Status = All

4. Incident Version = All

5. Release Status = All

6. Include Individual FDID Reports = blank

C. Select the fire department to include in the report.

    1. In the FDID Selection section, drill down to the fire department.

    2. Check the box next to the fire department.

D. Generate the report.

    1. Move down to the button named Generate Report.

    2. Select Generate Report.

E. Print the report.

    1. Select My Recent Reports from the Reporting Menu.

    2. View the status of the report.

        a. Submitted – the report is waiting to be processed.

        b. In Process – the report is being created.

        c. Completed – the report is created.

    3. If the status of the report is completed, select the PDF version of the report from the Report Format section.

    4. Open the report.

    5. View and print the report.

    6. Close the report after it prints.

Summary of NFIRS Tutorial

Because fire departments and states take part in NFIRS voluntarily, NFIRS conclusions may not completely reflect the entire nation's fire experience.

Also, remember that when utilizing any type of data collection software, it is critical that everyone responsible for incident reporting does his or her job in an objective manner. Simply stated, this means that your department must set a protocol for how incidents are classified.

Here is an example: Consider the typical unattended cooking fire that occurs when a person forgets about a pan of oil being heated on a stovetop. Unless your department has agreed on how your staff will classify the incident, you may end up reporting one of several selections. Over a period of time, this subjectivity in reporting can lead to the creation of an unreliable set of data about unattended cooking fires whereby you cannot discern how many incidents of people walking away from a stove you actually respond to.

If you submit data to NFIRS, it is a very wise strategy to explore the NFIRS webpage thoroughly. There are many sections that include helpful suggestions on how to classify and report incident data.

Assignment for Part 2

1. Use 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.) Also explore a profile of employment. **A worksheet (with prompting questions) is provided to assist you**.

   a. The demographic information will be used throughout the EACRR course and perhaps as part of your ARP. It also will likely be used at part of the EAFSOEM course you will attend next year.

   b. You **must** have this information available throughout the EACRR course in order to process the in-class activities **and** the culminating project for the course. Saving the information on a memory device or printing hard copies is highly recommended. All Fact Finder categories can be downloaded or printed. You also may wish to save the Census Bureau site as a favorite on your PC.

2. Once information has been gathered, consider how your home community has developed over time (past 20 years). Also consider how it may change as time progresses. As part of this assignment, develop a short narrative on how your community has changed over the past 20 years and what its profile may look like 10 years from now.

   a. One last **huge** point to consider: The U.S. census is collected and processed every 10 years. Community demographics can change dramatically in that timeframe. EFOs must remain knowledgeable about their home community's changing demographics.

   b. It is wise to have a discussion with your local planning or community development professionals. If you have such a discussion, please include your findings as part of the narrative for this section.

   c. Being able to **explain and use** the demographic, social, and cultural development of your community is essential to the effectiveness and credibility of a strategic decisionmaker.

DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHEET

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

Category	Description	Questions to answer--your community
Demographic (people-related information)	Population size, distribution, age, ethnicity, and cultures	• What is the total population of your community? • Population of each Census Tract? • Which Census Tracts have higher populations of: - Children under 5 years - Older adults - Ethnic groups - Specific cultures
Social characteristics	Education levels, family profiles, and poverty rates	• What are the demographics of education levels throughout your community? • What census tracts include the greatest populations of: - Single-parent homes? - Two-parent homes? - People living alone? - Older adults living alone? • What Census Tracts include the greatest number of people who are living in poverty?
Economic characteristics	Employment profile and rates, income levels	• What is the employment profile of your constituency? - Types of jobs? - Work in community or commute? - Major **local** employers? - Unemployment rate? - Income level ranges?

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	• What is the overall housing profile of your community? - Average age of homes? - New (or recent) construction? - Homes with automatic detection **and** suppression equipment? - Types of residential construction? - Types of residential properties? (single family, duplex, multiunit) - Renter versus owner occupied? - Transience? (how often do people relocate to another residence?) Note: please consider *all* census tracts. However, you only have to develop a **general overview** of your community's housing profile.
Growth trends		Develop a short narrative on how your community has changed over the past 20 years and what its profile may look like 10 years from now.

PART 3: BUILDING A RISK PROFILE OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Estimated time for completion of this section: 20 hours (contingent upon the organization's data collection system and the student's ability to extrapolate objective information).

Information from this section will be used in Units 1, 2, and 3.

Background Information

Every 79 seconds, fire occurs in someone's home. Residential fire affects over 400,000 families each year.

Residential fire deaths dropped to approximately 2,600 in 2002. This was the lowest death rate since NFPA began its current level of fire documentation in 1977. A similar reduction trend occurred in the early 1990s. Then, a 3-year spike followed in the mid-1990s. Similar trends have occurred since then.

Seventy-nine percent of fire deaths occur in residential occupancies. Three quarters of all fire-related citizen injuries occur in residential fires.

Over 90 percent of U.S. homes have at least one smoke alarm. Up to 30 percent of these alarms don't work. **One third of all fires and 60 percent of fire fatalities occur in *these* homes**. That's high-risk!

USFA and NFPA identify the national causes of fire to occur most frequently in the following order:

1.   Unattended cooking, also the leading cause of fire-related injury.

2.   Arson, also the second leading cause of fire death. Juvenile firesetting and fireplay are included in this area.

3.   Heating appliances.

4.   Electricity.

5.   Smoking remains leading cause of fire death.

One of the USFA's goals is to reduce risk at the local level through prevention and mitigation. Unfortunately, many emergency service organizations plan risk-reduction strategies solely on **national** statistics. While national statistics play an

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important role in identifying common risk issues, close examination of the **local community** and its needs is essential to effective risk reduction.

The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) represents an option for use in obtaining the requested information. However, you must ensure that **accurate and objective** information has been obtained by your organization.

The USFA logically places emphasis on reducing the U.S. fire problem. In addition to reducing the occurrence of fire, today's EFO must examine community risk from a broad perspective.

USFA calls for improving local planning and preparedness. These initiatives are to be led by or include the local fire service. In response to this challenge, the EFO should create an all-hazard profile that includes an overview of human-created and natural risks that currently or could threaten their community.

For this reason, the assignment for Part 3 is divided into three sections:

- Section 1 requires you to create an objective profile of the leading fire problems currently affecting your community. While you should consider frequency of occurrence as a baseline for selection, other factors must be examined as well. These factors are listed on the worksheet.

- Section 2 directs you to identify preventable injuries and other **human-created** incidents that frequently affect your constituency. Consider frequency of occurrence and the other factors listed as you make selections.

- Section 3 asks you to reflect on the **naturally occurring** risks that have a history of or **significant** potential to affect your community. More information is provided prior to the worksheet.

Note: Information from all three sections must be compiled and interpreted prior to attending EACRR. You will *not* be able to process an effective risk analysis of your community without it.

Part 3 Assignment

Section 1--Your Local Fire Problem

Using **local** data, list your fire experience using the following attributes:

- frequency of occurrence (listed by percent contrasted with total number fires);

- morbidity and mortality (number civilians injured or killed annually by this type fire);
- rate of rise for occurrences (is occurrence of fire rising, steady, or declining?);
- geographic distribution of occurrences (examine by Census Tract);
- financial impact to fire hosts, the community, and your organization; and
- population(s) most experiencing the specific type of fire.

A master worksheet is provided for your benefit. Please produce a copy for each of the five causes of fire you select. It is suggested that frequency of occurrence be used to select your leading types of fire to profile.

FIRE RISK WORKSHEET

Fire Cause: _____

Frequency (%)	
Morbidity/ Mortality	
Rate of rise	
Geographic distribution	
Cost (in $)	
Population(s) experiencing this cause of fire	

Section 2--Other Human-Created Risks

1.   In addition to fire, other human-created risks currently affect your community.   Among them are motor vehicle collisions, pedestrian incidents, falls to older adults, and other **preventable** occurrences.

      These occurrences may happen so frequently that a community doesn't pay attention to their magnitude. Even worse, constituents (and even the fire service) may grow complacent toward solving complex, yet frequently occurring, preventable risks.

      This section begins by requiring you to examine the U.S. preventable injury problem. It culminates as you profile preventable occurrences other than fire that currently (or have great potential to) affect your home community.

2.   Access the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site at www.cdc.gov Examine the section on injury, violence, and safety. The CDC collects and provides national data on age-specific leading causes of morbidity and mortality. Data queries can be refined per State through the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC).

3.   The   Web   address   specific   to   injury   query   is www.cdc.gov/ncipc/ncipchm.htm This site emphasizes the daily toll and cost of injury in the U.S. This site is linked to Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting Systems (WISQARS) which includes

      a.   Injury mapping--maps for county, State, region, and entire U.S. mortality rates.

      b.   Cause of death and injury charts.

4.   Using a reliable source of local data, profile the causes of preventable injury and death that affect **your** community most frequently. If your organization is responsible for EMS, the source may be your own response data. If not, consider your local EMS authority, hospital(s), or health department.

      If you cannot locate data specific to your community from a local source, consider using data published by your State.

      You should profile five causes of preventable injury or death using the following attributes:

      a.   Frequency of occurrence (by percent contrasted with total number injuries/deaths).

b.   Morbidity and mortality (number civilians injured or killed annually by this type of incident).

c.   Rate of rise for occurrences (are number of incidents rising, steady, or declining?).

d.   Geographic distribution of occurrences (examine by Census Tract).

e.   Financial impact to the victim, community, and your organization.

f.   Population(s) most experiencing the specific type of incident.

A master worksheet is provided for your benefit. Please produce a copy for each of the five causes of preventable injury you select. It is suggested that frequency of occurrence be used to select your leading occurrences to profile.

Note: Arson, hazardous materials release, and domestic terror are also examples of human-created (preventable) risks. Should you select one of these categories, be prepared to compare and contrast it with the impact created by other more frequently occurring incidents.

PREVENTABLE INJURY/DEATH WORKSHEET

Incident Type: _____

Frequency (%)	
Morbidity/ Mortality	
Rate of rise	
Geographic distribution	
Cost (in $)	
Population(s) most affected by this risk	

Section 3--Naturally Occurring Risks

1.   While the majority of human-created risks are preventable, naturally occurring events are not. Examples include severe weather, earthquakes, extreme cold/heat, and drought. Although a community may not be able to prevent such events, loss can be greatly mitigated through a combination of pre-planning, resource allocation, and citizen preparedness.

2.   While not preventable, most naturally occurring risks are predictable. Coastlines are more vulnerable to hurricanes. The South and Midwest regularly experience tornados. More snow falls in the northern portion of the country than in the South. Lightning-initiated wildfires occur in forests.

3.   In addition to reducing fires and preventable injury, EACRR advocates study of naturally occurring risks that currently (or have a potential to) threaten the EFO's home community. Base consideration on potential loss of life, personal property, and overall vitality of the community.

4.   Please select three naturally occurring risks that currently (or likely will) affect your community. These should be significant events that don't occur often, but when they do, there is great potential for high impact.

5.   Follow the worksheet's instructions to profile the risk. Next, offer an objective opinion as to your community's preparedness to mitigate the effects of a significant occurrence.

      You should profile each risk using the following attributes:

   a.   Prior frequency of occurrence (how often has it affected your community?).

   b.   Past history of loss (number civilian casualties, property damage, community vitality?).

   c.   Areas of community most affected (are some neighborhoods more vulnerable?).

   d.   Projected frequency of event (when might it happen again?).

   e.   Potential future losses (life, property, community vitality).

   f.   Current preparedness/areas of concern (are your organization and community prepared to effectively mitigate effects of the next event?).

NATURALLY OCCURRING RISK WORKSHEET

Incident Type: _____

Prior frequency of event	
Past history of loss (life, property, and community vitality)	
Areas of community most affected	
Projected frequency of event	
Potential future losses (life, property, and community vitality)	
Current preparedness/ areas of concern	

PART 4: IDENTIFYING ROOT FACTORS OF RISK AND POPULATIONS AT GREATEST RISK

Estimated time to budget for completion of this section: 5 hours (contingent upon the accessibility of reliable and objective data).

Information from this section will be used in Units 1, 2, and 3.

Background Information

The roots of the U.S. fire problem are similar to those of the majority of other life safety risks in our country. Social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors are contributing elements that often lie at the core of risk.

EFOs and risk reducers must master how to identify, understand, and address how these factors are affecting fire risk at the **local** level. Of interest: many social, cultural, and economic risk elements often remain consistent regardless of community size; differences most frequently occur in environmental factors.

Social Factors

Social problems such as a lack of quality housing, affordable health care, inadequate or unavailable childcare, lack of education and job opportunities, etc., are all social factors that contribute to risk.

Government systems, or lack of systems and services, can greatly affect social factors. Peers, family members, societal trends, and commercial marketing efforts also can generate social influences.

Cultural Influences

Cultural influences are the values, beliefs, behaviors, etc., of a specific group. Cultural beliefs are learned over time and through experiences. These beliefs can have a great influence on a person or group's behavior.

Social and cultural influences are so interconnected that they often appear one and the same. Don't get hung up trying to overanalyze the differences. The point to consider is that both social and cultural factors/influences can have a huge impact on risk in America-both positively and negatively.

Economic Factors

Income levels often affect the risk of fire or preventable injury among populations. Families with low income may not be able to afford fire protection systems, quality housing, regular day care, etc.

National statistics clearly indicate that the risk of fire and preventable injury is higher among populations with low income. Economic factors include family, societal, and workplace influences that affect personal finances.

A strong local economy and workforce can influence the level of potential community risk in a positive manner. A broad-based spectrum of employment that offers an adequate number of jobs can lead to stable employment rates and a healthy, diverse community.

In contrast, a community that offers limited employment options with the majority being lower paying manufacturing positions may see higher numbers of people challenged by preventable risk.

Environmental Elements

The environment in which populations live and work can affect risk. Lack of fire protection systems, cluttered living conditions, fire load, poorly maintained housing, and substandard construction are examples of such factors.

Often environmental factors are compounded by a lack of building and fire codes, or the lack of retroactive application of those codes. The lack of fire protection systems in aging multifamily housing is a common environmental factor that contributes to the U.S. fire death rate plateau.

Contrasting Urban, Suburban, and Rural Fire Risk

Fire risk affects all communities regardless of size. Risk reducers should be able to identify risks and associated factors specific to their community regardless of size.

Historically, emergency providers believed the demographics of urban, suburban, and rural communities were vastly different. As technology continues to affect our society, many of the old stereotypes about the starkly different characteristics of urban, suburban, and rural communities will gradually disappear. A common fact will remain: The lifestyles of families are influenced by social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors.

It is important to have an understanding of these elements and how they contribute to fire and other preventable risks. It also is important to examine populations that are more vulnerable to risk.

Identifying Risk Factors in Specific Populations

Community risk is best addressed based on the objective study of data. Many national organizations (i.e., the USFA, FEMA, NFA, and the NFPA) have conducted extensive research and identified four populations known to be at higher risk from fire:

1.   Young children (age 5 and under).

2.   Older adults (age 65 and older).

3.   People with disabilities.

4.   People living in poverty.

Of interest, these populations consistently represent the groups that are most at risk from a plethora of other preventable occurrences.

Several factors can place people at greater risk for fire and preventable injury:

- age and gender;
- cognitive ability and intellectual level;
- physical, mental, and emotional condition;
- socioeconomic status; and
- community demographics and personal living conditions.

An important point to consider during the entire EACRR course: When the risk factors that contribute to fire or preventable injury occur in combination, a person's vulnerability to risk may increase dramatically. For example: A visual-, hearing-, and mobility-impaired older adult living below the poverty level may be at much higher risk from fire than an older adult with only one of these challenges.

In 1999, leaders convened to discuss fire risk among the populations confirmed to be most vulnerable. A report entitled *Solutions 2000* was generated as a result.

High-risk populations are at greater risk from the effects of most hazards, both natural and human-created:

- children (age 5 and under);
- impoverished households;
- older adults (age 65 and over);
- people affected by disabilities; and
- populations who speak little or no English.

The *Solutions 2000* series focused on fire risk. However, a person's age, intellect, social class, physical ability, and living environment can affect his or her vulnerability to virtually **any** type natural or human-created risk.

In addition to the Census Bureau, there are many other community resources that may be useful when researching high-risk populations. Other sources for obtaining information on **local** community demographics:

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.
English as second language and diverse cultures:	Office of Community Development, Board of Education/School Districts, Head Start programs, child care associations, social services, and community action council.

Part 4 Assignment

1. Complete the High Risk Populations worksheet for your community using *American FactFinder.* Using data for your community, identify the current and projected population size of the groups listed on the worksheet.

HIGH-RISK POPULATIONS WORKSHEET

High-Risk Group	Current Population Size	Current Geographic Distribution of the Population (ID Census Tracts/areas having the greatest populations of high-risk groups)	Projected Demographic Growth of Population over Next 10 Years (ID Census Tracts/areas most likely to experience growth of high-risk populations)
Children age 5 and under			
Impoverished households			
Adults over age 65			

High-Risk Group	Current Population Size	Current Geographic Distribution of the Population (ID Census Tracts/areas having the greatest populations of high-risk groups)	Projected Demographic Growth of Population over Next 10 Years (ID Census Tracts/ areas most likely to experience growth of high-risk populations)
People affected by disabilities			
Populations who speak little or no English			

2. Identify how fire and other preventable injury are affecting each confirmed high-risk group in **your home community**. Succinct summaries are encouraged. You will use this information during several EACRR units and the culminating course activity.

IMPACT OF FIRE AND PREVENTABLE INJURY WORKSHEET

High-Risk Group	How fire and other preventable injury is affecting the group at the *local* level
Children age 5 and under	
Impoverished households	
Adults over age 65	
People affected by disabilities	
Populations who speak little or no English	

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PART 5: A CHANGING AND DISTRACTED AMERICA AT RISK

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Estimated time for completion of this section: 1 hour.

Information from this section will be used in all units.

Background Information

As society evolves over time, some things remain consistent. Among the constants is the fact that social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors can influence risk--positively and negatively.

Factors such as poverty and poor living conditions have and always will be large contributors to America's fire problem and other risk occurrences. In contrast, modern factors such as the technology revolution and population explosions in suburban areas are more contemporary contributors to preventable risk.

Risk reducers must remain aware of societal trends and design mitigation strategies that are effective in these changing times. The most effective risk-reduction strategies are those that focus on targeted problems affecting specific groups of people.

The fast pace of today's society creates many challenges that risk-reduction strategists should consider. The NFA course entitled *The Changing American Family at Risk* (CAFR) promotes strategies on how to address preventable risk in an ever-changing world.

An information-overloaded and distracted society is at higher risk from natural and human-created risk. The paradigm of "It can't or won't happen to me" exacerbates this challenge.

The roots of successful risk reduction are anchored by education, with resultant knowledge gain, and (**hopefully**) a positive behavioral change. This applies not only to those at risk, but also to policymakers who have influence over the adoption of technology, codes, and standards.

The definition of behavioral change is simple: Influencing a person's thinking that ultimately results in that individual making a choice to act in a different manner. When it comes to health and life safety, individuals **may** choose to make behavioral change if they:

- are aware that a problem or threat exists;
- understand the problem and factors contributing to it;
- believe they or loved ones are personally at risk;
- believe the benefits to change outweigh the barriers to do so;
- believe they are capable of the behavioral change;
- understand what they are supposed to do to reduce the risk;
- understand and believe in their reasons for taking action;
- have the resources to make the change possible; and
- receive feedback on their efforts.

Although the strategy sounds simple, changing a person's behavior can be a complicated effort influenced by social, cultural, economic, and environmental elements.

In preparation for EACRR, please read the following section that has been adapted from the CAFR course.

A Changing America

The demographics of U.S. families, schools, workplaces, and communities continue to change. This section explores current trends in the following categories:

- households, neighborhoods, and communities;
- schools;
- mass media and information technology;
- workplace; and
- emergency services.

Households, Neighborhoods, and Communities

- The demographics of households continue to diversify. Ninety-three percent of households are nontraditional (traditional American household-- Never-divorced parents and stay-at-home mom).

- Two-parent households increased 6 percent since 1990. Single-mother (sole income generator) households increased by 25 percent.

- Twenty percent of toddlers are raised in poverty.

- Family structure and household demographics can change due to relationship changes, new social groups, cultural influences, employment changes, pregnancy, aging, economics, and death.

- Due to delayed marriage, an aging population, and low unemployment, there are more single-person households than nuclear families.

- Sixty percent of moms with children work outside the home either part- or full-time.

- In response to demand, the number of childcare facilities has increased significantly. Some centers serve hundreds of families--others are small home-based operations.

- The pace of society influences the pace of families. More activities exist for children and families than ever before. Time pressures affect the majority of families, especially families with children.

- The majority of children's parents work. Children want more quality time with parents. The family is still very important to children and preteens.

- Our Nation continues to become more diverse. By 2050, "minorities" will represent nearly 50 percent of the population.

- Baby boomers will begin to retire in earnest by 2010. The number of older adults living alone or with a retired spouse will grow exponentially over the next two decades.

- Older adults are now less likely to be in a nursing home. Assisted living communities are growing.

- The safety and welfare of children and grandchildren will continue to be of concern to older adults.

- As the number of older adults increases, support systems for this population will become stressed for resources.

- As Americans age, so does the age of their homes. Many communities have older established neighborhoods where the condition of housing is rapidly deteriorating.

- The composition of many established neighborhoods is changing. As older residents pass on or relocate, their homes often are purchased by investors for use as rental properties. Some properties fall into states of disrepair due to tenant turnover and lack of maintenance.

- As communities age, many urban areas are experiencing surges in community revitalization efforts.

- Suburbs continue to expand in size as people move from crowded inner city areas. Areas once rural are becoming more suburban in nature.

- Income levels and size of homes continue to rise in many affluent suburban communities.

- The formation of neighborhood associations is becoming more common in many communities.

- The definition of "neighborhood" is diverse. It could mean a street or two in a large city, a several-block area in a suburban location, or a several square mile zone in a rural setting.

- In the 1950s, most people knew their neighbors. In many of today's neighborhoods, folks are cordial, but often barely know their neighbors.

- Neighborhood grocery stores were once gathering places where folks took time to talk and share important news. Today's big box stores feature a fast-paced environment similar to a superhighway.

- Local firehouses and churches were often the center of neighborhood activity. Now, due to the threat of terrorism, most are locked and monitored with security cameras.

- While trends point toward a resurgence of neighborhood-based activity, America's "neighborhoods" will probably never return to what they looked like 40 years ago.

- Many rural areas still remain untouched by major suburban influences.

- Poverty remains a serious challenge in urban and rural communities. Poverty will affect older adults at a greater frequency as that population grows.

- The resource gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" continues to widen.

- Social isolation often affects not only the older adult population. Many people live alone. Solitary activities, like surfing the Internet, can promote social isolation among younger populations.

- The church still has significant influence over many households throughout the United States. However, mainstream religion is losing popularity with the young.

- The retail industry continues to influence the demographics of many communities. Super malls and "Mega-Mart" complexes continue to affect how consumers spend their resources. One-stop shopping is proving to be a convenience demanded by Americans.

Schools

The internal demographics of schools in many U.S. communities are changing at a rapid pace. Here's why:

- The U.S. continues to lag behind in educational achievement when compared with many other industrialized nations. This fact places our Nation at a disadvantage when competing in a global economy. Today's workers must have higher levels of education, computer literacy, critical thinking, and information analysis skills.

- Taxpayers have requested enhanced performance and greater accountability from schools. The government has listened and responded.

- National and State initiatives to enhance both teacher and student performance have placed challenging accountability standards on local schools. These performance standards place added workloads on administrators, teachers, and students. These workloads can increase stress at all levels.

- Curricula are being revised to arm students with the information required to show proficienc**y** in core subject matters such as language arts, mathematics, and technology.

- Many communities are using the concept of "magnet schools" that focus on specific curricula like arts and technology.

- Over two million children attend private schools. Home schooling is another rapidly growing trend.

- Time pressures and competition for curriculum topics are increasing the possibilities that risk reduction may be overlooked as a core priority subject.

- Historically, most schools routinely requested some level of fire safety program from local firefighters. Unfortunately, annual firefighter visits and/or firehouse tours are being eliminated as schools scramble to meet increased educational standards.

- Competition for a school's curriculum priority can be a frustrating situation for risk reducers, but they should not give up. Rather, they must empathize with professional educators and understand the tremendous pressure to improve academic performance.

- Risk reducers must collaborate with school officials to develop innovative safety lessons that integrate with core curriculum topics such as language arts, science, technology, and math. The first step is meeting with officials to learn what is included in a school's essential curriculum.

- School officials respond best to risk reducers seeking collaborative win/win resolutions to curriculum challenges. We should offer assistance in developing, presenting, and evaluating user-friendly life safety initiatives.

- Integrating risk reduction with school-based curricula requires vision, collaboration, and effort on behalf of risk reducers. Using these strategies will prove successful, as the trend toward performance-based schools is here to stay.

- A measurable, school-based life safety curriculum that includes family extension activities remains one of the most effective forms of primary risk prevention.

Mass Media and Information Technology

This section features information on two components that have tremendous influence over how information is received by consumers: mass media and information technology.

For the sake of this section, mass media will include newspapers, television, and radio. Information technology will focus on computers and the Internet.

- After a several year decline in circulation numbers, newspaper sales are rebounding (or adjusting publication strategies) from the influences generated by the Internet. Many consumers still consider the newspaper a preferred source on local and national news.

- Many suburban communities are seeing an increase in the number of local papers that report news and happenings in regional geographic areas. Some larger papers offer sections that outline events in specific neighborhood areas.

- Thirty years ago, many consumers could receive just 10 channels on their televisions. Cable networks and satellite services have revolutionized the television industry. Many households now receive literally hundreds of channels. In some communities, a consumer must pay extra fees to receive local programming via their satellite service.

- Many cable networks remain community focused by offering a variety of local programming. In many cases, local government has its own channel. Local companies and stations often are interested in collaborating with the emergency services to enhance risk-reduction efforts.

- The composition of television programming has changed dramatically. Fast-moving, action-packed shows with intense visual stimulation dominate today's TV market. Viewer attention often is maintained through use of explosive scenes or alluring connotations.

- In the 1970s, the NBC series "Emergency" offered an action-packed view of the Los Angeles fire department. Today's television market offers a wide variety of shows that spotlight life in the emergency services. Sadly, few (if any) primary injury-prevention messages are integrated into these programs. Drama and excitement rule!

- Radio has changed in many ways. Today, it is not uncommon for one company to own dozens of radio stations. In many areas, local radio personalities are being replaced by syndicated programming.

- Locating a true local station that focuses on news and happenings in the local community can be challenging in many areas. As with television, satellite service is affecting the radio industry by offering subscribers hundreds of commercial-free stations. However, many people still listen to car radio and watch local television stations.

- Older adults are the biggest consumer of traditional media. Younger generations are more accepting of newer, technology-driven message media.

- Risk reducers must recognize trends in mass media and determine how they affect the dissemination of information in the respective local community.

- Partnerships with the media must be solidified at the local level. Reporters, editors, news directors, and other key people must know about and understand what risks threaten the local community.

- The emergency services cannot view the media as an enemy. Like us, the media have a job to perform. With or without our help, they will report the news. Understanding how local media function is an important skill for risk reducers. The media can be used as an integral component of the risk reduction team.

- The Internet has changed the way many people receive information.

- Two million people go online for the first time each month. Nine of 10 school-age children have access to computers either at home or school. Families with children are 70 percent more likely to possess a home computer that is connected to the Internet.

- Busy parents are looking to outside tutors and products to help educate their children. Nearly half of today's families who have a home computer use it primarily for research activities.

- Most noncommercial Internet sites for children have vanished. Retailers are being told to make Web sites child-friendly.

- While the growing availability of computers at work and school has made the Internet available across all demographic groups and geographic regions, not everyone has access to a computer. Nearly 140 million people are unable to connect to the Internet. Family income is the most important factor in Internet use.

- Advances in technology even have changed the face of children's games. Most of today's youth are proficient operators of electronic high-tech gadgets. Older children seem to have as much, if not more knowledge, of computers as their parents.

- Thanks to technology, Americans have more to see, do, and learn than ever before in the history of our country. All this stimulation, however, comes with a price: How can marketers (and risk reducers) use it to successfully elicit attitudes and behavioral changes that favor safe lifestyles?

- In general, most people are fed up with telemarketers, SPAM, and other distractions viewed as intrusions of privacy.

Workplace

- In the past four decades, economic and technological forces have transformed the U.S. economy from a production-based to a service-based economy. This trend demands a more intellectually prepared workforce. The need for life-long learning is not a projected trend; it's a reality that's here to stay.

- Our performance-driven society has tremendous influence over today's workforce. Americans demand fast and quality customer service. Email, voice mail, pagers, cell phones, and PDAs have made lightning-quick worldwide communication possible. Today's iPhone combines all means of communication into one device. The future will see further refinement of communication capabilities.

- As technology revolutionizes the workplace, many jobs once considered blue-collar are becoming more technical in nature. Ongoing staff training is standard as employees are required to have competencies in a variety of core subjects.

- No matter how technical society becomes, labor skills still will be needed in the workplace. No machine will ever replace the backbone of American labor: people. Due to varied levels of education, it sometimes can be a challenge to initiate behavioral change within labor-oriented cultures.

- Corporate downsizing has become a modern reality. Much like the mega-mart effect on small retailers, small corporations are being acquired by larger corporations. In the end, fewer jobs may be available as employees are forced to perform the jobs of several people. This can result in stressed employees and morale problems.

- Management staff faces performance pressures as well. As performance demands increase, a focus on routine workplace safety and overall concern for the employee's family may be inadvertently overlooked. Getting the attention of management and decisionmakers can be a challenging process in today's high-pressure workplace.

- While the workplace can be a challenging environment, many forward-thinking corporations consider employees to be their most important resource. Many offer onsite childcare, and part-time or work-from-home telecommuting employment options for parents.

- The number of home offices has grown exponentially during the past decade. Many people have home offices that rival the best-equipped corporate workplace.

- As performance pressures grow and healthcare costs skyrocket, the human resource department becomes an even more important component of today's workplace. Growing companies are placing increased responsibilities on HR departments to offer a wide variety of wellness programs designed to support employees and reduce staff turnover.

- Employees are changing jobs more than ever before. In days gone by, an employee could count on staying at a job and retiring with a pension after 30 years of service. Today, many employees invest contributions toward employer-sponsored investment programs.

- Many employees have personal retirement and investment portfolios. This trend makes it easier for employees to switch jobs. Employee loyalty to a single corporation for an entire career is diminishing.

- Government regulations continue to have an impact on many U.S. workplaces. Agencies that serve children, special needs populations, and older adults often are required to offer annual emergency preparedness training to staff.

- Due to a changing economy, many people are delaying retirement and working longer. In addition, the projected growth of the older adult population has spawned a dramatic increase in the development of housing, services, and people that will serve this group in years to come.

- The U.S. workplace has changed dramatically in the past 40 years. Although it can be a challenging process, the workplace remains a promising place to integrate risk-reduction initiatives. Risk reducers are wise to collaborate with corporate leaders to develop innovative programs that integrate both workplace and home safety training.

Summary

U.S. communities, neighborhoods, and families will continue to change over time. Technological innovations have led to a faster paced society. The structure and composition of communities and neighborhoods continues to evolve in a vast array of directions.

Information overload and fast-paced living often create distraction and less focus on basic issues like safety. EFOs must understand a changing Nation to address fire risk in the local community effectively.

As summary to this section, it is important to reflect on how a changing society may be affecting your community. Answers to the following questions will be used as foundation information for several EACRR learning activities and the culminating activity for the course.

Part 5 Assignment

Please respond to the following seven questions:

1.   After reflecting upon what you have just read, summarize succinctly how a changing society is affecting your home community.

2.   An uninformed and distracted society is more vulnerable to natural and human-created risk. In your opinion, how knowledgeable are your citizens about current and potential risk issues in the local community?

3.   What perceptions of local risk are held by your citizens?

4.   What perceptions of local risk are held by community decisionmakers?

5.   What is the level of risk mitigation collaboration between your organization and the community?

6.   Identify the groups and organizations that your agency currently collaborates with to address local risk.

7.   In your opinion, are there other groups and organizations that your organization should be collaborating with at the local level? If so, please identify them.

PART 6: CHANGE STARTS WITH THE EXECUTIVE FIRE OFFICER

Estimated time needed for completion of this section: 4 hours.

Information from this section will be used in Units 1, 4, and 5.

Reading Resource	Location
Understanding Community Policing: A Framework for Action	www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/commp.pdf

Background Information

The ability to lead a strategic risk-mitigation process is a skill that must be possessed by an executive officer EACRR will help the EFO build that skill set.

A successful risk-reduction process begins with a leader's vision. It advances through local data analysis and risk mitigation planning. It culminates in sustainable actions that are evaluated for success and modified according to need. Many of America's safest communities owe credit to EFO graduates who have helped design and implement a comprehensive risk-reduction strategy that focuses on **local** needs.

The following section overviews some of the progressive changes that are occurring within today's emergency services. It also chronicles traditions that may be hampering organizations from institutionalizing risk reduction as a core value.

Emergency Services--Trends and Traditions

- The emergency services have embraced the technology revolution. Life-saving technology like thermal imaging cameras and digital communications are being used nationwide.

- Organizations are taking advantage of computer technology. Most offer Web sites that provide information about their department.

- The challenge of marketing ourselves remains. How can we expect the public to visit our Web sites if they don't know about them? In addition, how many organizations offer quality information and prevention strategies on local risks? Are links to credible national sources like USFA, NFPA, and Safe Kids included on department Web sites?

- Most organizations continue to offer some level of primary prevention program at the elementary school level. The most effective efforts occur when the fire department works closely with school officials to design prevention strategies that integrate with core school curricula.

- Some departments assume their local schools are providing adequate lessons on primary fire and injury prevention. No communication takes place and programs are absent.

- Many organizations use fire prevention week as their sole window of opportunity to conduct risk-reduction efforts. School visits are crammed into a short timeframe, and the annual open house at the fire station seems to draw few visitors.

- Progressive departments have integrated risk reduction as part of their overall year-round mission. They know their leading risk issues and are constantly designing contemporary intervention strategies. Their organization's staff participates willingly in risk reduction because they understand how their efforts are vital to creating a healthy community.

- Many organizations are frustrated by the lack of citizen attendance at fire department open houses, retail store parking lot events, and table setups at malls. They embrace the philosophy, "If one person gets the message, we have been successful." Would the corporate or retail industry accept that philosophy?

- Progressive organizations are conducting market research on their target populations. Some are seeking advice from professional marketers and developing contemporary strategies that are reaching their intended audiences successfully.

- Risk mitigation strategists are learning that seeking advice about marketing doesn't have to be expensive. Often, it is free, as many marketing professionals are happy to give advice for the good of the community. Many universities offer free marketing consultation services from student groups performing projects or internships.

- Most marketing professionals give similar advice--Develop a series of strategies, each designed to permeate a specific target population.

  - Do things that make the target population inquisitive about the service being offered.

  - Create a culture where target populations view risk reduction as a needed commodity.

  - Most importantly, use strategies that show the most promise of success.

- Collaboration with retailers is paying off. Many retailers are allowing public educators to interact with customers at safety equipment point-of-sale areas and other high traffic locations in their store.

- Fire departments in many communities are enjoying strong partnerships with local businesses and industry. Risk reduction is integrated into employee wellness programs and includes home safety initiatives.

- More than ever, fire departments are visiting neighborhoods and getting to know their customers. Many departments install free smoke alarms on request. Others canvass neighborhoods postfire to check alarms. Some even visit a portion of their community each year, personally discussing risk issues and offering smoke alarm assistance.

- In most areas, residents warmly welcome a visit from local firefighters, but some organizations have decided against initiating neighborhood visitation because of concerns that citizens may view these actions as an invasion of privacy.

- Many risk practitioners are realizing the value of conducting postincident interviews with fire victims. This strategy uncovers the behaviors that contributed to a preventable incident. It also provides valuable information on what consumers knew about prevention of the problem. One of the greatest benefits of this strategy is that firefighters are obtaining information on how they can better market risk reduction in the community.

- Some fire departments offer tours of burned homes to neighborhood residents. People learn how the fire began and spread through the home. More importantly, they learn how the fire could have been prevented. Home safety displays are present and firefighters offer free home inspections and smoke alarm installation.

- Many organizations are feeling the impact caused by increased consumer litigation. Decisionmakers are sometimes forced to deny use of certain

windows of opportunity due to liability concerns. For example: A risk reducer may be directed by his or her superiors not to use a burned home as an interactive neighborhood classroom due to potential liabilities.

- Most organizations have people interested in leading or participating with risk reduction. Some organizations lack those catalysts. A few have malignant personnel who will openly criticize anyone who supports risk-reduction efforts.

- Many progressive organizations have developed political savvy and realize the importance of communication and customer service. They have adopted the philosophy that today's organizations must be "transparent." The definition of "transparent" is that behaviors displayed by staff truly reflect the mission of the organization without agendas or costs: "What you see is what you get".

Summary

An organization that has institutionalized risk reduction as a core value will display the following behaviors:

- Time and attention dedicated to risk reduction.

- Research on leading local risks and affected populations.

- Resources (people, time, money, and equipment) will be allocated.

- Intervention strategies will be designed, implemented, and evaluated.

Unit 5 of EACRR focuses on building organizational and community support for risk mitigation. It also provides information on how to initiate political action.

Part 6 Assignment

Section 1--Risk Reduction Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors

As a summary to Part 6 of this precourse assignment and to build background information for several EACRR activities, please respond to the following five directives:

1.   Risk-reduction strategies are created most effectively when the entire organization understands the level of natural and human-created risk that faces the community. Line staff, midlevel management, executive officers, and administrative and political decisionmakers need a fact-based rationale of why they should provide tangible support to reducing risk.

        In your opinion, how knowledgeable is your internal constituency about current and potential risk issues in the local community? Please provide your view on each of the following groups:

        a.   Line staff.

        b.   Midlevel management.

        c.   Executive officers.

        d   Chief of department.

        e.   Administrative leadership (i.e., city administrator).

        f.   Political leadership (i.e., council, commission, board of aldermen).

2.   Attitudes and values drive behaviors. In your opinion, what are the attitudes and values of your internal constituency about supporting risk reduction? Please provide your view on each of the following groups:

        a.   Line staff.

        b.   Midlevel management.

        c.   Executive officers.

        d.   Chief of department.

        e.   Administrative leadership (i.e., city administrator).

        f.   Political leadership (i.e., council, commission, board of aldermen).

3.   After reflecting upon the "trends and traditions" of the emergency services and responding to questions one and two, please offer your **objective** opinion on the following:

How well has your organization institutionalized risk reduction as a core value? Please justify your answer by including the following information:

a.   Does your organization's mission statement include prevention as a core objective? Please note the mission statement.

b.   What level of resources (attention, time, people, and money) does your organization invest into risk mitigation?

c.   Does your organization have a staff position dedicated to risk mitigation?

4.   EFOs need baseline knowledge of risk-reduction initiatives currently in place within their home community. Please identify examples of school and community-based risk-reduction programs that your organization is currently involved with.

a.   School-based programs:

b.   Community-based programs:

5.   In measurable terms, please summarize the outreach, impact, and outcome that have been created by your organization's school and community-based programs.

Note: Outreach measures the number of people being served by your initiatives. Impact indicates the changes in knowledge, behaviors, and living environments that your initiatives have helped to facilitate. Outcome measures how your work has affected the occurrence of preventable risk in the community.

Section 2--Comparing Strategic CRR and Community Policing

Understanding Community Policing: A Framework for Action

In 1994 the Department of Justice published a landmark report about community policing. The report, *Understanding Community Policing*: *A Framework for Action,* provided a detailed analysis of community policing and its impact on reducing crime. The report clearly identified the benefits of police officers working with the residents in a specific neighborhood or area. May times these benefits did not include a reduction in crime statistics; rather, the benefits were found in the nature of the relationship between the police and the residents of the community.

Even though this report is over 10 years old, it is still considered a landmark report about the benefits and challenges associated with community policing. There are numerous corollaries between the dynamics of community policing and firefighters performing risk reduction at the neighborhood level, especially the relationship between the firefighter and the target audience. The lessons from community policing can and should be analyzed and applied by fire service leaders to community risk-reduction initiatives.

Read the report as part of your precourse tasks. The information from the report will be the subject of an in-class discussion.

PART 7: THE PROCESS OF RISK MITIGATION
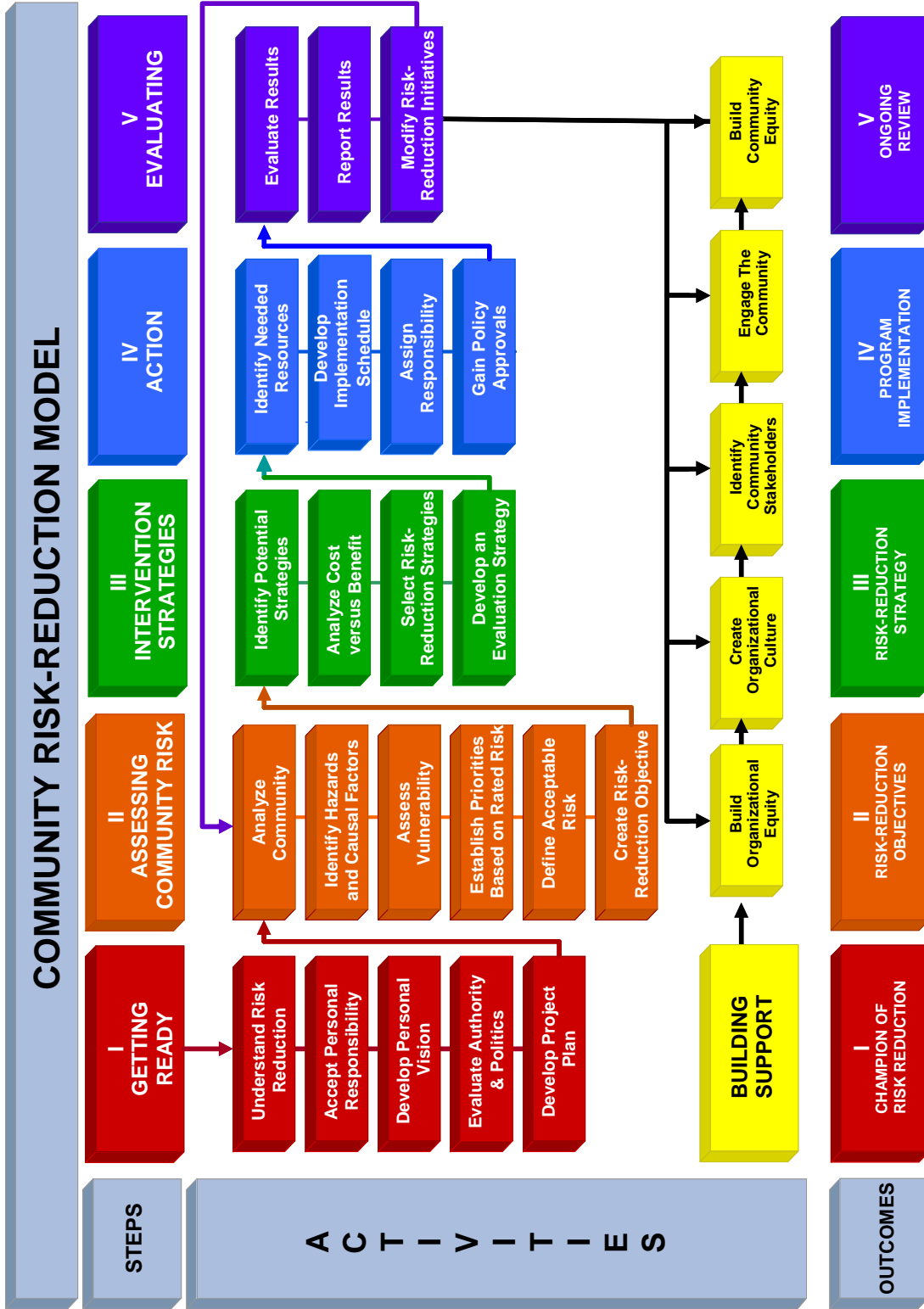

Estimated time for completion of this section: 1/2 hour.

The EACRR model will be used throughout the entire course.

Part 7 Assignment

Examine and become familiar with the nationally recognized community risk-mitigation model. The model outlines the process needed to build a successful community risk-reduction strategy. The EACRR course promotes use of this model.

COMMUNITY RISK-REDUCTION MODEL

STEPS	I GETTING READY	II ASSESSING COMMUNITY RISK	III INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	IV ACTION	V EVALUATING
A C T I V I T I E S	Understand Risk Reduction	Analyze Community	Identify Potential Strategies	Identify Needed Resources	Evaluate Results
	Accept Personal Responsibility	Identify Hazards and Causal Factors	Analyze Cost versus Benefit	Develop Implementation Schedule	Report Results
	Develop Personal Vision	Assess Vulnerability	Select Risk-Reduction Strategies	Assign Responsibility	Modify Risk-Reduction Initiatives
	Evaluate Authority & Politics	Establish Priorities Based on Rated Risk	Develop an Evaluation Strategy	Gain Policy Approvals	
	Develop Project Plan	Define Acceptable Risk			
		Create Risk-Reduction Objective			
	BUILDING SUPPORT	Build Organizational Equity	Create Organizational Culture	Identify Community Stakeholders	Engage The Community	Build Community Equity
OUTCOMES	I CHAMPION OF RISK REDUCTION	II RISK-REDUCTION OBJECTIVES	III RISK-REDUCTION STRATEGY	IV PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	V ONGOING REVIEW

PART 8: COMPLETE PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

Estimated time for completion of this section: 1 hour.

The precourse assignment checklist serves two purposes:

1.   To serve as a guide that helps keep you on track with completion of the assignment.

2.   To serve as record for the NFA Training Specialist that you have completed the prerequisite assignments that are required for entry into EACRR.

Please complete the precourse assignment checklist (located on pages 11 to 13 of this package) and send to Linda Pecher at the National Fire Academy.